

Accident Investigation and Reporting Procedures

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Policy Statement

Summary West Yorkshire Police have a duty of care to police officers and members of staff and have established a policy procedure to provide clear standards and guidelines to be followed for the reporting and investigation of accidents.

The aims of this policy are to provide assistance on the reporting and recording procedures for all:

- Managers;
 - Employees; and,
 - Non-employees.
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Scope This policy applies to all police officers and police staff, volunteers, contractors or visitors, including detainees where they experience an accident, near miss or dangerous occurrence on Force premises.

This includes employees carrying out their duties at a location other than their usual place of duty, including travelling to that location.

Definitions

- Definitions**
- An 'accident' is an unplanned, undesired event which may lead to injury or ill health to persons, damage to plant and materials, the environment or other losses to the organisation. It includes an act of non consensual violence.
 - An 'assault' is where there was a deliberate intention to cause harm to the officer/staff member.
 - A 'near-miss' is an unplanned event which may have given rise to an accident in slightly different circumstances.
 - A 'dangerous occurrence' is a specific unplanned, undesired event.
 - 'Ill health' is illness caused, or believed to be caused, by work place conditions.
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- Further Information**
- For the purposes of reporting, the Force will treat stress as ill health.
 - Vehicle accidents that do not result in injury should be reported only on the POLVEH system.
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Incidents

Incident Report

- An incident report should always be completed for any accident, assault, ill health or near miss, which occurs to any:
 - Police officer;
 - Special constable;
 - Police staff;
 - Volunteer; or,
 - Member of the general public (including contractor and detainee) on police premises. This excludes the use of reasonable force.
 - Injuries which occur while carrying out work duties off site must be reported in the same way to a responsible person on that site (where applicable) and their reporting procedures followed. The Force reporting procedure should run in tandem.
 - An injury may be dealt with by an appointed first aider. However, if an emergency arises, medical assistance e.g. an ambulance must be called at the first opportunity. Any such emergency must be reported to senior management immediately.
 - Where an accident results in absence from work, you must inform your manager of that fact when notifying the absence.
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Home Working

- Incidents still need to be reported when you are working from home whenever one occurs that is work related.
- For home working, this means incidents occurring due to work provided equipment, set up of the working area or the way in which work is done.
- The purpose of this reporting is to enable lessons to be learnt, which can improve the safety of yourself and others when working from home.
- Some examples of potentially reportable incidents are:
 - Fault with your home electrical system caused by an excessive amount of electrical (computer) equipment plugged in.
 - Tripped over trailing computer cables.
 - Sprains and strains from poor workstation set up.
- Some example of incidents which should not reported:
 - Tripped whilst at home during working hours, but not connected with work equipment or activity.
 - Burns or scalds whilst making a drink.

Note – No Investigation will take place in a employees home without their explicit consent to enter.

Investigations

Investigating the Incident

- Investigating incidents is an essential part of the Health and Safety Management process and is used to drive the prevention/mitigation of subsequent incidents.
 - In order to achieve this it is important that accurate data is collected during the investigation and this is only possible when carried out promptly after the incident has occurred.
 - Whilst shift patterns may not allow investigation to take place immediately, the Force's target is to investigate all reported incidents within 14 days.
 - When investigating incidents, if the incident occurs to:
 - An employee, the person responsible for an investigation is the supervisor at the time;
 - A member of the public, the person responsible for an investigation is the supervisor responsible for the area; or
 - A contractor, the person responsible for an investigation is, where not specified in the contract arrangements, the person responsible for appointing and managing the contract. Depending on the circumstances of the incident, this may be in conjunction with the contractor's representative.
 - Further to the above, should the incident be of a more serious nature (for example, involving a prolonged hospital stay or a fatality) the investigation must be overseen by a senior manager for the investigators SLT i.e. a chief inspector or principle officer, or above.
 - Depending on the particulars of the incident, once notified, Force Health and Safety Team may make further investigations.
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Serious Incidents

- When dealing with a major incident, which has resulted in death or major injury, you must ensure that:
 - The scene is left undisturbed;
 - The Force Health and Safety Team are informed as soon as practical;
 - The Health and Safety Executive is notified by the quickest means available; and,
 - Staff representatives are informed as soon as possible.
 - The Force Health and Safety Team can be contacted via telephone.
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Health and Safety Executive

Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences

- Under the RIDDOR regulations, certain accidents (see list of incidents) must be notified to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) by the quickest practicable means, either by:
 - website; or
 - Telephone.
 - In order to achieve this requirement, a degree of urgency is required throughout the process.
 - Responsibility for ensuring this reporting takes place and is recorded on the HR system lies with the People Generalists.
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Original Documentation

- In the majority of circumstances, all information will be recorded on the HR system.
 - Where additional paper/digital records are produced, they will be kept on the personnel file with a reference to the unique reference number of the incident reporting system.
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Review of Data

Local

- Incident data is subject to review at the Local Health and Safety Committee who will:
 - Identify any local trends in data; and,
 - Chase any investigations that do not meet the target timeframe of 14 days.
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Forcewide

- As part of the annual report, the Force Health and Safety team will review the previous years' accident data to identify any trends, and inform the planning of any workstreams.
 - This review will consider:
 - The likelihood of the event reoccurring;
 - The action required to prevent reoccurrence; and,
 - The severity of the incident including number of employees affected and the worst possible outcome.
 - In addition to this, they will dip sample incidents to review the adequacy of the initial management action and any further action required.
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Completing a Report

Principles

- Reports should be completed online via the Force's self-service HR system, and will usually be initiated by the employee involved.

- The initial part of the report records information on when and where the incident occurred and the nature of the injury. There is no requirement for the injury to have been confirmed through a medical intervention, but should be recorded based on the belief on the individual at the time.
 - In cases where the injured employee is unable to complete the report, any other employee can complete it on their behalf.
 - Once completed, the injured person's supervisor or relevant investigator will be notified that the incident required investigation.
 - Any non-employee who is involved in an accident or near miss incident while on Force premises must report the incident immediately to the person responsible for their presence on the premises.
 - If the person responsible is not available, the visitor/contractor must obtain the assistance of a responsible person to ensure that Force procedure is adhered to, including the completion of the incident report.
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Objectives and Considerations

Accident Investigation

- The main objectives of any incident investigation are to:
 - Determine the facts leading to the event;
 - Determine the immediate and root causes;
 - Take measures to prevent a recurrence; and,
 - Ensure compliance with the law.
 - Accident investigations are not there to allocate blame.
 - Other considerations would include:
 - The effectiveness of existing risk assessments;
 - The validity of the current health and safety policy;
 - Maintaining good employee and public relations; and,
 - Any changes to the injury stated.
 - This information will form the basis of what actions are required to prevent a recurrence, which may include long-term as well as immediate measures.
 - Good practice when investigating incidents includes:
 - Taking written accounts from any witnesses; and,
 - Taking photographs of injuries and the scene to negate any ambiguity.
 - A copy of these records, along with details of the investigation and remedial action, should be recorded on the incident report.
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List of incidents requiring reporting

- Incidents that require reporting to the HSE include:
 - Any incident that results in an employee being unable to complete their normal duties for seven days (not including the date of the accident, and irrespective of whether they are

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- scheduled to work);
 - Any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia;
 - Any fracture, other than to the fingers, thumbs or toes;
 - Any amputation;
 - Dislocation of the shoulder, hip, knee or spine;
 - Fatality; or,
 - Any incident involving a member of the public affected by the Force's actions and requiring immediate hospital treatment. This excludes where the injury is caused by the use of reasonable force.
- This is not an exhaustive list, and for further guidance refer to Force Health and Safety.
 - **Note** – Road traffic collisions and stress are excluded from this legislation.

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Additional Information

Compliance

This policy complies with the following legislation and policy:

- Data Protection Act 2018
 - Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
 - Health and Safety policy
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Further Information

Further guidance in relation to this policy can be sought from:

- Accident investigation conducted by OHSW
 - Recording of work related mental health on the Incident Reporting System
 - Accident/Incident recording
 - The Force Health and Safety team;
 - Police Federation representative;
 - Trade Union representative.
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