

Serious Incident Reporting Policy

Purpose

This policy sets out how the International Headache Society (IHS) identifies, records, and reports serious incidents to the Charity Commission in accordance with its legal duties.

What is a serious incident?

A serious incident is an adverse event, whether actual or alleged, which results in or risks significant harm to:

- People (e.g. beneficiaries, Trustees, volunteers, staff/contracted parties)
- The charity's intellectual property or reputation
- The charity's operations or finances

Examples include:

- Safeguarding concerns
- Fraud, theft or cybercrime
- Significant financial loss
- Data breaches
- Criminal behaviour involving the charity
- Serious governance issues

Who is responsible?

The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for:

- Ensuring incidents are identified and assessed
- Deciding whether an incident is reportable
- Making reports to the Charity Commission
- Taking appropriate follow-up actions

Day-to-day responsibility may be delegated to senior staff/contracted parties, but Trustees remain accountable.

Reporting process

1. Identify and Assess – Any staff member/contracted party, volunteer or trustee must immediately report concerns to a Trustee.
2. Record – Keep a written record of the incident, the decision made, and any actions taken.

3. Trustee review – Trustees review the facts, assess the risk, and decide whether it meets the threshold for reporting.
4. Report – If required, submit details to the Charity Commission using their online form.
5. Follow-Up – Implement remedial action and review procedures to prevent recurrence.

Timeframe

Serious incidents should be reported to the Charity Commission as soon as possible after the incident is identified.

Confidentiality

All reports and records will be handled confidentially and in line with data protection laws.

Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed annually, and adjusted as required, by the IHS Board of Trustees or following any reported serious incident.