

# Best Practices: Visitor Accident Investigation

Having an accident investigation process is critical to properly handle visitor injuries when they arise and mitigate future loss. Follow these best practices on how to investigate visitor accidents.

## Accident Investigation

After reading this article you will understand:

- Who conducts visitor accident investigations.
- What & when information needs to be recorded.
- Where, why and how information is recorded.
- Actions that must be taken after an investigation.

## Who

- Designate one public garden supervisor/safety manager/HR director in charge of the area where the accident occurred. They are responsible for conducting the investigation.
- The investigator should be held accountable for reporting the investigation carefully and clearly.

## What

The investigator will determine:

- What happened - write down and thoroughly describe what took place that prompted the investigation and what the visitor(s) was/were doing at the time of the accident.
- Important to note weather conditions at the time if incident occurred outside.
- Ask staff who were in the space just before the incident to recap what happened.

## When

- The investigation should be done immediately following the accident.

## Where

- The investigation and witness statements should be completed at the scene of the accident.
- Take pictures of the scene and area adjacent to the space.
- Use a common object such as a quarter to provide scale.

## Why

Determine why the accident happened.

- Obtain all the facts surrounding the accident.
  - ⇒ What caused the accident to occur— direct or indirect cause.
  - ⇒ The sequence of events before the accident occurred.
  - ⇒ Who was involved.
  - ⇒ What is the extent of the injuries and/or damage resulting from the accident.

## How

Use accident recording forms and an accident investigation kit to record the investigation and ensure you gather all necessary information. If you need a good reporting form, contact BHS and we can help provide an example.

## After the Investigation

- Provide copies of the forms used as well as any notes on the investigation to BHS or your current insurance agent.
- Determine whether the situation or conditions that led to this accident exist anywhere else in the public garden.
  - ⇒ If so, take action to correct this.
- Use the accident as an opportunity to review safety procedures or any other applicable training with your employees and volunteers.
- Contact the injured guest within 24 hours to see how they are doing and if any medical assistance was needed afterwards.

For more information on best practices: visitor accident investigation for your public garden, contact Sharon Van Loon or Kim Slager.

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