

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**



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# **HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK**

## **ACCIDENT INCIDENT REPORTING**

### **and INVESTIGATION**

## **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

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## Accident & Incident Reporting Policy

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Redditch Borough Council has a legal duty to report certain types of accidents, injuries and dangerous occurrences arising out of work activity to the HSE. It also has a responsibility to investigate and keep a record of all accidents causing injury, dangerous occurrences and occurrences of disease or ill-health where they arise out of the work of the Council.

Health and Safety legislation requires employees to inform their employer about anything related to work which has caused or had the potential to cause harm to themselves or others and the monitoring of such reports is an important aspect of the control of health and safety at work. Although an accident free workplace does not necessarily mean that all risks are being controlled adequately it is accepted as a sensible objective and all reasonably practicable measures should be taken by the Council to prevent accidents and work related ill-health to staff.

The reporting and investigation procedure is in place so that accidents and or work related ill-health problems can be recorded and those in appropriate managerial positions can determine the likely cause of the accident and consider action which may be required to prevent recurrence.

The Council promotes an open approach towards accident and incident reporting and positively encourages staff, contractors and visitors to report accidents and incidents and to learn from the outcomes.

### 2.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aims of the policy are:

- To identify the legal requirement for reporting and investigating accidents and incidents.
- To identify the procedure for reporting accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses at the Council.
- To set out duties and responsibilities in relation to accident and incident reporting and accident and incident investigation of all persons working at the Council or on their premises.
- To identify how accidents and incidents will be recorded and investigated at the Council in order to prevent recurrence.

### 3.0 DEFINITIONS

Terms used in this policy:

- *Accident* – an unplanned event which lead or could have lead to an injury to people or damage to property. The outcome is often a matter of chance

- *Incident* – any event planned or unplanned which is nevertheless unwanted and which may have resulted in damage to or loss of property or even injury to a person
- *Near Miss* – is an unplanned event which had the potential to cause harm, resulted in no injury, illness or damage to people or property.
- *Dangerous Occurrence* – an event which may or may not have caused damage to or loss of property, but which could also have caused serious injury or death had circumstances been different, e.g. a heavy object falling from a building.
- *Hazard* – a hazard is something which has the potential to cause harm. Thus working at height, dangerous chemical or broken paving slab are all hazards and should be considered when assessing risks associated with them.
- *Work related ill health* – any illness, disability, or other physical problem which reduces either temporarily, or permanently, the functioning of an individual and which has been caused by, in whole or part, by the working conditions of that individual.

#### **4.0 LEGAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

The Council is bound by the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 2013 to report certain accidental injuries, incidents and occurrences of disease to the Health and Safety Executive as follows:

- Any fatality involving an employee or a non-employee arising out of the Councils work or occurring on Council premises, including an act of physical violence to a worker
- Any major injury to employees
- Injuries to non-employees which require the injured person to be taken straight to hospital for treatment and have arisen out of the work of the Council
- Injuries to employees which lead to them being absent from work, or unable to do their normal duties for more than 7 days
- Certain dangerous occurrences listed in the regulations (See Appendix 2)
- Certain occupational disease listed in the regulations. (See Appendix 2)

The Council ensures that when reportable injuries, occurrences and diseases arise out of or in connection with the work of the Council:

- The HSE are notified as soon as practicable
- A written report is sent to the HSE within 10 days. For accidents resulting in the over-seven-day incapacitation of a worker, you must notify the enforcing authority within 15 days of the incident, using the appropriate online form.
- Trade Union Health and Safety Representatives are notified as soon as practicable.

Further details regarding the reporting requirements under RIDDOR 2013 can be found in the Appendices at the end of the policy.

## **5. REPORTING PROCEDURE**

Procedure for reporting accidents, incidents, dangerous occurrences and near misses:

- All forms are available on the Orb: where staff do not have access to the Orb hard copy forms will be provided.
- Report forms may be completed by anyone who has knowledge of the event in question; ideally this will either be someone directly involved in the incident, a witness, first aider or line manager.
- Forms should be completed as fully as possible, but at the very least should include the date, the incident location, a brief description of what happened, the names and contact details of anyone directly involved and a description of any injuries suffered.
- All completed online forms will be forwarded to the Health and Safety team who will maintain a record of all accidents and incidents.

Any serious accident or incident should be reported immediately by the quickest means possible (by the next working day) to the Health and Safety team (in addition to filling in the online form). Accidents serious enough to require immediate reporting would include:

- Any death on Council premises or arising out of the work of the Council
- Any serious injury e.g. amputation, break or dislocation of a major limb, injury leading to significant blood loss, burns, electrocution, injury leading to unconsciousness
- Any industrial illness e.g. asbestos related disease, Legionnaires disease, diseases contracted from animals, any disease contracted through exposure to chemicals or dusts.
- Collision involving a Council vehicle or persons on Council business whether an injury was sustained or not.
- Any accident which has resulted in legal action or a threat of legal action.

In the above circumstances, it will be necessary to inform the Councils Insurers of the details of an accident or incident. This will be done via the Councils Insurance Officer.

## **6. FORMS AVAILABLE ON THE ORB**

### **6.1 First Aider Form**

It is important that for first-aiders and/or appointed persons to record incidents they attend. In some situations paper copies are provided of the Accident Form which must be completed and then entered onto the Orb. The information can help to identify accident trends and possible areas for improvement in the control

of health and safety risks. It can be used for reference in future first-aid needs assessments. Useful information to record includes:

- the date, time and place of the incident;
- the name and job of the injured or ill person;
- details of the injury/illness and what first aid was given;
- details about what happened to the person immediately afterwards (e.g. went back to work, went home, went to hospital);
- the name and signature of the first-aider or person dealing with the incident.

## **6.2 Accident & Incident Report Form**

Any accidents and incidents which occur on or in Council premises need to be reported on the Orb at the earliest opportunity using this form. This includes injuries to members of the public including children.

It is imperative that this form is completed in full with as much information as possible so that in the event of the incident needing to be reported to the Authorities all the necessary information is already available.

Upon completion of the form details are forwarded to Heads of Service and to the Health and Safety team. Upon receipt of reports these are then assessed and investigations are initiated as appropriate.

## **6.3 Near Miss & Hazard Report Form**

This form is for members of staff to report incidents whereby an event has occurred, nobody was necessarily injured but could have been if the circumstances had been different.

The purpose of this form is to highlight potential problems so that they can be dealt with thus preventing an accident from actually happening. This includes preventing injuries and also damage to equipment, property etc.

Again, on completion these are forwarded automatically to the Health and Safety Team who will assess and investigate where appropriate. Managers will be responsible for addressing any concerns which may have been raised this will include looking at work procedures, risk assessments and working practices involved.

## **6.4 The purpose of the On-line accident and incident reporting forms**

- To enable swift and accurate reporting of an incident by a member of staff, to those managers and staff who need to have the information, in order to carry out an investigation and take appropriate actions.
- To record incident data accurately in order that a range of reports can be generated for management reporting purposes.
- To enable on-going monitoring of the management of all incidents by the responsible service areas thus identifying any trends.

- To enable a formal completion of each incident by the Health and Safety Team when all appropriate actions have been addressed by the relevant service area.
- All staff with IT access in the workplace will be able to enter any accident forms online at the time of the incident.
- Ensure that relevant Managers names are included on the form for reporting purposes.

## **7. RISK MANAGEMENT STATEMENT**

- Failure to comply with this policy could lead to a failure to comply with the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations 2013 which is a criminal offence.
- Failure to comply with this policy could lead to a failure to comply with statutory legislation.

## **8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **8.1 Heads of Service**

- Ensure that any accident or incident occurring during any activities under their control or involving Council premises is reported on the Orb and investigated as deemed necessary. Please refer to the table in Appendix one for guidance regarding levels of investigation.
- Any occurrence which is perceived to be either a dangerous occurrence, or a near miss, which has not actually resulted in an injury to a person, but may or may not have resulted in loss or damage to property and therefore has the potential to cause harm should be reported on the Orb and investigated as deemed necessary.
- Any case of ill-health which is, or is thought to be, caused or aggravated by Council work activities or the work environment controlled by them, is investigated and reported on the Orb to the H&S Team.
- Ensure that all members of staff for whom they are responsible are aware of the accident and incident reporting procedure and of their duty to use it.

### **8.2 Line Managers**

- Ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements and procedures for the reporting of accidents and incidents at the Council.
- Ensure that members of staff within their areas of responsibility are aware of the Councils requirements and procedures for the reporting and investigating of accidents and incidents which occur during the course of their work duties.
- Ensure that all incidents are reported via the Orb as soon as they are aware of them, and all boxes completed fully with as much detail as possible.
- Ensure that the H&S Team are informed as soon as possible if an incident is likely to become reportable to the HSE under RIDDOR 2013.

- Ensure that accidents are adequately investigated and cooperate fully with any accident or incident investigation. If appropriate, conduct an investigation into any significant accident or incident within their area of responsibility in liaison with the Health and Safety team.
- Take appropriate action in respect of any outcomes or recommendations following an investigation into any accident or incident. The implementation of the actions must be managed and reported back to the Health and Safety team at the earliest opportunity.

### **8.3 Health and Safety Team**

- Review and validate accident/incident reports to ensure the investigation remit has been achieved and the report is of a good standard.
- Review and validate the report or request further investigation/action within 2 weeks of received draft report.
- Ensure that requirements and procedures for the reporting of accidents and incidents are adequately communicated throughout the Council to all staff.
- Ensure that any accident or incident they are aware of is reported through the appropriate procedure.
- Take the role of 'responsible person' in relation to the reporting of injuries, diseases, and dangerous occurrences under RIDDOR 2013.
- Take the lead in investigating or advising on investigating, where appropriate, any accidents and incidents occurring on Council premises or arising out of the work of the Council.
- Ensure that trade union representatives are kept informed of any serious or reportable accidents which may involve or have an impact on the health and safety of their members.
- Communicate issues relating to and arising from accidents and incidents to the Health and Safety Committee. Ensuring that the Chair is informed at the earliest opportunity.
- Ensure that trade union representatives are kept informed of any serious or reportable accidents which may involve or have an impact on the health and safety of their members.
- Ensure that the Council's Insurers are made aware of accidents and incidents as and when necessary at the earliest opportunity.
- Monitor reports of accidents and incidents for trends which may indicate the need for action at a more fundamental level.

### **8.4 Employees**

- Ensure that they are aware of the requirements and procedures for the reporting of accidents and incidents at the Council.
- Obtain the necessary first aid treatment as soon as possible.
- Ensure that any accident or incident they are aware of is reported to their Line Manager and the appropriate forms are thoroughly completed on the Orb.

- Fully cooperate in any accident and incident investigations as required by the investigating team, whether it is as an injured party or witness.

### **8.5 Councils Insurance Officer**

- Ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements and procedures for the reporting of accidents and incidents at the Council.
- Provide any advice and support to the Health and Safety team with ensuring that any accidents are reported and recorded for Insurance purposes.
- Work with the Councils Insurance Company with regard to any claims.
- Monitor for any trends and or areas where improvements could be made to reduce claims against the Council.

## **9. INVESTIGATION OF ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS**

Competent investigation of both accidents and incidents will accurately identify the immediate and underlying causes. Good quality accident investigation will assist in reducing the number of accidents and their consequences should they occur.

The scale of the investigation should be based on the consequences (potential or real). The level and extent of the investigation should reflect the seriousness or potential seriousness of the accident or incident. It is important that extensive resources are not employed on conducting minor investigations.

Investigations may be initiated by the Health and Safety team, the Head of Service, Line Manager or other suitably competent persons depending on the nature of the accident or incident (persons who have completed the minimum of Managing Safely (IOSH)).

In circumstances whereby the Council is required to report to the HSE the investigations should always involve a member of the Health and Safety team.

A high level of investigation will be conducted if:

- The injury is likely to result in the injured person being off work for more than 7 days
- Major injury/ill health including fractures (other than fingers or toes), amputations, loss of sight, a burn or penetrating injury to the eye, an injury resulting in loss of consciousness, requiring resuscitation or requiring hospital admittance for over 24 hours
- The incident or near miss had the potential to cause serious damage or harm.
- The incident or near miss has a likelihood of happening again if not controlled.
- A dangerous occurrence as defined in the RIDDOR 2013
- Recurring minor injuries.

Accident investigation reports should include:



- What happened – the immediate cause of the accident
- Why it happened – underlying causes of the accident
- Necessary corrective actions
- Necessary system changes
- Details of policies or procedures requiring review.

The subsequent Action Plan will detail any proposed deadlines for completing any remedial actions. When the investigation is concluded, a draft report should be submitted to the Health and Safety team for review and validation. If the accident/incident involves a member of the H&S Team the draft report will be sent to the HR Manager.

Upon agreement from the Health and Safety Team and the HR Manager the report can be issued to those concerned. These people may include:

- Individuals to whom recommendations have been allocated
- Individuals whose employees were involved
- Individuals responsible for managing safely in that area
- Trade Unions and the Councils Insurance Officer

When recommendations are received they should be thoroughly evaluated at an appropriate level and actions agreed or, if no action is to be taken, the issuing department should be informed and given a justification for the reason. Those responsible for implementing recommendations should report on progress and completion to the Health and Safety team and the H&S Committee.

The results of any investigations will be reviewed by the H&S Committee to ensure that all necessary actions are completed, any lessons can be learnt and best practice circulated when appropriate.

## **10. DATA PROTECTION ACT 1998**

The data supplied on the Online form is covered by the *Data Protection Act 1998* and as such will be treated as confidential data and used to enable the Council to comply with its statutory obligations, to process insurance claims, to monitor health and safety and to implement appropriate remedial actions. Summary data (anonymised, wherever possible) will be presented to the Councils Health and Safety Committee and also provide anonymous data for the Dashboard.

## Specified Injuries as defined in RIDDOR

The list of 'specified injuries' in RIDDOR 2013 replaces the previous list of 'major injuries' in RIDDOR 1995. Specified injuries are (regulation 4):

- fractures, other than to fingers, thumbs and toes
- amputations
- any injury likely to lead to permanent loss of sight or reduction in sight
- any crush injury to the head or torso causing damage to the brain or internal organs
- serious burns (including scalding) which:
  - covers more than 10% of the body
  - causes significant damage to the eyes, respiratory system or other vital organs
- any scalping requiring hospital treatment
- any loss of consciousness caused by head injury or asphyxia
- any other injury arising from working in an enclosed space which:
  - leads to hypothermia or heat-induced illness
  - requires resuscitation or admittance to hospital for more than 24 hours

## Reportable Dangerous Occurrences covered by RIDDOR

The list of Dangerous Occurrences below does not cover all that are listed in the *Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) 2013*, but is a selection of those that might be associated with the Council's activities. Where doubt exists about whether an incident is reportable or not, advice must be sought from the Health and Safety Office.

Dangerous occurrences are certain, specified 'near-miss' events (incidents with the potential to cause harm.) Not all such events require reporting. There are 27 categories of dangerous occurrences that are relevant to most workplaces. For example:

- the collapse, overturning or failure of load-bearing parts of lifts and lifting equipment;
- plant or equipment coming into contact with overhead power lines;
- explosions or fires causing work to be stopped for more than 24 hours.

For a full, detailed list, refer to the online guidance at: [www.hse.gov.uk/riddor](http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor).

### Reportable gas incidents

A distributor, filler, importer or supplier of flammable gas learn, either directly or indirectly, that someone has died, lost consciousness, or been taken to hospital for treatment to an injury arising in connection with the gas you distributed, filled, imported or supplied, this can be reported online.

A gas engineer registered with the Gas Safe Register, must provide details of any gas appliances or fittings that are considered to be dangerous to the extent that people could die, lose consciousness or require hospital treatment. This may be due to the design, construction, installation, modification or servicing, and could result in:

- an accidental leakage of gas;
- inadequate combustion of gas; or
- inadequate removal of products of the combustion of gas

### Reportable occupational diseases

Employers and self-employed people must report diagnoses of certain occupational diseases, where these are likely to have been caused or made worse by their work. These diseases include (regulations 8 and 9):

- carpal tunnel syndrome;
- severe cramp of the hand or forearm;
- occupational dermatitis;
- hand-arm vibration syndrome;
- occupational asthma;
- tendonitis or tenosynovitis of the hand or forearm;
- any occupational cancer;
- any disease attributed to an occupational exposure to a biological agent.

## Appendix 4: Level of Investigation

	MINOR	SERIOUS	MAJOR	FATAL
CERTAIN				
LIKELY				
POSSIBLE				
UNLIKELY				
RARE				

**MINOR:** No injury or short term harm, minimal first aid treatment required.

**SERIOUS:** Semi-permanent harm

**MAJOR:** Permanent or long term harm

**FATAL:** One or more fatalities

	Low level investigation by Service area into immediate and underlying causes. Short investigation into circumstances and immediate, underlying and root causes to try and prevent a recurrence and learn any general lessons.
	Medium level investigation involving the H&S team and will involve Service line managers and employee representatives.
	High Level investigation under the direction of a member of Senior Management Team

## Appendix 4



### Accident and Incident Reporting procedure

