

Incident Documentation Tip Sheet

This tip sheet can serve as a guide for providers in documenting incidents. Remember, state agencies often rely on this information when reviewing critical incidents. The key to good incident documentation is ensuring that what you describe could be understood by someone who was not present to witness the incident. At the very least, documentation should cover the 5 W's – Who, What, Where, Why and When?

Documentation checklist

1. Incident classification
 - harm to self
 - harm to others
 - other (remember if not an emergency this classification should not be used)

2. Who was involved (everyone that was involved, directly or indirectly)
 - acting-out individuals
 - staff
 - other witnesses (statements from witnesses should include a description of what they observed).

3. Time and location
 - incident start time
 - incident end time
 - where did the incident occur (location(s))

4. Chronology of the incident
 - precipitating events (known facts, triggers, etc)
 - observed coping responses
 - observed escalation
 - non-physical interventions/responses
 - What action did the staff take to de-escalate the situation?
 - physical interventions/responses (who did what be specific including type of physical response and any and every restraint hold used)
 - How long did the restraint last? Who all was involved and how?
 - Were there any injuries?
 - Was medical attention given to the young person or staff?
 - monitoring process
 - release process

5. Debriefing
 - acting-out individual
 - acting-out individual's group
 - staff (Were staff debriefed by the supervisor?)
 - What plan was developed during the debriefing?

6. Follow up

- Develop a safety plan
- notifications
- health check
- documentation assigned
- Lessons learned triggers indentified
- Was any follow up needed?
- Was the family notified?

For assistance related to incident documentation please contact your OCYF or OMHSAS Regional Office or the Bureau of Program Integrity:

Office of Children Youth and Families

Western Region: 412-565-2339

Central Region: 717-772-7702

Northeast Region: 560-963-4376

Southeast Region: 215-560-2249

Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services:

Western Region: 412-565-5226

Central Region: 717-705-8395

Northeast Region: 570-963-4335

Southeast Region: 610-313-5844

DPW, Bureau of Program Integrity: 717-772-4615