

# Accident Reports

Policy 303.5

## 1 Introduction

1.1 Appalachian State University (“University”) is committed to providing a safe work environment free of recognized hazards for all employees, students, and visitors. To accomplish this goal, it is important that everyone take an active role in promoting safety and identifying hazards that could result in injury. In the event an incident or injury does occur, it is important to quickly report the incident to ensure that proper care is provided to the injured person, and that steps are taken to identify and mitigate any potential hazards to prevent future injury. Prompt reporting also is necessary in order to satisfy various legal obligations and protect the interests of the University as a whole. This policy outlines the process for reporting occupational incidents and injuries with an emphasis on injury prevention.

## 2 Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all University employees.

2.2. The North Carolina Workers’ Compensation Act (N.C.G.S. Chapter 97) covers all University employees. Any employee who suffers an occupational injury or contracts an occupational illness within the parameters of the North Carolina Workers’ Compensation Act is entitled to benefits and subject to obligations under the Act. The North Carolina Industrial Commission administers the Workers’ Compensation Act.

2.3 The North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Act (N.C.G.S. Chapter 95, Article 16) also covers all University employees. Administration of this Act is handled by the North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHNC), which falls under the purview of the North Carolina Department of Labor. Any occupational injuries and illnesses suffered by University employees must be recorded and reported to the proper entities outlined within this policy. These records must be made available to OSHNC for examination.

2.4 Each agency listed above has their own unique regulations and reporting requirements, but share the common goal of ensuring a safe work environment for all employees. It is important that the University community works to comply with the requirements of both North Carolina’s Workers’ Compensation Act and its Occupational Safety and Health Act to ensure that incidents are prevented from occurring and proper care is provided to those that are injured while at work.

## 3 Definitions

### 3.1 Amputations

The traumatic loss of a limb or other external body part, including but not limited to complete or partial severance of any appendage; fingertip amputations with or without bone loss; medical amputations resulting from irreparable damage; and amputations of body parts that have been since reattached.

### 3.2 EHS&EM

The University’s Office of Environmental Health, Safety and Emergency Management.

### 3.3 Employee

All University employees, including full-time EHRA faculty, EHRA non-faculty, and SHRA employees; as well as part-time employees, temporary employees, and student employees.

### 3.4 Incident

Any undesired occurrence resulting in a work-related personal injury, illness, damage to property, or loss of process (production) or materials.

### 3.5 In-Patient Hospitalization

Formal admission to the in-patient service of a hospital or clinic for care or treatment.

### **3.6 Near Hit**

Any incident where no property damage occurred or no personal injury was sustained, but where an incident and/or injury could have easily occurred given a slight shift in time or position.

### **3.7 Occupational**

Of or relating to an employee's workplace or work responsibilities.

### **3.8 Serious Injury**

A severe or traumatic injury including but not limited to amputations, significant head injuries (e.g., resulting in a loss of consciousness), loss of an eye(s), any fall resulting in significant injuries, and the impaling of any foreign object into the body. A serious injury includes any medical condition, such as a heart attack, that results in emergency medical care, in-patient hospitalization, or death.

### **3.9 University**

Appalachian State University.

### **3.10 Workers' Compensation Administrator (WCA)**

The WCA serves as the liaison between the injured employee, the supervisor, the University and the Third Party Administrator to ensure that University employees who are injured on the job receive the medical attention needed.

## **4 Policy and Procedure Statements**

### **4.1 Medical Care for Injured Employees**

4.1.1 In the event an employee receives a work related injury, the primary concern and first priority is to ensure proper medical treatment is provided.

4.1.2 If the injury or illness is life-threatening, 9-1-1 should be contacted immediately.

4.1.3 If the injury is not life-threatening, the injured employee should seek initial treatment at Fast Med Urgent Care (FMUC). If FMUC is not open, the employee should go to the Watauga Medical Center Emergency Room. If transportation is needed, the injured employee may contact University Police at 262-2150.

4.1.4 Failure to seek initial care from Fast Med Urgent Care or Watauga Medical Center may preclude workers compensation payment.

4.1.5 With the exception of emergency care or initial treatment, any treatment or surgery by a medical professional shall be coordinated with individuals in the University's Office of Human Resources responsible for handling Workers' Compensation matters.

### **4.2 Employee Responsibilities**

4.2.1 There are several responsibilities that employees experiencing an occupational incident, including an injury or illness, must fulfill to ensure that future incidents or injuries are prevented, proper care is received, and eligible benefits are received. The first priority is ensuring that proper emergency care is provided when appropriate.

4.2.2 Employees are required to report immediately, to their supervisor, any incident that occurs as defined in section 3 of this policy. If the employee is unable to report the incident due to injury, a co-worker may report the injury in their place and the supervisor will follow up with the injured employee as necessary. Failure to provide timely notice of the incident may result in further injury or illness and/or potentially disqualify the employee from receiving eligible benefits.

4.2.3 Documentation of all incidents, regardless of severity, is required by the employee. In addition to supervisor notification, the employee shall complete the Initial Notification of Injury (INI) Form within 24 hours of the incident. Failure to timely and accurately report notification of an incident could result in a delay or denial of Workers' Compensation benefits. A link to this form is located under the Forms section of this policy. In the event the injured employee is unable to complete the form, the employee's supervisor may complete the INI Form on their behalf.

4.2.4 For workers' compensation, the University's workers comp administrator will coordinate the benefits process and communicate with the injured employee regarding any additional information or actions needed. It is the employee's

responsibility to ensure that all requested information is provided completely, accurately, and in a timely manner.

4.2.5 In cases where an occurrence did not result in injury, property damage, or loss of process (production) or materials, but the employee perceives an injury, property damage, or loss of process (production) or materials could have resulted (near hit), the employee shall complete the Initial Notification of Injury Form within 24 hours of the event. A link to this form is located under the Forms section of this policy. Completion of this form is vital to documenting minor injuries that may require future medical care, as well as potentially help prevent an incident, injury, or illness from occurring in the future.

### **4.3 Supervisor Responsibilities**

4.3.1 The supervisor of an injured employee is responsible for immediately contacting the EHS&EM and Human Resources following a Serious Injury as defined in this policy. Failure to contact EHS&EM within 6 hours of the occurrence of a Serious Injury could result in a violation of OSHNC regulations and potential fines for the University. Completion of the forms mentioned in this policy does not substitute the need to contact the EHS&EM office directly.

4.3.2 During business hours (8 am -5 pm, Monday-Friday), the supervisor shall report to EHS&EM and Human Resources either in person or by calling EHS&EM's main telephone line (828-262-4008) and the Workers' Comp Administrator at 828-262-6488. If there is no answer, the supervisor shall follow the after-hours protocol found below (see section 4.3.3).

4.3.3 After hours, including weekends and holidays, the supervisor shall contact University Police at 828-262-2150 to report the incident. The supervisor must provide a brief description of the incident and their contact information. A member of the EHS&EM team will be notified by University Police and EHS&EM will follow-up with the supervisor.

4.3.4 Should an injured employee be required to miss work due to an occupational injury or illness, or to work in a reduced capacity (restricted or light duty), the supervisor shall communicate this information to an individual in the University's Office of Human Resources responsible for handling Workers' Compensation matters. This information must be reported. For assistance in determining whether the injured employee meets the definition of missed work time or restricted duty, contact the Office of Human Resources (828-262-6488).

4.3.5 The supervisor of the employee involved in an incident, injury, or near hit shall conduct an investigation, regardless of incident severity. The supervisor shall complete the Supervisor's Investigation Form, and forward copies to the Workers' Comp Administrator and EHS&EM within 24 hours of the incident. The Supervisor's Investigation Form can be found in the Forms section of this policy.

### **4.4 University Occupational Accident and Injury Investigations**

#### **4.4.1 Supervisor Investigations**

The injured employee's supervisor shall take an active role in investigating incidents, to include injuries and near hits. Supervisors shall conduct a review of any incident to determine the root cause and ways to prevent future injuries. The purpose of these investigations is not to affix blame, but to identify safety hazards and work to prevent future injuries.

Supervisors may contact EHS&EM for assistance with investigations and/or utilize the supervisor's investigation guide found at the end of this policy. Training on how to conduct incident investigations is also available through EHS&EM.

#### **4.4.2 Environmental Health, Safety, and Emergency Management Investigations**

Information obtained from the initial report of an incident or near hit will be used to determine if an incident investigation by EHS&EM will be conducted. Determining factors may include the nature of the injury or illness, the severity of the incident, prior occurrence of related incidents, request for assistance with an investigation, and other factors.

EHS&EM will conduct an investigation on all workplace incidents, injuries, and fatalities. EHS&EM will review all supervisor incident investigations to determine if any additional actions are needed based on supervisor findings.

The purpose of EHS&EM investigations is to determine the root cause of an incident in order to help prevent future injuries from occurring.

EHS&EM will be responsible for notifying and coordinating with OSHNC and NCOSHR upon notification of reportable accidents and injuries.

#### **4.4.3 Worker's Compensation Investigations**

The Worker's Compensation Administrator and third party claims administrator may opt to conduct an independent or joint investigation (with EHS&EM) of occupational injuries and illnesses. The purpose of this investigation is to aid in the determination of liability and compensability.

## 4.5 Corrective Actions

4.5.1 Hazards discovered during the investigation process of occupational incidents and injuries shall be referred by EHS&EM to the appropriate department head for correction.

4.5.2 The department head where the employee reports is responsible for ensuring that identified hazards are corrected.

4.5.3 If hazards cannot be immediately corrected, the department head shall take appropriate action to ensure to the best of their ability that a similar injury or illness does not occur. This may necessitate a change in operations or restricting access to a given area.

4.5.4 If the supervisor of an injured employee discovers any hazards while conducting an incident investigation, the supervisor will either correct the hazard(s), consult with EHS&EM for guidance on how to proceed, or forward the identified hazards to the appropriate department head for correction.

4.5.5 EHS&EM shall be notified by the appropriate department head when identified hazards have been corrected. If hazards cannot be immediately corrected, a correction plan shall be provided to EHS&EM outlining prevention strategies and an estimated date of correction.

4.5.6 EHS&EM may be contacted at any time for consultation and guidance. However, corrective actions remain the responsibility of the department head.

## 4.6 University Reports

4.6.1 The North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Act requires the recording and maintenance of the specialized reports of occupational injuries and illnesses as follows:

4.6.1a A continuously maintained log of each recordable occupational illness or injury. This report is referred to as the OSHA 300 Log, and is maintained by the Workers' Compensation Administrator in Human Resources.

4.6.1b An annual summary analysis of injuries and illnesses for public posting from February 1st through April 30th of each year. This report is referred to as the OSHA Form 300A, and is also maintained by the Workers' Compensation Administrator in Human Resources.

## 4.7 Forms

4.8.1 [Initial Notification of Incident Form](#)

4.8.2 [Supervisor Accident Investigation Form](#)

## 5 Additional References

[North Carolina Workers' Compensation Act, N.C.G.S. Chapter 97](#)

[North Carolina Occupational Safety and Health Act, N.C.G.S. Chapter 95, Article 16}](#)

[OSHNC Part 1904 – Recordkeeping](#)

[North Carolina Department of Labor, Division of Occupational Safety and Health](#)

[North Carolina Office of State Human Resources, Incident Investigation and Reporting Program](#)

[State Employees Workplace Requirements Program for Safety, Health, and Workers' Compensation, N.C.G.S. section 143-580, et seq. and 25 NCAC, 01N .0100, et seq.](#)

## 6 Authority

[University of North Carolina Policy Manual, The Code Section 502](#)

## 7 Contact Information

Accident and Injury Investigations and Prevention – Environmental Health, Safety and Emergency Management  
(828.262.4008)

Worker's Compensation – Human Resources (828.262.6488)

## 8 Original Effective Date

# 9 Revision Dates

July 11, 2019