

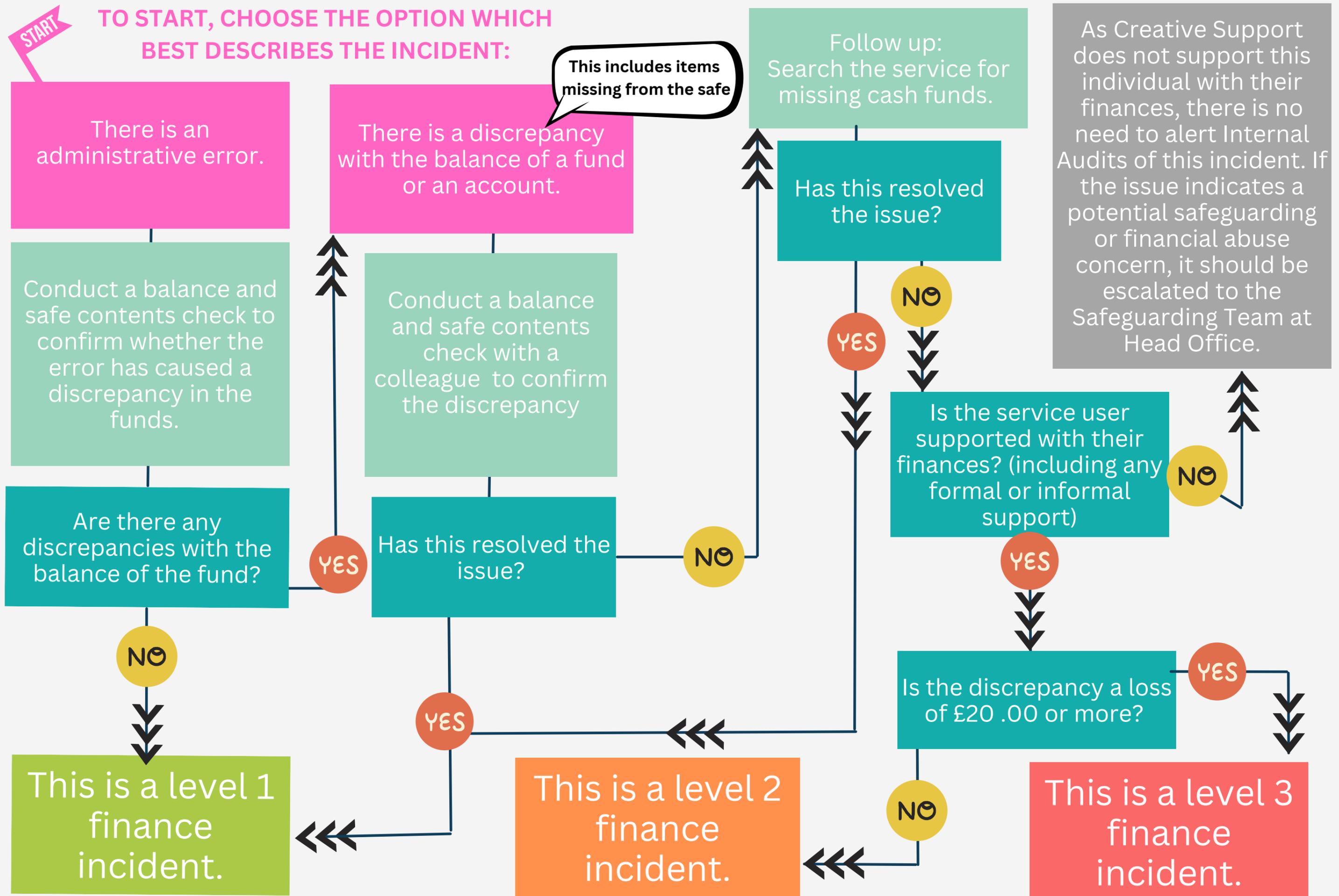


Internal Audit Guide:

Service User Finance Incidents

1. Identifying and categorising a finance incident
2. Following up finance a finance incident
3. Managing incidents alongside third parties
4. Closing a finance incident

1. Identifying and categorising a finance incident- service user finances



2. Following up a finance incident- service user finances

Level 1 finance incidents:

Level 1 finance incidents are errors or discrepancies in a fund that have been identified but have not resulted in any financial loss.

This includes incidents where transactions have been poorly recorded, information may have been shared inappropriately, or money has been misplaced and promptly found.

Required follow-up:

- There is no need to submit an incident report.
- Service managers should indicate the incident in the monthly manager check.
- If bank details such as PINs have been shared, these should be promptly changed.

Level 2 finance incidents:

Level 2 finance incidents occur when a financial loss of £19.99 or less is incurred by a service user who has formal or informal support with their finances.

This includes incidents where money, or items in the safe, are known or suspected to have been misappropriated, lost, or stolen from a service user's fund.

Required follow-up:

- You must submit a detailed incident report by the end of the working week which includes all of the facts of the incident, and any relevant information about the financial arrangements in place.
- An internal investigation must be conducted by a senior member of staff at the service. This should include:
 1. An audit of the relevant books, statements, and other finance documents to identify any further discrepancies.
 2. A minuted team meeting to discuss the incident and provide an opportunity for staff to come forward with any relevant information.
 3. Minuted fact-finding meetings with the staff members who were on shift during the incident. If the day or time of the incident cannot be confirmed then all staff must be interviewed.
- The findings of this investigation should be reported to the Internal Audit Team.
- Any evidence of dishonest staff practice must be escalated to Human Resources.

Level 3 finance incidents:

Level 3 finance incidents are similar to level 2 finance incidents, except that the total value of loss is £20.00 or higher.

Level 3 finance incidents are reported to the board of trustees by the Internal Audit Lead, and added to the corporate fraud and loss register.

Required follow-up:

You must complete all of the follow up which is required for a level 2 finance incident.

In addition to this, you should report the incident to the police, and provide the Internal Audit Team with your crime reference number.

As these incidents are reported on the corporate fraud and loss register, the service manager will be required to work collaboratively with the Internal Audit Team, who may conduct an additional investigation into the concerns.

3. Managing incidents alongside external parties: Service User finances

When finance incidents occur, there may be one or more external parties who are also involved in managing or investigating the incident. This might include the service user's financial appointee, the local safeguarding team, or CQC.

The involvement of an external party does not negate Creative Support's responsibility to conduct an internal investigation by following the procedures described on the previous page. Senior support staff and above should work collaboratively with external parties where appropriate. If there is any doubt about the level of cooperation required, you should consult with your service director or the internal audit team.

4. Closing a finance incident: Service user finances

In order to close a level 2 or 3 finance incident, the following steps must have been completed:

- A full internal investigation has been conducted, including an audit of the relevant books, a minuted team meeting, and minuted fact finding meetings.
- The investigation findings have been recorded in a report which has been submitted to the Internal Audit Team.
- Evidence of dishonest staff practice has been escalated to Human Resources, and they have confirmed the conclusion of their follow up.
- EITHER the lost money or property has been found OR the funds have been repaid by the perpetrator OR the funds have been reimbursed by Creative Support.
- Please note that, where staff are responsible for a financial loss incurred by a service user, all effort should be made to recuperate the funds from the perpetrator. This payment may be made directly to the service user, or through salary deductions.
- The Internal Audit Team have been updated with the outcome and have confirmed that the case incident has been closed.

Still not sure? Send us an email at internal.audit@creativesupport.co.uk and one of the auditors will be in touch to provide support.