



**Hope and Aid Direct**  
**Serious Incident Reporting and**  
**Whistleblowing Policy**

## Change & Approval Record

<b><i>Date of Change:</i></b>	<b><i>Changed By:</i></b>	<b><i>Comments:</i></b>
<i>11/01/24</i>	<i>Charles Storer MBE</i>	<i>Initial Version</i>
<i>8/2/24</i>	<i>Mark Belton</i>	<i>Version 2 – added Whistleblowing &amp; other related documents</i>

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<i>23/3/24</i>	<i>Trustees</i>	<i>Version 2</i>

# Serious Incident Reporting & Whistleblowing Policy

## Objective

This policy outlines the responsibilities on Hope and Aid Direct (HaAD) trustees for reporting serious incidents to the Charity Commission. The purpose is to ensure timely and accurate reporting of significant events that may impact the charity's operations, volunteers, or recipients, and/or the charity's reputation. In other words, when there is Reputational Risk.

## Definition of Serious Incidents

Serious incidents are defined as events that significantly affect the charity's ability to achieve its purposes or undermine public trust and confidence. These incidents may include, but are not limited to, safeguarding concerns, financial irregularities, fraud, damage to HaAD's property, significant operational failures including Information security breaches, or any event that results in harm to volunteers, other recipients, or harm to the charity's work or reputation.

## Responsibilities

### 1. Reporting Officer:

- The Reporting Officer shall be any of the trustees.
- All the trustees collectively are responsible for overseeing the serious incident reporting process.
- If any of the trustees is personally involved in the serious incident, a quorum of remaining trustees must take responsibility for reporting as necessary.

### 2. Volunteers and Staff:

- All volunteers have a responsibility to report any incident that may be considered serious promptly.
- Incidents should be reported to the trustees or an appropriate manager/supervisor as soon as possible.

### 3. Incident Recording:

- The Reporting Officer will ensure that all reported incidents are documented comprehensively.
- Relevant details, including date, time, location, individuals involved, and a brief description of the incident, should be recorded.

# Reporting Process

1. **Immediate Action:**
  - In the event of a serious incident, immediate action should be taken to mitigate harm and ensure the safety and well-being of individuals involved.
  - Emergency services should be contacted if required.
2. **Notification to Reporting Officer:**
  - Volunteers and staff should promptly inform the Reporting Officer or an appropriate manager/supervisor of the incident.
3. **Assessment:**
  - The Reporting Officer will conduct a preliminary assessment to determine the seriousness of the incident and whether it meets the criteria for reporting to the Charity Commission.
4. **Consultation:**
  - If necessary, the Reporting Officer may consult with other relevant parties such as legal advisors, to determine the appropriate course of action.
5. **Notification to Charity Commission:**
  - If the incident is deemed serious and falls within the Charity Commission's reporting requirements, the Reporting Officer will submit a detailed report to the Charity Commission promptly.
6. **Internal Review:**
  - Following the submission to the Charity Commission, HaAD trustees or management board will conduct an internal review to learn from the incident and implement any necessary improvements to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

# Whistleblowing: Speaking out if you suspect wrongdoing

If you suspect serious wrongdoing within the organisation, for example criminal offences, malpractice/misconduct or health and safety breaches, you should raise this with HaAD's Reporting Officers (Trustees). If the charity fails to deal with your concerns appropriately or you continue to suspect serious wrongdoing, you can report this to the Commission – including anonymously if you wish to do so. In reporting your concerns to the Commission, you may be protected under the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998. To find out more, read the Commission's [whistleblowing guidance](#).

## Confidentiality

All reports of serious incidents & whistleblowing will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis, ensuring the privacy and dignity of individuals involved.

## Review and Updates

This policy will be reviewed annually and updated as necessary to reflect changes in legislation or organisational practices.

## Related documents

1. Complaints Handling and Code of Conduct Policy
2. Safeguarding and Vulnerable Beneficiaries Policy
3. Bullying and Harassment Policy
4. Health and Safety Policy