



# Responding to Incidents Policy and Procedure

## Scope

This policy applies to Brook RED Community Members, Nominated Support People, Board Members, employees, volunteers, and students on placement.

## Purpose

To ensure that Brook RED is prepared for and responds to *incidents* that may arise, in order to minimise the negative impact of these on our community.

## Principles

Brook RED is strongly committed to promoting the safety, health, and wellbeing of our community. Incidents (including emergencies and critical incidents) can have a significant physical and psychological impact on people and can at times affect the continuation of programs, supports and services. As such, Brook RED endeavours to have an effective response to incidents in order to preserve life, protect property, and restore operations as quickly as possible. Brook RED provides support to those who request it following an incident.

## Policy

Staff will:

- Respond and resolve incidents where possible, following procedures as outlined below, taking immediate action to minimise the risk of further damage or injury
- Escalate serious incidents to management
- Contact emergency services as appropriate
- Use the Fire and Evacuation Plans found at each site for incidents that constitute an emergency
- Verbally notify Line Manager of all incidents
- Record incidents using a 'General Incident Report Form' and forward copies of forms to the General Manager within **two business days** of the incident occurring

Management will:

- Ensure staff have the necessary skills to manage incidents
- Assess whether Brook RED operations will be effected
- Notify next of kin, family, or guardian (if appropriate)
- Respond to any media enquiries
- Investigate incidents (if required)
- Log forms in the 'Incidents Register'
- Analyse all incidents every six months, analysis reports will be reported to the Board annually
- Report incidents to Workplace Health and Safety Queensland if required
- Provide feedback, advice and support to staff to prevent reoccurrence
- Provide support to those negatively affected by incidents
- Foster a culture of continuous quality improvement with a proactive approach to preventing incidents

# Responding to Incidents Policy and Procedure

## Procedure

### Community Member Timed Out

Please see the Least Restrictive Practice Policy for more information.

### Contact Hierarchy for Emergencies

In an emergency, **staff must contact emergency services first**. Once emergency services have been notified, staff must attempt to contact the General Manager. If the General Manager is unavailable, staff must contact the Business Service Manager. The Business Services Manager will forward this information as soon as possible to the attention of the General Manager.

### Data Breaches

Please refer to the Brook RED Privacy and Confidentiality Policy and Information Security Policy.

### Emergency Lockdown Response

Building emergency procedures are traditionally focused on the safe evacuation of staff, Community Members, and visitors. This is an appropriate response to most emergency situations (for example fire, gas leak), but in some situations it may actually be safer to stay inside the building. An emergency lockdown will be implemented when necessary to ensure that the occupants of Brook RED are protected from an external threat, including but not limited to, air contamination, violent incidents, civil disturbance or severe storms. An emergency lockdown may also be implemented in situations where additional pedestrian traffic may hinder the work of the attending emergency services. Staff will be notified of an emergency lockdown by the attending emergency services personnel, management or the Evacuation Coordinator. This message will be communicated verbally.

- Follow the instructions of emergency services, management, and the Evacuation Coordinator
- Draw all window coverings and secure the building (lock doors and close windows)
- Stay away from exposed windows
- Remain calm and encourage others to do the same
- If possible, maintain phone and email access
- If possible, maintain communications with staff and Community Members
- Do not communicate with the media (please see the Communications Policy)

### Fire/Evacuation Response

Each centre has a designated primary Evacuation Coordinator and a secondary Evacuation Coordinator if the primary is unavailable. The Evacuation Coordinators are trained to carry out evacuation procedures. For more information, please see the Fire and Evacuation Plan kept at each site and electronically.

### First Aid Response

On becoming aware of an incident, staff should notify a first aid officer so that they can provide assistance as soon as possible. If required, an ambulance will be called.

# Responding to Incidents

## Policy and Procedure

### Gas Leak Response

As many Brook RED properties are serviced by natural gas, a significant gas leak associated with equipment failure or damage to a high pressure gas line, may have an impact on the safety of the building occupants. In the event that gas can be smelt inside a building:

- Notify management as soon as possible
- Eliminate ignition sources
- Evacuate all staff, Community Members, and visitors to a well ventilated area
- Call 1800 GAS LEAK (1800 427 532) or 000

### Suicide/Self Harm Response

Please see the Suicide and Self-Harm Response Policy and Procedure for more information.

### Threats of Violence/Bomb Threats Response

If received by phone:

- Remain calm and alert
- DO NOT HANG UP
- Keep the caller talking as long as you can
- Write down the numbers that show up on the phone caller identification screen
- Document the exact words of the threat using the 'Threat Checklist Form'
- Alert your Line Manager and/or others around you that you are receiving a threat
- Listen for any distinguishing sounds such as traffic, animals, voices, tone, and accent of the caller

If received any other way:

- Alert your Line Manager and/or others around you that you are receiving a threat
- Notify management who will work with the Queensland Police to decide the best course of action
- Follow instructions from Queensland Police, management or its delegates
- Evacuate as directed
- Report suspicious items to Queensland Police, management or its delegates (do not touch them)

### Verbal/Physical Assault Response

Brook RED seeks to create a working environment where staff and Community Member are free from verbal and physical assault. Staff are to at all times consider their own safety paramount and are to act in a manner which ensures their own safety, and that of others. If an employee considers an environment to be unsafe then they must act to make themselves safe which may include removing themselves and contacting 000. Verbal/physical assault must be reported to management at the earliest possible opportunity and recorded in a General Incident Report Form.

### Reporting

Incidents that may require reporting to external agencies include:

- Data breach or breach of personal information (OAIC)
- Injury or death of an employee while on duty (WH&S QLD)

# Responding to Incidents Policy and Procedure

Any incident involving crimes such as assault, theft, and fraud must be reported to police.

## **Child Sexual Offences**

It is a requirement in Queensland that, unless they have a reasonable excuse, all adults must make a report to the police where they are aware that a child (a person under the age of 16 or someone under 18 if that person has a reduced capacity for communication, social interaction, or learning) is the victim of a sexual offence.

Child sexual offences include: Indecent treatment of a child, carnal knowledge with or of a child, rape, incest, grooming, creating child exploitation material, or maintaining a sexual relationship with a child.

If the victim of the offence is an adult at the point that a Brook RED employee becomes aware of the offence, you must report it unless you reasonably believe that the victim does not want it reported. If you became aware of a child sexual offence prior to 5 July 2021 you do not have to report it.

It is considered a reasonable excuse to not report a child sexual offence if a person believes that reporting the offence would endanger them or another person.

In the event that a Brook RED employee becomes aware of such an offence, they must:

- Report the offence to the police
- Document the details of the report in General Incident Report Form
- Notify management of the report

## **Support After Serious Incidents**

As per the research in this area, immediately after a serious incident or traumatic event at work, management will attempt to speak to those involved and offer support which may include time off work or counselling. One month following an event, management will meet with those involved and debrief. This involves talking about what happened, reflecting on what went well, what could have been done differently and discussion around improvement and preventative strategies.

## **Definitions of Terms Used**

### **Incident**

An incident is broadly defined as:

- Any event or circumstance that resulted, or could have resulted, in unintended and/or unnecessary harm to a person, or loss or damage to property
- A near miss which did not cause harm, but had potential to do so
- Any event which deviates from standard policy or procedure
- Anything illegal (e.g. assault, sexual misconduct, fraud)

## **References**

Brook RED Communications Policy  
Brook RED Fire and Evacuation Plans

# Responding to Incidents Policy and Procedure

Brook RED General Incident Report Form  
 Brook RED Information Security Policy  
 Brook RED Risk Management Policy and Procedure  
 Brook RED Suicide and Self-Harm Response Policy and Procedure

## Document Control and Record of Changes

Version	Effective Date	Approved by	Summary of Change	Date of Next Review
Version 01	January 2017	Eschleigh Balzamo	Introduction of new policy	-
Version 02	March 2017	Eschleigh Balzamo	Addition of new form Change of format	January 2018
Version 03	April 2017	Eschleigh Balzamo	Change of content	January 2018
Version 04	May 2017	Eschleigh Balzamo	Change to version control Change of content and format	January 2018
Version 05	December 2017	Eschleigh Balzamo	Change of content	January 2018
Version 06	September 2019	Eschleigh Balzamo	Review and Update	January 2021
Version 07	June 2020	Eschleigh Balzamo	Review and Update	January 2021
Version 08	June 2021	Eschleigh Balzamo	Review and Update	June 2023
Version 09	November 2021	Eschleigh Balzamo	Change of content	June 2022
Version 10	June 2022	Eschleigh Balzamo	Review and Update	July 2023
Version 11	August 2023	Eschleigh Balzamo	Review and Update	August 2024
Version 12	January 2024	Eschleigh Balzamo	Review and update	August 2024

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The General Manager has overall responsibility for this policy. If there are any questions regarding this policy, please direct these to the Business Services Manager or General Manager.