Hazards

GREATER MANCHESTER HAZARDS CENTRE

HEALTH & SAFETY 40 YEARS 2021

FACT SHEET

Act Now

on accident books

Every injury at work, however small, should go in the accident book. Here is what to record, what must also be reported, and how safety reps can help.

Recording accidents at work is a legal requirement for employers under the Social Security Regulations 1979. The records show what happened, where and when. They help to spot trends and hazards, they support claims, insurance and compensation, and they show an employer is keeping to the law.

3 years

the least time accident records must be kept. Keep them longer for claims or insurance.

Every injury

including minor ones, should be recorded in your employer's accident book.

999 or 111

Call 999 at once in a life-threatening emergency. If you are unsure, call 111.

What to record, every time

Who

The full name, address and occupation of the injured person, and of whoever records it if that is someone else.

When and where

The date and time of the accident, and the place where it happened.

What happened

The cause of the accident and the nature of the injury.

Minor or serious

Minor injuries must be recorded. Serious injuries must be recorded and reported under RIDDOR.

The employer must report more serious work-related injuries, illness and near misses straight away to the enforcing authority, usually the HSE or the local authority. The accident book can help to inform a RIDDOR report, but it is not a substitute for one.

Stress and mental health

Psychological injuries should be prevented too. Stress, heavy workloads, bullying, harassment, exhaustion, long hours and anxiety can badly harm mental health, and like all injuries they should be reported.

Employers must treat mental and physical health as equally important.

Accident books, first aid and your safety rep

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THE KEY POINT

Any injury at work, even a minor one, should be recorded. The record may be what helps you later.

1 Is there an accident book?

The HSE recommends that every employer has one that is easy to reach. They can buy the HSE book or use their own, if it records everything required.

2 Are all injuries recorded?

Even minor ones, so the employer can see what is going wrong and act to stop further injuries.

3 Is it used to prevent harm?

Safety reps can ask for regular reports from the book, and it should be a regular item at safety committee meetings.

4 Are serious cases reported?

Under RIDDOR, straight away, to the HSE or the local authority.

5 Is first aid in place?

A well stocked kit for the size and nature of the workforce, and everyone knows where it is and who the first aiders are.

6 Does it cover mental health?

The law now covers mental health. First aiders should take a recognised course that includes mental health first aid.

Your rights as a safety rep

Safety reps have the right to see any records the employer keeps on injuries, diseases or dangerous occurrences. Personal details can be hidden on request, but the rep must still be told the details.

Reps also have extra powers to investigate, inspect and help with formal investigations. Unionised workplaces are safer, especially with a safety rep.

Legal and other standards for prevention and control

- Social Security Regulations 1979: employers must record accidents
- RIDDOR: the reporting of serious injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences
- HSE guidance on first aid at work (L74)

FREE FOR EVERY WORKER

Worried about safety at work?

Scan for free advice, and fourteen more free guides like this one.

gmhazards.org.uk · 0161 884 4229

HSE: accident book
hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/accident-book.htm

HSE: RIDDOR
hse.gov.uk/riddor

HSE: first aid at work
hse.gov.uk/simple-health-safety/firstaid

Find a union
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