

Sample Incident Handling Checklist

Excerpt from *Computer Security Incident Response Handling Guide*, Recommendations of the National Institute of Standards and Technology, Special Publication 800-61 Revision 2

3.5 Incident Handling Checklist

The checklist in Table 3-6 provides the major steps to be performed in the handling of an incident. Note that the actual steps performed may vary based on the type of incident and the nature of individual incidents. For example, if the handler knows exactly what has happened based on analysis of indicators (Step 1.1), there may be no need to perform Steps 1.2 or 1.3 to further research the activity. The checklist provides guidelines to handlers on the major steps that should be performed; it does not dictate the exact sequence of steps that should always be followed.

Table 3-5. Incident Handling Checklist

	Action	Completed
Detection and Analysis		
1.	Determine whether an incident has occurred	
1.1	Analyze the precursors and indicators	
1.2	Look for correlating information	
1.3	Perform research (e.g., search engines, knowledge base)	
1.4	As soon as the handler believes an incident has occurred, begin documenting the investigation and gathering evidence	
2.	Prioritize handling the incident based on the relevant factors (functional impact, information impact, recoverability effort, etc.)	
3.	Report the incident to the appropriate internal personnel and external organizations	
Containment, Eradication, and Recovery		
4.	Acquire, preserve, secure, and document evidence	
5.	Contain the incident	
6.	Eradicate the incident	
6.1	Identify and mitigate all vulnerabilities that were exploited	
6.2	Remove malware, inappropriate materials, and other components	
6.3	If more affected hosts are discovered (e.g., new malware infections), repeat the Detection and Analysis steps (1.1, 1.2) to identify all other affected hosts, then contain (5) and eradicate (6) the incident for them	
7.	Recover from the incident	
7.1	Return affected systems to an operationally ready state	
7.2	Confirm that the affected systems are functioning normally	
7.3	If necessary, implement additional monitoring to look for future related activity	
Post-Incident Activity		
8.	Create a follow-up report	
9.	Hold a lessons learned meeting (mandatory for major incidents, optional otherwise)	