

## Reporting of Incident & Worker Concern

*You may wish to show the form(s) currently used in your facility/area to report an incident or a concern. Mention where the forms are located. Also consider discussing the process of reporting as well as the follow-up process.*

### Incident

An incident is an unwanted, unplanned event that results in or could have resulted in a loss (production, property or person).

### Near Miss

A near miss is an incident that does not result in an injury.

### Dangerous Occurrence

A dangerous occurrence is any incident which does not result in, but could have:

- a) caused or may cause the death of a worker; or,
- b) will require a worker to be admitted to a hospital as an in-patient for 72 hours or more.

The employer must give notice to the Ministry of Labour Relations & Workplace Safety as soon as is reasonably possible of any dangerous occurrence that takes place, whether or not a worker sustains injury.

While workplace inspections are proactive efforts to prevent incidents, investigations are reactive efforts to prevent the same or similar incident from happening again. The goal is to identify the precise sequence of events that led up to an incident, determine the root cause and put controls in place.

### Incident Reporting and Investigation Process

The purpose of the incident reporting and investigation process is to:

- define the duties, roles and responsibilities of the employer, supervisors, workers and OHC so that an effective and immediate investigation, documentation and reporting process is completed.
- identify:
  - all contributing factors/root cause of the incident (including near miss); and,
  - all hazards and necessary recommendations to prevent the incident from reoccurring.
- provide a mechanism to track and identify trends that cause or may lead to injuries and make quality improvements to avoid a similar incident.
- ensure that workers will be informed of outcomes of investigation.

**Purpose of an Investigation**  
**To determine the root cause of an incident,**  
**put controls in place to ensure that it never happens again.**

**The purpose is *not to assign blame***  
**but to always find the root cause for the incident.**

No one comes to work intending to be injured. The decisions and actions that we, the workers, take make sense to us at the time given our goals, knowledge and focus of attention. Every day we adapt to changes in the workplace and modify our actions to keep things operational.

When an incident happens it's tempting to see human error as the cause – the worker made a bad decision, wasn't paying attention, didn't follow the rules, "They shouldn't have", "They could have", "They didn't", "They failed to". **This does not lead to "WHY"**.

Human error is a symptom of a deeper system problem and is just a starting point in an investigation which requires further exploration. The key is to find out how the worker's actions were influenced by different elements in the workplace. Once it is clear what shaped and guided a worker's decisions and actions, steps can be taken to prevent similar incidents from happening.

**For the steps below, you might want to include additional information specific to your facility/area such as the emergency response process, how this impacts the workers, how they'd be involved.**

### **Steps in an Investigation**

- Report and document the workplace incident on the correct form.
- Activate emergency response if required.
- Investigate the scene.
- Interview witnesses: interview all staff and clients directly involved in the incident as soon as possible after the incident.
- Investigate and inspect any physical evidence – physical environment, equipment task/procedure (photographs may be necessary).
- Analyze evidence.
- Documentation review:
  - job safety analysis (JSA)
  - policies and procedures
  - standards of practice
  - leading practices/relevant evidence based guidelines.
- Prepare recommendations.

### **Incident Prevention**

Incidents can be reduced through:

- increased awareness of safety;
- empowerment of workers to participate in their own safety;
- adequate policies and safe work practices in place;
- sufficient orientation, training and supervision of workers;
- adequate hazard identification and appropriate controls; and,
- ensure that all workers comply with workplace requirements.

### **Safety Talk Discussion**

**Be Accountable: Choose safety - work safe - and go home injury free!**