Report All Injuries Meeting Kit



IMPORTANCE OF ALL INJURIES

Work-related incidents are tracked and investigated so that preventative measures can be implemented. The information contained in the reports is essential to maintain successful safety programs. The facts are necessary to develop procedures that can control both the conditions and acts that contribute to incidents.

We are all trained to report any near misses, injuries, or incidents to a supervisor or safety representative. Often times however many of these incidents, especially first aid type injuries, are not reported. Injuries are not reported because of many different reasons, but it is important to understand why all of them need to be.

Reasons Why Incidents Go Unreported

There are many reasons why incidents such as property damage, near misses, spills, and injuries go unreported. A major reason is often the individual’s pride. Most people do not want to admit their mistakes to others, especially at work. They may also fear the outcome from sharing what occurred with a supervisor. This fear may come from being afraid of being disciplined, what others think, or the repercussions from the incident. Another reason a person may not want to report an incident is because of the paperwork or energy involved in doing so. There are many other reasons why an individual may not want to share what happened to them, but this should never be the case.

Why it is Important to Report Injuries

There are many reasons why you should report any type of injury, no matter the severity. The most important reason is to make sure the situation or hazard is made safe for not only yourself, but the others at the worksite. Another reason is to further share your experience or the lessons learned from the incident with others to prevent it from occurring in the future.

Minor Injuries

With injuries, even just minor ones, it is important to get them looked at by a supervisor or safety representative. While many injuries, such as a small cut or an insect sting, may not seem like a big deal they can turn into one.

Example

You are bit by some type of insect on a Friday afternoon at work, but decide not to

tell anyone for various reasons. You leave work and are home for a few hours when you notice that the bite area is beginning to swell up. Along with the swelling, you notice that you have hives and are having trouble breathing. You realize it is a serious allergic reaction and need medical attention. You tell the doctor you were bit or stung at work and the treatment he gives you ends up being considered “medical attention”. Because it happened at work and you needed medical attention beyond first aid it is now an OSHA recordable injury.

In this situation there are a few problems since the injury was not reported to someone at work immediately.

1. There is no record or witness to it happening at work which could raise concern by the employer whether or not the injury occurred at work. This may end up in a drawn out dispute since there has been many people in the past who have faked or had injuries off the job, but stated it occurred at work in an attempt for it to be paid through worker’s compensation.
2. If the injury was reported immediately someone may have been able to recognize that it may develop into an allergic reaction. There could have been options for first aid instead of medical treatment to treat the issue before it worsened which would have saved you a trip to the hospital and the company an OSHA recordable.

STEPS IN 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 them in a manner that satisfies your obligations.

Generally, you should to complete an incident report form for every incident however minor, and keep a record of every workplace accident. 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.

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

FINAL WORD

All injuries need to be reported, no matter how small. Not only does it protect you, but it also protects the company as a whole by possibly preventing a first aid injury developing into an OSHA recordable. You never know when something that seems minor in nature will develop into something more serious. There are also always lessons that can be learned, even from just minor injuries, to prevent others from occurring in the future.