

Dealing with accidents & emergencies

Actions taken will depend on the nature of the incident, location, state of the group generally and the leader/assistants skills. This Emergency Procedure is to be followed as a generalised order of priorities and a source of guidance, and may not apply to all emergencies. Nor may all steps and guidance be necessary.

The group leader has duty of care for all the young people and adults in the group, not just the 'casualty'.

Incident process

1. Stop and assess the situation – make sure that yourself and the rest of the group are safe, both from the hazard that caused the incident and other hazards. Consider getting group to layer up. And maybe into a group Shelter.
2. Protect the casualty from the risk of further injury by either removing the source of danger or by moving the casualty. Never move an injured person if spinal injury is suspected unless absolutely necessary.
3. Establish the extent of the injuries and administer First Aid within your competence.
4. Call the event managers first to notify them and request assistance. If they have no network reception leave a message but also send a text as voicemail messages can be garbled by weak signal and wind noise.
5. If necessary, call the emergency services.
6. If you have no network reception, decide where is the best place to send two group members to get a call out. You stay with the casualty as you have the most first aid training and the casualty or weather may deteriorate.
7. You are not to contact the casualty's emergency contact – that is the role of the Event coordinator.
8. Ensure that the rest of the group are adequately supervised throughout. Control access to phones until emergency contacts have been notified. Make arrangements for the group to either continue with activities or return to base.
9. Record all relevant information while fresh in your memory, include names and addresses of any witnesses. Complete the Accident/Incident Form. Keep any equipment involved in its original condition. Take photographs if appropriate.
10. Do not make any statements to press, refer them to Adventurous Horizon's Managing Director, Kevin Beattie 07980 306869. An fault or liability should not be discussed, admitted or attributed to other parties.
11. Submit the completed Accident/Incident Form to the event manager. The event manager will carry out a further verbal investigation and complete an investigation form.

A serious accident or incident is defined as:

- an accident leading to a fatality, serious or multiple fractures, amputation or other serious injury.
- An incident or near-miss in which a group member might be at serious risk or have a serious illness.
- any situation in which the press or media are or might be involved.

Calling emergency services in case of serious injury or illness:

Calling the Emergency Services is a serious course of action to take. Although we don't discourage this during an emergency, it is important to us that the participants and staff we work with understand under which circumstances this action would be appropriate. Where possible this decision should be made by the event manager. Under most circumstances, where there is an emergency but the emergency services are not required, the event manager will take appropriate action.

If a staff member's initial assessment is that the casualty will need to go to hospital for secondary aid, then they can contact the emergency services directly before contacting the Event manager. It is their mobile phone number and location that the Emergency Services will want for reference and continued contact.

For that reason, all staff must have a charged mobile phone with them at all times.

If the staff member's phone fails, then use any other member of the group with a phone.

In some instances the staff member may need to stay with a casualty and group to administer first aid and monitor the group. In this instance at least 2 members of the group must be sent to get signal and get message out. Teams have an emergency pack, with laminated cards and pen to take notes. Ensure they are sent with correct location and details. And inform them not to phone anyone else than the emergency services and the event coordinator.

Staff should phone event manager as soon as possible afterwards.

Look after the group

Depending upon the nature of the accident/incident, it is possible that the leaders and young people will be in a state of shock. The remainder of the group should be moved to some secure accommodation and placed under the care of a member of staff able to protect them from the attention of the press/media. If necessary, request the police to assist or ask for direct support from your base. Calm and comfort the young people and arrange for their evacuation or to be handed over and continue the event.

Communication with others on event

Do not allow group members to text or telephone home or friends until contact has been made with the school staff **and the affected parents**. We must prevent affected parents from hearing about incidents from someone else's child or parent first.

Do not allow anyone to see any group member without an independent witness being present.

Communication with parents and school

Parents of any injured young person should be notified as a priority. This can be done by the event manager, or school contact. If necessary, assistance should be given to transport parents to their injured child if they are hospitalised. The event manager will have access to lists of all group members dates of birth, home addresses, medical details and emergency contacts.

Preparing DofE teams for dealing with emergency situations

Teams are provided with an emergency pack on their expeditions. This must be carried at all times on all expeditions. Even if they are carrying tents. Or on a day walk. It contains:

- Group shelter
- 1 foil sleeping bag
- 1 whistle
- Laminated crib cards with emergency procedure
- Laminated blank table for making notes (location, casualty, issue)
- Pen
- Leader and event manager numbers.
- Team emergency phone.
- GPS tracker.

Participants should all have individual first aid kits and medicines.

Ensure the phone is kept switched on and charged. Participants can have emergencies in the middle of the night as well and need to phone for assistance to come to their tent.

On the Planning day, participants are shown how to use first aid kit, group shelter and role play an emergency.

On the first day of every expedition, training **and qualifier**, every team will receive instruction on how to use the laminated notes in the Emergency pack, and perform an emergency scenario. As part of their training they will also be instructed in how to make an emergency call and what to say to the Team Leader or emergency services.

During their practice expedition, each team will make a 'dummy' emergency call to the Team Leader. And be briefed on when to contact emergency services first.

They can switch their phones off at the campsite but they need to be switched on whilst on expedition at all times. The Team Leader's phone number is stored in the phone and it is also on the Emergency Card.