

V-Aid (Virtual Aid)

Serious Incidents Reporting Policy



Serious Incidents Reporting Policy approved
by Trustees on 18/12/25

The policy will be subject to an annual review.

Signed: *Christin Lau* (Christin Lau on behalf of Trustees)



Serious Incidents Reporting Policy

1. Policy Statement

V-Aid (Victuals-Aid) is committed to safeguarding children, young people, and adults at risk, and to meeting the standards of good governance set out by the Charity Commission for England and Wales. Many of V-Aid's beneficiaries and participants—including veterans in crisis, individuals in custody or on probation, and people affected by homelessness or humanitarian emergencies—may be considered adults at risk due to their circumstances.

This policy aligns with V-Aid's Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Policy and supports trustees in fulfilling their legal duty to protect people from harm, respond appropriately to concerns, and maintain public trust and confidence through openness and accountability.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all V-Aid activities and settings, including custodial environments, probation workshops, community outreach, and humanitarian response. It covers all trustees, staff, volunteers, sessional workers, and partners acting on behalf of V-Aid.

Everyone working with or for V-Aid shares a responsibility to safeguard children and adults at risk and to report serious incidents or safeguarding concerns promptly, in line with this policy and the Safeguarding Policy.

3. Definition of a Serious Incident

In line with Charity Commission guidance, a serious incident is an adverse event—actual or alleged—which results in, or risks, significant harm to a child or adult at risk, other individuals connected with the charity, or to V-Aid's assets, reputation, or ability to operate safely and lawfully.

Safeguarding incidents, including abuse, neglect, or serious failures to follow safeguarding procedures, are always treated as potential serious incidents and must be escalated immediately.

4. Examples of Serious Incidents

Examples include serious safeguarding incidents involving children or adults at risk, deaths or serious injuries, serious criminal activity, fraud, or incidents that expose

beneficiaries to significant harm.

Where a safeguarding concern is identified, V-Aid's Safeguarding Policy must be followed as the primary procedure, with this policy supporting regulatory reporting and governance oversight.

5. Immediate Response to a Serious Incident

The immediate response must prioritise the safety, dignity, and wellbeing of the child or adult at risk. Any allegation or disclosure of abuse or neglect must be taken seriously, listened to, and acted upon without delay.

Staff and volunteers must follow safeguarding reporting pathways, contact emergency services where necessary, and avoid investigating concerns themselves, in line with safeguarding best practice.

6. Internal Reporting Procedure

All safeguarding concerns and serious incidents must be reported internally as soon as possible to ensure appropriate protective action can be taken. Delays in reporting can increase risk to individuals.

Reports should be made to the CEO, or directly to the Trustees if the concern involves senior management, in accordance with the Safeguarding Policy and Whistleblowing Policy.

7. Reporting to the Charity Commission

Where a safeguarding incident or other serious incident meets the Charity Commission's reporting criteria, trustees must ensure that it is reported promptly.

Reporting safeguarding-related serious incidents demonstrates responsible governance and a commitment to protecting children and adults at risk.

8. Reporting to Other Authorities

Safeguarding incidents may require referral to local authority safeguarding teams, the police, prison or probation services, or other statutory bodies.

V-Aid will cooperate fully with safeguarding partners and statutory agencies to ensure individuals are protected and risks managed appropriately.

9. Confidentiality and Whistleblowing

Safeguarding and serious incident information will be handled sensitively and shared only on a need-to-know basis. Confidentiality will not prevent information sharing where a child or adult at risk may be harmed.

Concerns may be raised through safeguarding channels or under the Whistleblowing Policy, and all individuals will be protected from retaliation when raising concerns in good faith.

10. Learning and Review

Safeguarding practice requires continual learning. Following any serious safeguarding incident, V-Aid will review what happened, identify learning, and strengthen policies, training, and supervision arrangements.

This learning culture supports safer practice and improved outcomes for children and adults at risk.

11. Roles and Responsibilities

Trustees have ultimate responsibility for safeguarding and serious incident oversight. The CEO is responsible for operational management, reporting, and liaison with safeguarding authorities.

All staff and volunteers have a duty to act in the best interests of children and adults at risk and to report concerns immediately.

12. Related Policies

This policy must be read alongside:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Whistleblowing Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Data Protection (GDPR) Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Complaints Policy

13. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or immediately following any safeguarding or serious incident, or in response to changes in safeguarding legislation or Charity Commission guidance.

14. Approval and Version Control

Approved by the Board of Trustees. This policy applies across all V-Aid operations and safeguarding environments.

Appendix A – Serious Incident Report Form

This form must be completed as soon as possible following a serious incident or safeguarding concern. Completed forms should be submitted to the CEO and retained securely in accordance with V-Aid's Data Protection Policy.

| | |
|---|--|
| Date report completed | |
| Name of person reporting | |
| Role (staff / volunteer / partner) | |
| Contact details | |
| Date of incident | |
| Time of incident | |
| Location of incident | |
| Is a child or adult at risk involved? (Yes / No) | |
| Names of individuals involved (if known) | |
| Description of the incident or concern | |
| How was the incident identified or reported? | |
| Immediate actions taken to ensure safety | |
| Safeguarding actions taken (if applicable) | |
| Was a safeguarding referral made? If yes, to whom? | |
| Were emergency services contacted? (Yes / No) | |
| Other external authorities informed | |
| Ongoing risks identified | |
| Actions required to reduce or manage risk | |
| Does this meet the Charity Commission serious incident reporting threshold? (Yes / No / Unsure) | |
| Has the Charity Commission been notified? (Yes / No / Pending) | |
| Name of CEO / Trustee reviewing the incident | |
| Outcome / decisions taken | |
| Date reviewed | |
| Follow-up actions required and timescales | |