# Investigation of Incidents

## Overview

*Incidents* include unplanned, unwanted events (i.e., accidents) that cause harm to people or damage to property or the surrounding environment. Incidents also include *near misses* in which no injury or damage occurred but might have if conditions had been different.

*Lost-time injury (LTI)* refers to any injury that prevents a worker from coming to work beyond the date of the injury.

*Medical aid* refers to any injury where medical treatment is given by a physician or other registered medical practitioner. Medical treatment usually involves treatment above and beyond that provided at the workplace by a first aid attendant.

*First aid injury* refers to injuries that can be treated at the workplace without the need for medical treatment.

*Occupational illness* is defined as a condition resulting from a worker’s exposure to chemical, biological or physical agents in the workplace to the extent that the health of the worker is impacted.

*Serious injury* is any injury that can reasonably be expected at the time of the incident to endanger life or cause permanent injury. Serious injuries include traumatic injuries that are life threatening or that result in a loss of consciousness, as well as incidents such as chemical exposures, heat stress and cold stress that are likely to result in a life-threatening condition or cause permanent injury or significant physical impairment.

## Policy Statement

**(Company Name)** requires all employees to immediately report all incidents to their supervisor. Supervisors will then report the incident promptly to management to ensure timely reporting and submission to WorkSafeBC. Each incident that results in worker injury or has a potential for worker injury will be analyzed to determine root causes (i.e., underlying causes that, if removed, would have prevented the incident**)** and contributing factors, and the analysis will be used to recommend corrective actions to eliminate the risk of future incidents.

## Role of Supervisor

The supervisor and the site health and safety coordinator (if applicable) must investigate all incidents that involve workers. This includes the following:

* Secure the incident scene to prevent further injury.
* Provide any necessary medical assistance to the injured.
* Gather evidence, including taking statements from witnesses.
* Analyze the evidence.
* Complete an Incident Investigation Report.
* Recommend corrective actions to prevent recurrence.

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that all incident investigation reports are transmitted to the appropriate department managers, Health and Safety Department or Human Resources, as described below.

### Participation in the employer’s investigation

The *Workers Compensation Act* specifies that employer incident investigations must be carried out with the participation of employer and worker representatives. Through Bill 35, Section 174, the Act has been amended to specify that the participation of an employer (or representative of the employer) and worker representative may include, but is not limited to, the following:

* Viewing the incident scene with the persons carrying out the investigation
* Offering advice on the investigation’s scope and methods

### Reporting workplace fires or explosions

Section 172(1) of the Act has been amended to require that employers immediately report to WorkSafeBC all workplace fires or explosions that had the potential to cause serious worker injury. Employers must also continue to meet the existing requirement to investigate in accordance with sections 175–176 of the Act and related policies.

Sections 175(2) and 176 have been amended to require employers to provide preliminary and full incident investigation reports to the employer’s joint occupational health and safety committee or worker health and safety representative, as applicable. If there is no committee or worker rep, employers must post these reports in the workplace.

## Procedure

All incidents must be investigated. A preliminary investigation must occur immediately after the incident occurs and an immediate corrective action plan must be put in place to prevent further injuries. Preliminary investigations must be completed within 48 hours of the incident occurring and shared with the joint health and safety committee. A detailed investigation must be completed and submitted to the committee and WorkSafeBC within 30 days of the incident.

An employer must ensure that an incident investigation report required by [Division 10 of Part 3 of the *Workers Compensation Act*](http://www.worksafebc.com/en/law-policy/occupational-health-safety/searchable-ohs-regulation/workers-compensation-act/workers-compensation-act#6682B6E61D5E4514843AF88F860DE704) contains the following:

* Place, date and time of the incident
* Names and job titles of persons injured in the incident
* Names of witnesses
* A brief description of the incident
* A statement of the sequence of events that preceded the incident
* Identification of any unsafe conditions, acts or procedures that contributed to the incident
* Recommended corrective actions to prevent similar incidents
* Names of incident investigators

If a worker is injured on the job or the incident has the potential of injuring a worker, employer investigation responsibilities include the following:

* Provide first aid for the injured worker, if applicable.
* Transport the injured worker to the nearest location where medical treatment can be obtained, if applicable.
* Submit a [Form 7: Employer’s Report of Injury or Occupational Disease](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/claims/report-workplace-injury-illness/how-employers-report-workplace-injury-illness?origin=s&returnurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.worksafebc.com%2Fen%2Fforms-resources%23q%3Dform%25207%26sort%3Drelevancy%26f%3Alanguage-facet%3D%5BEnglish%5D&highlight=form+7) to WorkSafeBC within three business days of the occurrence or within three business days of you or your representative becoming aware of the incident.
* Report fatalities and serious injuries immediately to the Prevention Emergency Line at 604 276-3301 in the Lower Mainland or toll-free 1 888 621-7233.
* Provide resources for the investigation to occur.
* [Submit the final investigation report to WorkSafeBC](https://www.worksafebc.com/en/health-safety/create-manage/incident-investigations/conducting-employer-investigation).

If a worker injury requires more than first aid (for example, medical aid or a lost-time injury), the employer has additional reporting responsibilities, which include the following:

* Report the incident to WorkSafeBC within three business days of the injury occurrence or within three business days of you or your representative becoming aware of the injury.
* Submit an [Incident and Injury Report](http://www.worksafebc.com/claims/report_injury/incident_and_injury_report/default.asp) (Form 7) online or complete and submit the [Employer’s Report of Injury or Occupational Disease](http://www.worksafebc.com/forms/assets/PDF/7.pdf) to WorkSafeBC.