

Incident Reporting

The term “incident” may refer to an occurrence arising from any situation or task that resulted in, or had the potential to result in, injury, illness, damage to health or property, or fatalities.

A “near miss” is an incident in which no injury was sustained or property was damaged, but given a slight shift in time or position, injury or damage could have occurred.

Incident reporting is essential to the recognition of potential or actual hazards in the workplace and the risk that they pose. Incident reporting helps lead to the creation and maintenance of a safer workplace for all by ensuring proper awareness, follow-up, and control of hazards. Foremost, any type of incident should be reported to your supervisor.

All incidents in the workplace need to be reported. Reportable incidents are those which:

- Result in personal injury
- Result in modified work or lost time in work
- Have the potential to result in personal injury or property damage, even if no injury or damage actually occurred
- Occur to a University employee during course of their work, on any property where Trent-sanctioned activities occur
- Occur to a student during the course of their classroom, laboratory, field, or placement work, or any property where Trent-sanctioned activities occur
- Occur to any other member of the University community (including visitors, volunteers, contractors, third-party vendors) or that occurs on University property

If you are unsure whether something should be reported or not, report it. As soon as a situation or occurrence is considered as a potential incident, it should be reported. If you are unsure of any details requested on the form, indicate as N/A and provide the information that is available. Subsequently, the supervisor and employer will assist in review, analysis, and next-step requirements of the situation.

Critical Injuries

Regulation 834 under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* (OHSA) defines a critical injury as an injury of a serious nature that,

- a. places life in jeopardy
- b. produces unconsciousness
- c. results in substantial loss of blood

- d. involves the fracture of a leg or arm but not a finger or toe
- e. involves the amputation of a leg, arm, hand, or foot but not a finger or toe
- f. consists of burns to a major portion of the body
- g. causes the loss of sight in an eye

Under section 51 of the OHSA, if a person is killed or suffers a critical injury in the workplace, the Ministry of Labour, Immigration, Trades and Skill Development (MLITSD) must be immediately notified. Within 48 hours of the incident, a written report must also be submitted. Additionally, similar notifications must be shared with the Joint Health and Safety Committee (JHSC) and applicable trade union. These reporting requirements are why it is imperative to report an incident as soon as possible, even if not all details requested on the reporting forms are known. Health and Safety will follow up and investigate further as required.

If a critical injury occurs to a non-worker in the workplace, it must follow identical reporting measures if there is a realistic connection between the hazard that gave rise to the injury and worker health and safety. Therefore, evaluation of all critical injuries in the workplace should be performed to determine if corrective action needs to be taken.

Should a critical injury occur, preservation of the scene of the incident must be kept for inspection. This includes abstaining from interference, disturbance, destruction, alteration, or removal from any wreckage, article or thing except for the purpose of,

- a) saving life or relieving human suffering
- b) maintaining an essential public utility service or a public transportation system
- c) preventing unnecessary damage to equipment or other property.

Occupational Illness

The OHSA defines an occupational illness as a condition that results from exposure in a workplace to a physical, chemical or biological agent to the extent that the normal physiological mechanisms are affected and the health of the worker is impaired.

Examples of an occupational illness may include:

- a disease resulting from exposure to a substance (for example, chemicals, dust, fumes or viruses) relating to a particular process, trade, or occupation in an industry (for example, asbestosis from exposure to asbestos in mining, manufacturing or construction)
- a disease peculiar to, or characteristic of, a particular industrial process, trade or occupation (for example, operating drills used in mining or construction or using tools such as chainsaws may result in Hand Arm Vibration Syndrome)

Under section 52 of the OHSA, when an employer becomes aware that a worker has an occupational illness, the employer shall give written notice within four days to the MLITSD. Additionally, similar notification must be given to the JHSC and applicable trade union.

Similarly, should a worker become disabled from performing their usual work or requires medical attention because of a workplace incident, written notice must be provided by the employer within four days of being advised, to the MLITSD, JHSC, and applicable trade union. “Medical Attention” refers to treatment provided by a legally qualified medical practitioner. It does to include treatment from other regulated health professions such as chiropractors, physiotherapists, or naturopaths.

The duty to report applies to all current and former workers.

WSIB Reporting Requirements

Work-related accidents must be reported to the WSIB if the employer learns a worker requires health care and/or:

- is absent from regular work
- earns less than regular pay for regular work (e.g., part-time hours)
- requires modified work at less than regular pay, or
- requires modified work at regular pay for more than seven **calendar** days following the date of accident.

Work-related accidents do not have to be reported to the WSIB if the worker:

- receives only first aid
- receives first aid and requires modified work at regular pay for seven calendar days or less, following the date of accident, or
- does not receive first aid, but requires modified work at regular pay for seven calendar days or less, following the date of accident.

The WSIB uses a variety of forms to collect accident information from an employer. In every case, the information must be sufficient to allow the WSIB to set up a claim.

The WSIB must receive an employer's complete accident report within three **business** days after the employer learns of the reporting obligation (business days are Monday to Friday, and do not include statutory holidays).

If the employer fails to comply with reporting requirements, the WSIB will levy either a late reporting penalty of \$250, or for those accidents reported after more than 30 calendar days, a penalty of \$1000.

For further information on WSIB reporting, please visit the [WSIB website](#). For questions or guidance regarding WSIB reporting processes at Trent, please contact healthandsafety@trentu.ca.

Resources

[Employers' Initial Accident-Reporting Obligations](#)

[Reporting workplace incidents and illnesses](#)

[Occupational Health and Safety Act](#)

[Ontario Regulation 834: Critical Injury - Defined](#)

[Ontario Regulation 420/21: Notices and Reports Under Sections 51 to 53.1 of the Act – Fatalities, Critical Injuries, Occupational Illnesses and Other Incidents.](#)