**Mearns Kirk Helping Hands**

**Incident Reporting: Guidance for Volunteers**

An Incident Report is used to let others know that something has happened during an activity which requires further follow up action. This might be a review of a policy or procedure, a debrief with volunteers or additional support being provided to a group member. Incident Reports can also be used to record “near misses”- where an accident or incident could have occurred but did not. In this instance it will be used as a prompt for action to be taken to prevent a future incident/ accident.

You may need to complete both an Incident Report and an Accident Report depending on the situation. If you are not sure which form/s to use, please check with the Group Leader or the Project Manager.

Likewise, if you are in doubt as to what to write in an Incident Report, speak with the Group Leader or Project Manager who will guide you through what to record.

Blank Incident Reports are kept in a clearly marked folder in the photocopy room.

***When completing an Incident Report:***

* Try to sit somewhere you have some privacy. If two or more volunteers have been involved in an incident, you should produce one report together.
* Report only what you know to be fact. Do not make any assumptions or give any opinions about why an incident may have occurred. For example, in a situation where a group member has shouted at a volunteer, you would write “A shouted at B”, not “A shouted at B because he was in a bad mood”. You do not necessarily know what B’s mood is, or that it was the bad mood which prompted the shouting.
* Be as brief and accurate as you can. If you can recall exact words etc. you can note them down in speech marks. If you are not certain about something (for example “A hit B with his left hand”) do not write it down, just write “A hit B”).
* Note any witnesses to the incident- it may be useful for the Group Leader or Project Manager to ask others what they saw and will also allow appropriate debriefing.

***When the form is complete:***

* Take it to the Group Leader or Project Manager. The GL/PM will debrief you to make sure you are not going home with any worries or concerns.
* The GL/PM will also debrief any other volunteers who may have been involved in or witness to the incident.
* The GL/PM will ensure any appropriate follow up actions are taken, and that any further reporting (for example to the Board) is completed.
* **Remember that all such completed forms are confidential and should be treated as such.**

*Vicky Irving*

*November 2017*

***(Reviewed by MKHH Policy Review Working Group September 2021)***