

Injuries on the Job

Every workplace should have a plan for handling injuries. Employees need to know when and how to report injuries.

In each of the three stories below, a janitor has gotten injured or become sick at work. **Should they report their injury to their supervisor?**



A. Carlos cut his hand while emptying out the garbage. He needs stitches and a tetanus shot.



B. Bill's arms ache from mopping the floors. On some days, he can barely move his arms.



C. Anna fell from a ladder and hurt her back. She forgot that she wasn't supposed to stand on the top two rungs.

Answers:
A. Yes. Carlos needs immediate medical care. He may need workers' compensation.
B. Yes. Bill may have an ergonomic injury. He may need workers' compensation.
C. Yes. Anna may have a serious back injury. Even if Anna made a mistake, she may be eligible for workers' compensation.

Discussion Questions for Management & Employees

1. What concerns do you have about reporting or dealing with injuries?
2. What can management and employees do so that everyone knows what to do when injuries happen? (Flip this page over for tips on dealing with injuries. →)

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Management Can Make the Workplace Safer

- Develop a written safety program and train employees on how to report an injury.
- Provide first aid training. If employees are working alone, consider providing first aid training to each employee. Or, you can provide first aid training to supervisors so that each shift has someone “on-call” to provide first aid.
- Provide first aid kits at each worksite.
- Check with the building owner about any hazards specific to the building, such as disposable needles. Training on bloodborne pathogens or other topics may be needed.
- Learn about the workers’ compensation system at www.dir.ca.gov/DWC and www.dir.ca.gov/chswc.

Employees Can Follow Safe Work Practices

- Know your employer’s procedure for reporting injuries.
- If you are exposed to blood or body fluids at work (for example, if you clean a doctor’s office or lab), seek medical attention. You may need a Hepatitis B vaccination and infectious disease testing.
- If you have been cut and the bleeding does not stop, seek medical attention. If the wound is deep or dirty, you may need a tetanus shot.
- If you have been burned by a chemical, call 911 if the area of burned skin is more than 3 inches in diameter, or if the burn is on the face, groin, or major joint. Bring the chemical container with you.
- Know where first aid kits are kept.

What If I Get Hurt on the Job?

- Tell your supervisor right away.
- Get emergency medical treatment if needed.
- Your employer is required by law to provide workers’ compensation benefits, including medical care for your injury. You may also receive payments if you lose wages for more than 3 days. Your employer must give you a claim form. Fill it out and return it to your employer.

