

# CRITICAL INCIDENT AND MANAGEMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURE

These procedures aim to assist Talkabout Tours PTY LTD to respond appropriately and ensure the relevant stakeholders are informed, and to manage in a compassionate and culturally sensitive manner, critical incidents that involve international students placed in Homestay by Talkabout Tours PTY LTD in accordance with Standard 6.4 of the National Code 2007.

## Related Documents

National Code Part D, Standard 6 Explanatory Guide

## Definition

A critical incident is defined as 'a traumatic event, or the threat of such (within or outside Australia), which causes extreme stress, fear or injury'. It is an event that causes individuals to experience a strong emotional reaction that interferes with their usual coping skills. The event has a level of trauma that is beyond the normal living experiences of those affected.

The resulting stress reaction may include emotional, physical, behavioural and cognitive changes evident either at the time of the incident or later. The impact of a critical incident may affect the host family or TAT staff, not only those most directly involved.

Critical incidents are not limited to, but could include:

- o Death of a student or close family member.
- o Attempted suicide.
- o Life-threatening injury.
- o Illness.
- o Missing student.
- o Mental health crisis.
- o Threats of violence to one-self, host family member or Talkabout Tours PTY LTD (TAT) staff member.
- o Severe verbal or psychological aggression.
- o Drug or alcohol overdose.
- o Natural disaster.
- o Issues such as domestic violence or sexual assault.
- o Neglect.

## Purpose

The purpose of this document is to articulate a plan for delivering a timely and coordinated response to critical incidents and to ensure that the reported critical incidents are:

- Responded to, or resolved, in the best possible way for the student(s), their families, for the host family, and for Talkabout Tours PTY LTD.
- Documented.
- Reported to relevant personnel of the Education Provider and government agencies.
- Managed in a manner to ensure that negative publicity, both locally and overseas, is not generated from an incident.

## Accountability

With reference to the National Code, as Talkabout Tours PTY LTD (TAT) is providing a management tool for Education Providers which are required to have in place a critical incident management policy, as per Standard 6.4 of the National Code, our role is one of a communication conduit.

It is the responsibility of the Education Provider to determine the appropriate course of action for each critical incident as provided in their own critical incident management plan.

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## Notification

In cases of a critical incident the Talkabout Tours PTY LTD Critical Incident Policy and Procedure must be engaged. The Directors of Talkabout Tours PTY LTD will be informed of the incident immediately and determine the circumstances of the situation, and if necessary, assign roles and responsibilities with Talkabout Tours PTY LTD staff.

## Intervention

It is not the responsibility of Talkabout Tours PTY LTD staff to contact the next of kin, Consulate, Department of Immigration (DIAC). These matters will fall to the Education Provider under their duty of care responsibilities.

## THE FOLLOWING STEPS WILL BE TAKEN:

1. Confirm that the person/people involved in the incident is an international student/s placed by Talkabout Tours PTY LTD with a host family.
2. Record any details of the incident provided by the person who reported the incident.
3. Plan an immediate response.
4. Contact the relevant Education Provider, who hold welfare for the student, await instruction from Duty of Care Holder.
5. Enact Talkabout Tours PTY LTD staff assistance, if required.
6. Complete Critical Incident Initial Report.
7. Continue liaising with stakeholders and advise of further action.
8. Complete Incident Report/Debrief.

## Homestay Host

Keep in contact with the student/s homestay host ensuring that support and assistance is available to them and to keep them informed of the situation as it unfolds.

## Evaluation

Conduct debriefing session for everyone directly involved in the incident. People can express their emotions about the incident and ensure that any needs are met. Policies, procedures and the implementation of procedures and responses should be evaluated and possible changes and improvement for future critical incidents discussed and adopted.

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## Documentation

Documented records should be kept by Talkabout Tours PTY LTD throughout the whole response period. Including:

- Detailed documentation.
- Copies of emails and letters.
- Records of significant interactions.
- Contact details for significant people in the process.

## Follow Up

Monitor the need for counselling and maintain contact with those who may need ongoing support. Assess the need for and organise debriefing sessions for all involved in the incident.

| Task  | Responsible Person | Date Completed |
|---|--------------------|----------------|
| Notification of critical incident                                 |                    |                |
| Confirmation of Homestay student's identity                       |                    |                |
| Emergency Services engaged as needed                              |                    |                |
| Talkabout Homestay contacts Education Provider Representative     |                    |                |
| Update and gather information as necessary                        |                    |                |
| Details of incident are recorded by Talkabout Tours PTY LTD Staff |                    |                |
| Assess the need for ongoing counselling and support               |                    |                |
| Conduct debriefing session  |                    |                |
| Staff evaluation  |                    |                |
| Complete all records  |                    |                |

This form is to be completed by the relevant staff member following the notification of a critical incident. This document may be used by Talkabout Tours PTY LTD to brief the Education Provider representative contact.

# Critical Incident Report

|   |   |                         |  |
|---|---|-------------------------|--|
| Name of person completing this form:                                |   |                         |  |
| Date:   |   | Time incident reported: |  |
| Person reporting incident:  |   |                         |  |
| Homestay Student's identity:  |   |                         |  |
| Education Provider:   |   |                         |  |
| Contact Details:  |   |                         |  |
| Homestay Host:  |   |                         |  |
| Contact Details:  |   |                         |  |
| Nature of Incident:   | <i>Outline clearly what happened, where, who was involved and the current situation</i> |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
| Information from hospital or police (if relevant):                  |   |                         |  |
| Name of Officer:  | Date:   | Time:                   |  |
| Contact Details:  |   | Case Number:            |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
| Hospital Contact:   |   |                         |  |
| Date:   |   | Time:                   |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
| Record any advice or information provided by the Education Provider |   |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |
| Recorded by:  |   | Date:                   |  |
| Follow up action for Homestay Host:                                 |   |                         |  |
|   |   |                         |  |