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Accident Records

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Accidents and Injuries in the Workplace

Workplace health and safety accidents can have a negative impact on a business in many ways. They can result in loss of productivity, reduced staff morale, increased [absenteeism](#), and even temporary or permanent closure.

According to research from [Safe Work Australia](#), 120,355 people lodged a serious claim in 2019-20.

At EmploySure, we believe that it is important that staff and employers work together to take reasonable steps to improve workplace health and safety, [reduce work-related injuries](#), and to maintain a consistent record of work-related injury as they occur in the form of incident reports as part of the workplace accident records.

Safe Work Australia has drafted a *Model Workplace Health and Safety Act*, which most States and Territories adopted albeit with modifications. The model legislation came into force in WA in 2022, while Victoria still has Workplace Health and Safety laws.

It is important to check with your Workplace Health and Safety authority for State or Territory specific provisions.



Don't Wait for Accidents to Happen. Assess the Risk Now

Learn how to identify hazards and assess risks at your workplace.

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Reporting an Accident at Work

You may not be able to prevent accidents from happening at work but, if they do happen, you must handle the manner that satisfies your obligations. . If it is a serious incident, as well as calling the emergency services, you notify the health and safety authority in your State or Territory **immediately**, in accordance with the relevant Workplace Health and Safety Legislation. Please note the information below is mainly based on the model Work Health and Safety legislation, and that in NSW. As such, you should consider seeking professional advice that specific to your circumstances.

Generally, you are obligated to complete an incident report form for every incident however minor, and keep a record of every workplace accident (called a 'Register of Injuries' in NSW). At a minimum, this must be available at all times and each report should contain the following information:

- Name of injured worker/s
- Worker's occupation or job title at the time of the injury
- Worker's age at the time of the injury
- Time and date of injury
- The nature of the industry in which the injury was sustained
- Exact location of the worker at the time of injury
- Exact description of how the injury was sustained (cause)
- If any treatment was provided to the injured, and if so, what kind of treatment
- Nature of injury and the body part/s affected
- Names of people who witnessed the incident take place
- Date of entry in the register
- Name of person making the entry

Anyone injured at work, including direct worker, agency employee, contractor, customer or visitor, must complete an incident report or be noted on the register of injuries. Always store personal data carefully in line with privacy, health and safety legislation.

You must also review the incident to find out whether there are steps you could take to stop it from happening. A serious injury, or risk to plant and equipment, will need a more in-depth health and safety investigation.

What Constitutes a Work Health and Safety Incident or Accident?

A notifiable workplace incident is any event that exposes a worker or any other person to a serious risk to that person's health or safety, and it requires the relevant health and safety regulator to be notified. It may also include 'near miss' where no actual injury occurs. Under the various Work Health and Safety (WHS) Acts (2011/2012), other than Victoria, a notifiable incident means:

- The death of a person
- A serious injury or illness of a person or
- A dangerous incident,

arising out of a conduct of a business or undertaking at a workplace.

For example, according to the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (NSW) a serious injury or illness of a person that requires the Workplace Health and Safety Authority, *SafeWork NSW*, to be notified immediately is an illness or injury that requires:

- Immediate medical treatment in a hospital
- Immediate treatment for:
 - The amputation of a persons' body part
 - Serious head injury
 - Serious eye injury
 - Major burn
 - Separation of skin from underlying tissue
 - Spinal injury
 - Loss of certain bodily functions
 - Serious lacerations
 - Any infections transmitted to a person as a result of them carrying out work-related activities
 - Medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance

In Victoria under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* a notifiable incident is an incident that results in

- The death of a person
- A person requiring medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance
- A person requiring immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital or
- A person requiring immediate medical treatment for specified injuries (detailed in the excel spreadsheet).

A notifiable incident in Victoria is also an incident that exposes a person to specific risks, but unlike all other jurisdictions, the requirements to notify diseases is very limited. Please call us for free initial advice on work health and safety legislation in your State or Territory.

Get Workplace Advice Now

Call Our Team of Advisers To Get Help With Any Workplace Related Questions.

Call 1300 651 415

Investigating a Workplace Incident

Not all workplace incidents are serious enough to warrant an investigation. Once an incident report has been submitted to the relevant work health and safety regulator, they will assess the following factors to determine if they should conduct an incident investigation:

- Severity, or potential severity of the incident
- Number of people involved in the incident
- Level of risk
- Complexity of the situation and amount of factors involved

If the incident is serious enough, once you have notified the Workplace Health and Safety Authority you must ensure the incident site is not disturbed, unless you need to remove the injured person or make the site safe.

This is because the local supervisor or manager – in cooperation with an expert from the relevant work health and safety regulator – must carry out a formal incident investigation procedure to:

- Determine all contributing factors to the incident – whether it was an accident, near-miss, or a hazard.
- Record all relevant details about the incident to support an insurance claim, workers' compensation claim, common law proceeding.
- Comply with the applicable legislative requirements
- Implement changes to eliminate or reduce the risk of the same incident happening again.

You should notify your workers compensation insurer once you have notified the emergency services (if applicable), the workplace health and safety authority, and the site has been secured.

During the investigation you must, at a minimum, collect relevant information from anyone who was involved in the incident. While you may receive some of this information in the incident report form, you will need to conduct face-to-face interviews so you can piece together the sequence of events that led to the incident.

After you collect this information, you must uncover the cause of the incident and come up with reasonable recommendations to address the contributing factors of the incident to eliminate or reduce the risk of further incidents. If the injured worker has filed a workers compensation claim, you will also be required to support the injured worker's recovery and return to work.

Identifying Workplace Hazards

In order to figure out the cause of an incident, and to make appropriate changes to eliminate or reduce the chance of the same incident happening again, you need to perform a [risk assessment](#) at the incident site.

While the nature of a workplace risk can vary from place-to-place, the most common types of hazards at work include:

- **Physical hazards:** Slips, trips and falls, vibration and noise.
- **Ergonomic hazards:** Certain body movements that result in harm to the musculoskeletal system. This may include repetitive movement, [manual handling](#) and poor posture.
- **Biological hazards:** Exposure to dangerous and infectious organic substances like bacteria and viruses.
- **Chemical hazards:** Exposure to hazardous substances found in the workplace. Common types of hazardous chemicals include neurotoxins, immune agents, asthmagens, and carcinogens.

By assessing the risk site, and using the information you collected from all parties involved, you will be able to identify the hazards and evaluate the risks, and then implement the right control measures to minimise the risk of serious injury and illness.

[EmploySure](#) can help you to better understand your workplace health and safety obligations. For peace of mind contact [1300 651 415](tel:1300651415) for free initial advice.

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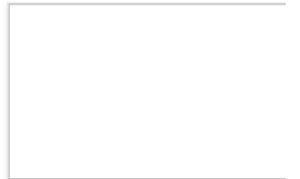
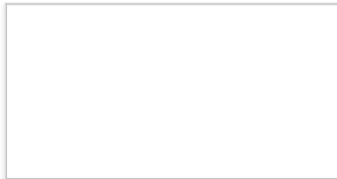
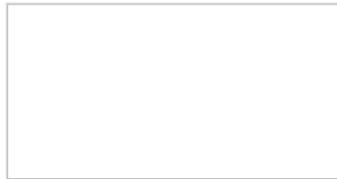
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