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| Notice of a Client Incident Management System (CIMS) investigation – for clients |
| Template |
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Instruction text:

* Italic text is for guidance and should be deleted when no longer required.
* This template is for notifying clients of a CIMS investigation process.
* This letter should be provided with a Collection Notice (see the CIMS guidance and resources webpage <https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/cims-guidance-resources> for templates)
* This letter can be sent for staff-to-client, or for client-to-client CIMS investigations. This includes clients who have been harmed, or those who are alleged to have harmed others. This letter informs them of the allegations being investigated, their rights, and what to expect.
* For staff or carers involved in incidents it is recommended to use the ‘Notice of CIMS investigation template – subject of allegation’, which is available on the CIMS guidance and resources webpage < https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/cims-guidance-resources>

Department of Families, Fairness and Housing staff only:

* Consult the Integrity Unit before sending this notice, to determine if the incident is in scope of the Reportable Conduct Scheme (RCS).
* The Integrity Unit are the RCS delegates for the Department and will send an RCS letter of allegation to any individual subject to allegation, for investigations in scope of the scheme.
* The content of this notice to clients, and the RCS letter of allegation, should align.

End instruction text.

*[Name of client]*

*[Address of client]*

*[Date]*

Dear *[client name]*

**Allegation of abuse or neglect – [Alleged abuse/neglect type]**

CIMS incident number: *[IRD number]*

I am writing to you as I have received information that an incident has occurred, where [*you / and / or others, if applicable*] have been harmed.

A CIMS investigation will be conducted by [*service provider*] in relation to the incident and allegation*(s)* to learn from the incident and try to prevent it happening again.

The details of the allegation*(s)* are as follows:

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| * *[details of each allegation to be outlined]*   *Note: For client-to-client incidents – these should focus on the incident and harm that has been experienced, not who was or is believed to be responsible* |

**What to expect**

To investigate what has happened, it is important that everyone involved in the incident has an opportunity to provide their version of events. This could be by talking about it an interview or writing about it. This means that someone from [*service provider*] will contact you and ask you questions about what had occurred. You can respond to any questions in writing if you prefer.

The investigator will need to collect all the relevant information into a report, review the information and decide what has happened, and what should happen in future to reduce the chances of an incident happening again. This can take some time, and the investigator will work to make their decisions as quickly as they can.

While the investigation is happening, it is important that you know who is available to support you, and anyone that you might need the investigator to speak to on your behalf. You can let the investigator know if you would like a support person with you at any time. [*Name of nominated support person from service provider*]is available as someone you can call to ask for support or any questions.

**Confidentiality and privacy**

Your privacy is important, and there are laws and policies that are in place to protect your privacy.

Please let us know if you believe there has been a breach of confidentiality or privacy.

You may like to talk to someone you trust about what is happening. We recommend that while you access any support as you need, that you keep the matter confidential, and limit the sharing of information to those directly involved and / or your support person.

We may need to provide information to other organisations or oversight bodies, such as the Social Services Regulator, Victoria Police, or the Commission for Children and Young People.

For further information about CIMS policy, procedures and guidance, including privacy and information sharing, please see https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/cims.

**Review process**

If you don’t agree with a decision, you may request a review of an investigation outcome in writing within 10 business days of being told the outcome. [*Name of nominated support person*] can help you with this if you need.

Further information about a decision review is available in the CIMS policy and guidance document, which you can find at https://providers.dffh.vic.gov.au/cims.

**How to make a complaint**

We are committed to listening to you and responding to your concerns.

If you have a complaint about how an investigator or other staff member from [*service provider*] is doing things, you can ask to speak to their supervisor. You can ask someone you trust to help you with this.

If you still have concerns, you can make a complaint by following the steps on [*service provider’s complaints process and webpage*]. If the complaint is about a Department of Families, Fairness and Housing staff member, see the Department of Families Fairness and Housing Victoria - making a complaint webpage <https://www.dffh.vic.gov.au/making-complaint> for steps to follow.

**Next steps**

[*Name of investigator / nominated contact from service provider / I*] will be your primary contact person during this investigation.

[*Their/my*] contact details are:

[*Organisation address*]

[*Phone*]

[*Email*]

*\*If an investigator external to the service provider will be conducting the investigation, also include who this is and who the individual can expect to hear from*.

If you have any further questions or concerns, please contact [*nominated contact person*].

Yours sincerely,

[*Investigation manager / Service provider contact*],

[*Job title*]

[*Organisation address*]

[*Phone*]

[*Email address*]