

Link to Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) YouTube Training Video – if completing online  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lyvijpwm6uTU>

The Serious Incident Response Scheme (SIRS) is being rolled out to all Aged Care Services as of the 1 December 2022. The scheme's aim is to help prevent and reduce incidents of abuse and neglect in Aged Care Services.

SIRS builds upon your service's obligations under the Aged Care Standards and introduces the need to report specific incidents that occur "in connection with the provision of service".

The 8 types of incidents reportable under SIRS are:

- unreasonable use of force
- unlawful sexual contact or inappropriate sexual conduct
- psychological or emotional abuse
- unexpected death
- stealing or financial coercion
- neglect
- inappropriate use of restrictive practices, or
- missing consumers.

These incidents have either occurred or are alleged or suspected to have occurred within the provision of meal service to clients, and these incidents have caused harm, or could reasonably have been expected to have caused harm to clients.

As part of your workplace health and safety obligations, your service already has systems in place to manage and prevent incidents, including reporting injuries, hazards or near misses.

We encourage anyone to freely express concerns they may have that could cause harm to themselves, other volunteers, staff, clients or the general public.

If you see or hear anything concerning whilst volunteering at your service, please report all concerns to the service manager, coordinator or committee. Your committee or board should have processes in place to review and respond to any concerns raised.

It is important to realise the current processes will remain, such as non-response, but SIRS may influence reporting obligations that happen within that process. For the example of a non-response, if we have to escalate the matter to the police for a welfare check to be undertaken, it becomes a reportable incident under missing consumer and must be reported.

The introduction of SIRS from 1 December 2022 will require volunteers and staff to be aware of and undertake their obligations to report incidents they witness or are made aware of in the delivery of meal service.

Some examples of what is considered a reportable incident under SIRS are demonstrated in the following scenarios:

A volunteer is told by a client that the volunteer who delivered yesterday took a valuable piece of jewellery from their home.

A client tells you that the person they spoke to on the phone about their menu caused them distress due to the manner in which they were spoken to.

A client passes due to an anaphylactic reaction after being given the wrong meal.

Now for some examples that are not considered reportable under SIRS:

A client tells you that a person providing their cleaning services through another provider is stealing from them. In this scenario, you have an obligation to report the incident to the appropriate person in your service who will escalate it to the other provider. They will then be responsible for reporting the incident to the Commission.

A volunteer injures themselves on a broken step at a client's house. Because the person affected is not the client, this is not a SIRS incident, however the service is responsible for following its risk management procedures to ensure this is prevented from happening again.

We suspect a client is the victim of elder abuse by a family member. This would need to be reported to the appropriate person in your service who will escalate it to the appropriate authorities.

There are obligations for reporting SIRS incidents in a timely manner, so please report all incidents immediately.

As a volunteer or staff member this shouldn't be a major change in your day-to-day processes, however it does need to be noted that you have additional obligations to notify your service of any incidents. If at any stage you are confronted with an incident that you are unsure of how to respond to, or feel unable to speak to your service manager, coordinator or committee about, please contact the Aged Care Commission at <https://www.agedcarequality.gov.au/making-complaint/lodge-complaint> or call on 1800 200 422 or post to PO Box 1237, Runaway Bay, QLD 4216

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**I have read and understand the Serious Incident & Response Scheme (SIRS):**

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Name of Volunteer

.....  
Signature

.....  
Date