

Section 29: REPORTING WORK-RELATED ACCIDENTS, INJURIES AND ILLNESSES

INTRODUCTION

This procedure applies to all King County employees, and includes jurors, witnesses, and all reserve Sheriff's Deputies. It outlines the procedure for reporting work-related accidents, injuries or illnesses, and filing a workers' compensation claim. These requirements are in accordance with applicable county, state and federal law and must be strictly followed. These procedures also apply to people who are not in the payroll system, such as witnesses and jurors, paramedic trainees, and election officials.

EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

For emergencies involving serious injuries or fatalities, call 911 immediately.

Any accident that results in a fatality or probable fatality, or any accident that results in the in-patient hospitalization of an employee, must be reported to **Safety and Claims Management** immediately, regardless of time or day.

Call **(206) 477-3350** M – F 8:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

For **EMERGENCIES** during hours other than the office hours above, call **Facilities Management Division (FMD) Security**, which is open 24 hours a day and will act as an emergency contact. They will notify **Safety and Claims Management** personnel of any emergencies called in. The emergency number to call is:

FMD Security: (206) 296-5000

In addition, any accident involving a potential or actual fatality, or any in-patient hospitalization, must be reported to the state Department of Labor and Industries within 8 hours of the accident. The toll-free central reporting telephone number is:

**Department of Labor and Industries:
1-800-423-7233**

L&I also requires reporting of non-hospitalized loss of eye and non-hospitalized amputations within 24 hours.

For emergencies involving **DOT Roads Services** employees, call Renton Roads Division emergency number, 206-296-8100.

For emergencies involving **DOT Transit**, call the Transit Division Control Center at 206-684-1705.

For all **DNR Wastewater Treatment Division** emergencies call the WTD Safety Emergency Response Hotline Number 206-263-3744.

For **DNR Solid Waste Division** emergencies see the *Emergency Call-Out List*, and Notify the Scale House 206-263-1098 and the Main Office 206-263-1000.

When notified of an emergency incident, the appropriate Safety and Health Professional will respond to the scene of the accident.

1. When the Safety and Health representative arrives, s/he will assist the supervisor in conducting the accident investigation. Witnesses and an employee representative (shop steward, employee-elected safety committee member, or other employee-designated representative) will be included in the preliminary investigation.
2. Equipment or materials must not be moved until released by the State of Washington Department of Labor and Industries or the Safety and Claims Management representative, except if victims need to be extricated or to prevent further accident or injury.
3. In the case of vehicle accidents, law enforcement agencies responsible for investigating shall be called as soon as practicable. Investigating police officers shall be in charge.
4. Once the emergency has been resolved, the supervisor will review the contents of the worker's compensation packet with the injured employee(s).

REPORTING A WORK-RELATED INJURY OR ILLNESS

1. Employees must report all work-related near-misses, injuries or illnesses to their immediate supervisor.
2. If the injury or illness is not serious or requires simple first aid, the injured or ill worker does not necessarily need to go to a doctor. But in all cases, the worker and supervisor must fill out a Work-Related Illness/Injury Supervisor Report. This report establishes that an injury or illness has occurred, should the injured worker eventually see a doctor and want to file a workers' compensation claim.
3. Employees exposed to bloodborne pathogens should fill out the claims forms

and submit a claim to Safety and Claims Management, even if they choose not to seek medical attention. This enters the incident into the claims system for any future illness that may result from the exposure, and ensures compliance with state reporting requirements. See Section, 14, Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control.

4. If the injured worker wants workers' compensation benefits, s/he must see a doctor or other health-care professional for treatment.

REPORTING VEHICLE ACCIDENTS

In addition to the above procedures, accidents involving King County vehicles must be reported to the Office of Risk Management (206-263-2250) no later than the end of the next work day.

WORKERS' COMPENSATION (INDUSTRIAL INSURANCE)

Industrial Insurance, more commonly called workers' compensation, is a no-fault insurance program that covers work-related accidents and illnesses. Workers' compensation is designed to cover medical expenses and to partially pay for wages lost while an employee recovers from a work-related injury or illness.

King County is self-insured, which means that the County, rather than the Department of Labor & Industries, provides workers compensation insurance for County employees. Employees file all claims for work-related injuries or illnesses with the County, which covers the costs of allowed work-related injuries and illnesses.

If an injured employee receives medical treatment, the employee or the immediate supervisor must notify Safety and Claims Management (206-477-3350).

HOW TO FILE A WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIM

1. If medical treatment is needed, the supervisor gives the injured employee a workers' compensation packet, which is available in most departments or by calling the workers' compensation section at (206) 477-3350. It's best to provide the packets to the employee before s/he goes to the doctor the first time. The packet contains detailed instructions for the employee, supervisor and the doctor.
2. The Work-Related Illness/Injury Supervisor Report must be completed by the supervisor and sent to Safety and Claims Management, Mail Stop ADM-ES-0500, or faxed to 296-0514.
3. The injured employee takes the packet along while visiting the treating

physician. Inside is a Medical Release - Physical Capacities Evaluation, which must be filled out by the treating physician and the injured worker. It is important to let the treating physician know the illness or injury is work-related and that King County is self-insured. Do not fill out a Department of Labor & Industries State Fund form.

4. The completed Medical Release - Physical Capacities Evaluation needs to be returned, or the information on it relayed, to the injured worker's immediate supervisor within 24 hours after initial medical treatment. The supervisor notifies the Safety and Claims Management office (206-477-3350) of the physician's directions, such as whether the injured worker can return to work or has physical restrictions.
5. Two other forms are inside the packet: a Physicians Initial Report, which must be completed by both the physician and injured worker; and a Self-Insurer Accident Report (SIF-2), which needs to be filled out by the injured worker. Return both forms to the Safety and Claims Management office, Mail Stop ADM-ES-0500. The claim number in the upper right hand corner of the SIF-2 form is very important when referencing the workers' compensation claim.
6. If the employee does not have a workers compensation packet, the physician may have the Physician's Initial Report form in his/her office. Be sure that the physician sends the completed forms to: King County Safety & Claims Management, 500 4th Avenue, Suite 500, Seattle WA 98104.
7. If the initial treating physician refers the injured employee to another doctor, duplicates of the forms described above should not be filled out. The new treating physician should be advised that all forms have been processed.

TIME LOSS RESULTING FROM WORK-RELATED INJURY OR ILLNESS

1. It is the responsibility of the injured employee to notify his/her immediate supervisor of physician-directed days away from work resulting from a work-related injury or illness. The employee must seek medical treatment if the inability to work is due to a work-related illness or injury. The time off work must be authorized by a physician for worker compensation wage replacement benefits to be paid.
2. The injured employee needs to contact his/her payroll clerk to determine what type of medical leave is appropriate.
3. The immediate supervisor must notify Safety and Claims Management (206-477-3350) if the injured employee is absent from work due to a work-related illness or injury.

RESTRICTED DUTY

1. On the initial visit, the injured worker's doctor indicates on a Medical Release - Physical Capacities Evaluation if the injured worker can return to work with full duties, modified duties, or if s/he needs to remain off work. This form goes to the injured worker's supervisor and the work status of the injured worker is reported to Safety and Claims Management.
2. If the doctor says the injured worker can go back to work, but with some restrictions, the injured worker takes a doctor's note that identifies restrictions to his/her supervisor and asks if the restrictions can be accommodated within 24 hours. This same note goes to Safety and Claims Management, and a coordinated effort is made between the claims section, the injured worker's supervisor and doctor on any available light duties.
3. If the doctor says the injured worker cannot continue in his/her usual occupation because of physical limitations, the injured worker may be eligible for the King County Disability Accommodation program or vocational rehabilitation services.

RETURN TO WORK

1. Prior to returning to work, the injured employee must have a written work release from his/her attending physician. The release is to be given to the injured worker's immediate supervisor.
2. The immediate supervisor forwards a copy of the release, or otherwise notifies Safety and Claims Management.