 VERMONT DEPARTMENT FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES Family Services Policy Manual		<h1>264</h1>
Chapter:	Administrative Issues	
Subject:	Responding to Incidents	Page 1 of 3
Approved:	Cynthia Walcott, Deputy Commissioner	Effective: 12/10/2012
Supersedes:	Social Service Policy No. 264	Dated: 2/25/00

Purpose

This policy guides staff deciding what incidents should be reported to central office and helps to guide the type of response to any such incident.

Policy


Notifying District or Unit Manager

Family Services district office and Woodside employees will immediately notify their district director about any serious incident involving clients, foster parents, regulated facilities, staff or contract agencies. Family Services central office employees will immediately notify their unit manager. Examples of such incidents are listed below:

- a staff member or his/her family member is threatened with harm or actually harmed by a client of the division;
- the death of a child/youth in an open case, in custody or the subject of an intake.
- a serious accident or critical health status of a child/youth in an open case or in custody;
- the abduction, rape or serious abuse of a child/youth in an open case or in custody;
- a contracted service provider is charged with an offense or involved in an incident that suggests the person's judgment and ability to work with children/youth is in question;
- a staff member is accused of behaving illegally or in a grossly unprofessional manner;
- a youth escapes from Woodside;
- a child/youth with an open case commits a serious offense, such as those cited in 33 VSA §5506 (see Appendix A of this policy).

District office and Woodside employees will also promptly notify their district director (or in their absence the next person in the chain of command) and central office employees will immediately notify their unit manager when:

- a staff member is contacted by the media;
- a staff member is contacted by state or federal legislators or officials; or
- a staff member is notified that an attorney is actively exploring lawsuits or other legal action against the Department or its staff.

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Notifying Central Office

The district director will promptly notify central office of these incidents, as follows:

- District directors will notify the Policy and Operations Manager assigned to their district and the Field Operations and Child Protection Director;
- Woodside will notify the System of Care Manager and Director of Residential Licensing and Special Investigations (if applicable).
- Central Office Unit Managers will alert the Field Operations and Child Protection Director and/or the Deputy Commissioner, as appropriate.

In the absence of any of these individuals, staff should inform the next person in the chain of command.

The person notifying central office should be prepared to detail the following:

- the description of the incident and who was involved;
- the current status of involved persons;
- any involvement of police and/or State’s Attorney;
- if incarceration resulted, who, where, and under what basis; and
- requested or required support to be offered to affected staff.

Request for Incident Report and/or Record

At the discretion of the central office manager notified, more information may be requested to understand the situation. Requests for more information will be addressed in a timely manner.

Any staff member harmed or threatened with harm will submit an FS-110 (Staff Safety Incident Form) to the Policy and Operations Manager assigned to the district within three working days.

Critical Incident Review

At times, further review of an incident is required. The division will adhere to the framework provided in the Family Services Division Response to Critical Incidents (Appendix 11) in conducting these reviews.

APPENDIX A:

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§ 5506 offenses:

1. arson causing death as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 501;
2. assault and robbery with a dangerous weapon as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 608(b);
3. assault and robbery causing bodily injury as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 608(c);
4. aggravated assault as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1024;
5. murder as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2301;
6. manslaughter as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2304;
7. kidnapping as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2405;
8. unlawful restraint as defined in 13 V.S.A. §§ 2406 and 2407;
9. maiming as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 2701;
10. sexual assault as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 3252(a)(1) or (a)(2);
11. aggravated sexual assault as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 3253;
12. burglary into an occupied dwelling as defined in 13 V.S.A. § 1203(c).