

Incident report

The first written record of an unplanned event at work that hurt someone, could have hurt someone, or damaged property, the environment or security. Complete it on the day, from what people saw and did, and pass it to the person who decides what happens next. Sections 1 to 7 record facts; sections 8 to 10 are a first, provisional look at causes that the investigation in section 11 confirms or overturns. It is not a spill or release report (use that form for substance, quantity and receptors), not a nonconformance report (a product or process that fails a requirement) and not a safety observation record (a planned conversation about work, with no event). The event types and the severity classes below are examples: change them to your own.

No blame. This report is about what happened and why, so that it does not happen again. It is not used to find someone to blame. Write what you saw, did and know, not what someone should have done.

Privacy. Record only what your procedure needs. Do not write diagnoses, medical history or treatment details here beyond the severity class in section 3. Keep names and contact details on this report only, and share it only with people who act on it.

1 Report details

Report number	Reported by (name, role)	Date and time of this report	Report status ☐ Initial ☐ Updated ☐ Final
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2 What, where and when (facts)

Date of the event	Time of the event (24 h, estimated if unsure)	Time it was discovered or reported	Shift or crew
Location (site, area, exact place)		Work being done at the time	
Type of event (examples, tick all that apply) ☐ Injury or ill health ☐ Near miss ☐ Damage to property or equipment ☐ Environmental ☐ Security ☐ Other			

Type (examples only)	Example (invented)	Often goes on to
Injury or ill health	A worker cuts a hand on a blade	First-aid or medical record; section 3
Near miss	A pallet falls from a rack and nobody is below it	Investigation chosen by potential outcome
Damage	A truck hits a door frame	Maintenance; insurance, if you use it
Environmental	Oil drips from a drum towards a drain	Also fill in the spill or release report
Security	A stranger is found in a restricted area	Your security lead

3 Severity

Class (example scale)	Tick	Definition	Notes (who decided, when it changed)
No injury	☐	Near miss or damage only	
First aid	☐	Minor, on-site treatment only	
Medical treatment	☐	Beyond first aid	
Restricted work	☐	Modified duties	
Lost time	☐	Days away from work	
Fatality	☐	Death resulting from incident	

Potential outcome if it happened again, worst credible case ☐ No harm ☐ First aid ☐ Medical treatment ☐ Restricted work or lost time ☐ Fatality or permanent harm	
Recordable or reportable under a rule that applies to you? (for example OSHA recordable in the US) ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Not yet known	Which rule, who decided, and when

The classes are an example scale. Where a law defines what counts (for example the US OSHA lists of first aid and medical treatment), use its definitions. A case can become recordable later, so record when the answer changed.

4 People involved

Role	Name	Department / Company	Contact	Statement taken (date, by)
Injured or affected person				
Injured or affected person				
Witness 1				
Witness 2				
Witness 3				

Take witness statements separately, as soon as possible, in the witness's own words. Add the contact details of a contractor's or visitor's witness. Do not record anyone's medical details here.

5 Facts in order

Facts only, in time order, starting with what the person was doing just before. Say who saw or told you each point. Leave opinions for section 8.

Time (24 h)	What happened (what was seen, done or said)	Source (saw it, told by, record)

6 Immediate actions taken

Actions taken (tick all that apply)

- ☐ First aid or medical help
 ☐ Area made safe
 ☐ Equipment taken out of use
 ☐ Scene left undisturbed or photographed
 ☐ Spill contained
☐ Other

Action (what, in short)	By whom	Time

7 Who was told

Who was told (examples: supervisor, safety lead, manager, emergency services, safety representative, client, insurer)	Name	Date and time	How

Authority notification

- ☐ Not required (reason in the next box)
 ☐ May be required, being checked
 ☐ Made

Which authority, who decided, date and time	Reference or confirmation number
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Whether an event must be reported to an authority, to whom and how fast differs by country, sector and event, and some deadlines run in hours from the moment you first knew. This form does not say that any report is required. Decide with the person who owns that duty and record the time you first knew.

8 Contributing factors (provisional analysis, not fact)

From here on is analysis. It stays an opinion until the investigation confirms it. For each entry, say whether it rests on a fact, a witness or an assumption.

Factor	Notes (what may have contributed)	Basis (fact, witness, assumption)
Equipment		
Procedure		
Training		
Supervision		
Environment		
Other		

9 Initial root cause (5-Why, provisional)

Why 1	
Why 2	
Why 3	
Why 4	
Why 5	

Keep asking why until the answer is something the organisation can change. A person's mistake is where the questions start, not where they stop.

10 Corrective actions (interim and permanent)

No.	Action	Owner	Target date	Status (open, done, checked)

11 Hand-off to the investigation

Investigation needed? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Decide by (date)	Level (examples) ☐ Supervisor review ☐ Team investigation ☐ Led by an authority or outside party
Why (for example serious or potentially serious outcome, repeat event, cause unclear)	
Investigation lead (name, role)	Date handed over
Investigation reference	
Evidence kept (statements, photos, video, equipment, documents) and where	
Safety representative or committee told (who, date)	

The report goes to the investigators unchanged. They record their findings, causes and conclusions in their own investigation record, not here.

12 Sign-off

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Reporter			
Supervisor			
EHS or safety lead			
Manager			