



GUIDELINES ON REPORTING THEFTS, ASSAULTS ETC. TO THE POLICE

1. Introduction

Legal advice has been received that as a general rule all incidents at Mind in Croydon projects involving theft of property or criminal assault on a client, volunteer or member of staff must be reported to the police. If a staff member feels there are exceptional circumstances which make it inadvisable to inform the police of an incident they should discuss these with their line manager immediately. This non-reporting must be approved by the Chief Executive in writing.

2. Reasons for reporting

It is understandable that staff members' first reaction to such an incident may be to protect the people involved and to try to deal with the problem themselves. This is not acceptable, however, for the following reasons:

- a) If such incidents are not reported Mind's public liability and property insurance could be invalidated. Even if there is no intention to make a claim the insurance company has a right to all information with a bearing on their level of risk and they require the reporting of all incidents, whether or not a claim is made. The decision whether to claim is for the Hon. Treasurer and Chief Executive to make.
- b) When incidents are not reported the perpetrators may get the message that there will be no bad consequences whatever they do and commit further crimes.
- c) "Normalisation" - helping people to achieve as normal a life as possible - is a key part of Mind's philosophy and protecting people from the consequences of their actions does not fit well with this philosophy.
- d) Leaving staff (or volunteers) to make the decision whether or not to contact the police could result in the rights and interests of other clients, volunteers or members of the public being infringe

3. What to do when the police are called

If the police are called into a project staff will need to ensure that the situation is explained to clients and that they are given support and reassurance. The police should not interview people who are vulnerable through mental illness without an "appropriate adult" being present. This is likely to apply to all users of Fairfield House, Enterprise House and to many users of Mind's other projects.

