

 Official Policy Manual	Date issued 08/25/23	Supersedes 04/01/07	Page 1 of 1	Section # A-3032
	Section: Administration			
	Directive: Fire Investigations			
	Policy Owner: Director, Administrative Support Services Group			

A. Fire Investigations:

To provide a safe environment it is important to investigate any fires that occur within OMH facilities and operated programs immediately following the incident. The purpose of these investigations is multifold in nature, but most importantly, to prevent the same situation from occurring in the future. The investigation should also seek to determine if equipment was involved in the ignition and such equipment should be evaluated at other facilities. The investigation should also seek to determine whether the fire was the result of a criminal act.

A fire investigation should determine the cause and origin of the fire. The origin is the place within the building or fire area where the fire started. The cause is what caused the ignition to occur and can be either are accidental or incendiary in nature.

The Safety and Security Officer in charge of the Safety Department during a fire situation has the overall responsibility to ensure the following are completed:

- Secure scene as necessary to protect any evidence contained within the fire scene.
- Visually assess the fire scene.
- Conduct witness and occupant interviews.
- Notify the Chief Safety Officer or her/his designee.

If fire appears to be incendiary in cause or the cause is unknown or cannot be determined by Safety:

- Notify appropriate agency if not already at the scene, e.g., Fire Department, Police Department.
- Assist investigating agency as requested.
- Request copy of investigating agencies reports on the fire.
- Notify Central Office, Administrative Support Services Group (ASSG) of the fire and investigation results.

If the cause of the fire is determined not to be incendiary:

- Photograph scene completely.
- Complete a sketch of the fire scene.
- Take written statement(s) from witness(es) and occupant(s) as necessary.
- Complete written reports.
- Notify Central Office/ASSG.
- Forward copies of reports to ASSG.
- File and distribute copies of reports according to Facility Policies.
- Remove from service and secure any equipment involved in ignition.
- Report findings of investigation and any recommendations to the Environment of Care Committee.