

# **Major Unusual Incidents**

## **Understanding the MUI Reporting System**

**A Handbook for Families**

**Butler County Board  
of Developmental Disabilities**

**To Report Incidents, call us at:  
513-867-5992 (evenings or weekends, 513-867-5913)**

**State Developmental Disabilities Incident Hot-line:  
866-313-6733**

## **Introduction**

The Butler County Board of DD wrote this handbook to help families understand what happens when “major unusual incidents” are reported. We want families to know:

- 1) why incident reporting matters;
- 2) what happens when a report of a major unusual incident is made, and
- 3) how families might sometimes be involved in reviews of incidents.

### **I. What is a “major unusual incident” (often shortened to MUI)?**

A major unusual incident is the name for an event in the life of a person with a developmental disability (or every person using supports from the Butler County Board of DD) that is very unhealthy or unsafe and that raises the risk of harm to that person.

### **II. Why are MUIs reported?**

Most important, we want to protect people from harm. We want to identify the reasons why unhealthy, unsafe, or risky events occur in the lives of people with developmental disabilities. If we know the reasons, we may be able to keep such events from happening again to the person or to other people. Reports about MUIs always focus on the person to whom the incident happened, but the reports also describe what has happened in the service-agencies involved so that agencies can know what occurred and try to prevent such incidents from happening again.

### **III. How are MUIs different from UIs (“unusual incidents”)?**

Unusual incidents (UIs) are not as serious as MUIs. An unusual incident is something that happens to a person that doesn't fit with what we would want to do with or for that person. Unusual incidents are negative events that ordinarily don't happen in someone's life. Examples of UIs might include:

- someone getting the wrong dosage of medication but not being harmed by it;
- someone falling unexpectedly;
- someone having to re-locate because of natural disasters, fires, or other similar events.

Agencies that provide services to people with developmental disabilities are supposed to keep records of UIs and let the County Board of DD review those records four times each year. We do this so that we can try to see what kinds of things are happening again and again (or are happening in some other pattern that can be changed).

#### **IV. Who Must Report MUIs? (according to Ohio law)**

- 1) Anyone providing service to people with developmental disabilities **MUST** report MUIs to the local County Board of Developmental Disabilities.
- 2) All County Board of Developmental Disabilities and Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities employees are required to report MUIs.
- 3) Anyone paid to provide Medicaid waiver services must report MUIs, because part of the Medicaid waiver service is to do what's needed to keep people healthy and safe.

#### **V. When are MUIs reported?**

Some very serious things that happen to people—or that someone believes have happened— **ALWAYS** have to be reported, no matter where they happen or who is involved. These things include:

- Abuse
- Neglect
- Exploitation of someone by someone else
- Misappropriation of someone's money
- Someone's death
- Prohibited sexual relations
- Failure to report a major incident

Other kinds of MUIs must be reported when the person to whom they happen is, at the time, served by a licensed or certified provider or by a program operated or supported by a County Board of Developmental Disabilities.

#### **VI. To Whom are MUIs reported?**

Reports should go to the Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities at **513-867-5992** during usual office hours or **513-867-5913** at other times. People may also report MUIs to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities at 866-313-6733 if they can't reach the County Board number.

## **VII. What Must Service Providers Do?**

When an incident happens, providers must act right away to protect people with developmental disabilities whom they support from more harm. Providers also have to:

- Report incidents to the County Board of Developmental Disabilities right away—no later than four (4)--hours when the incident involves abuse, neglect, misappropriation of money, exploitation, or suspicious death.
- Notify other people (e.g., guardians) or agencies (e.g., police, Children's Protective Services) as the law requires.
- If a crime is suspected, providers should notify police right away.

If the MUI involves something other than the events mentioned above, providers must report them within 24 hours after they happened.

Providers should also act to reduce the chances that a similar incident will happen again.

## **VIII. What Must the County Board of Developmental Disabilities Do?**

If the County Board provides services, members of its staff have to report incidents just like other providers have to do (see above).

Another independent part of the County Board of Developmental Disabilities (Office of Incident Review) must:

- Report all MUIs to the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities;
- Investigate all MUIs and file reports with the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities and others who are involved in the incident;
- Follow up to make sure that other people (e.g., guardians) or agencies (e.g., police, Children's Protective Services) are notified, as the law requires.

Investigative agents from the Butler County Board of Developmental Disabilities try to find out what happened—what the incident was. They are not trying to fix

blame on anyone. Looking into MUIs and reporting what they find are the only jobs of investigative agents.

## **IX. What Must the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD) Do?**

DODD must:

- Review ALL MUI reports soon after they arrive at the Department so that they can be sure that people who have been harmed are protected and that investigations are going on.
- Conduct investigations when it could be a conflict-of-interest for the County Board of Developmental Disabilities to do so.
- Set the rules for reporting and reviewing MUIs—the rules that County Boards of Developmental Disabilities must follow.
- Offer guidance to counties about the MUI system.

## **X. Why Are Family Members Called for Information?**

If we're investigating an incident, we'll understand what happened better if we get as much information as we can—information that's important to the situation. It also helps if we can know about the life of the person in the past, so that we can see whether the incident we're looking at is part of a pattern or trend in the person's life. So, sometimes we call families in order to fill out the picture that we're seeing. We expect that full information will make our reports more accurate and effective at correcting situations and preventing other incidents from happening in the future.

## **XI. Definitions**

(This section adapted from definitions written by the Knox County Board of Developmental Disabilities, Mount Vernon, Ohio)

**Physical Abuse** means that a person has been hit, slapped, pushed, or hurt by someone else on purpose, or that attempts to hurt someone have been made.

**Sexual Abuse** means that someone touches a person or does things to him/her for sexual purposes in places the person doesn't want; or it means a person touches another in places the other doesn't want.

**Verbal Abuse** means that a person has been called names, threatened, made to feel bad.

**Exploitation** means that someone uses a person's disability as a way to get money from that person.

**Misappropriation** means that someone steals or takes things from a person with a disability.

**Prohibited Sexual Relations** means that someone who works (as staff) with a person with a disability has sexual contact with that person, even with the person's permission.

**Unscheduled Hospital Admission** means that a person unexpectedly gets sick and is admitted to the hospital.

**Known Injury** means that a person is injured (for example, gets stitches, breaks a bone, or gets a splint), and you know how the injury happened.

**Law Enforcement** means that a person has been arrested, taken to jail, or charged with a crime.

**Neglect** means that someone who was supposed to care for a person doesn't take care of that person

**Missing Individual** means that a person is missing longer than her/his plan allows and responsible staff can't find the person.

**Medical Emergency** means that a person has a sudden, serious medical problem, like choking, needing CPR, needing emergency medicine to save the person's life.

**Attempted Suicide** means that a person tries to kill him/herself (suicide) & goes to the hospital.

**Unapproved Behavior Support** means that someone restrains a person (e.g., holds her/him down) when a restraint is not part of the person's plan or is done differently than written in the plan

**Unknown Injury** means that a person has an injury that needs a doctor or nurse practitioner to treat and no one knows how the person got hurt.

**Death** means the death of a person, even if she/he has been very sick and dying was expected.

**Failure to Report** means that someone knows a person has been hurt, or had things taken from her/him, or had some other bad thing happen and doesn't officially report about it or get someone else to help.

**Rights Code Violation** means that the person has been put at serious risk by a violation of the rights the person has under Ohio law.