

PCNSW INCIDENT NOTIFICATION AND MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE

July 2026

1. Notifiable Incident Legislative Requirements

All congregations (as occupiers and controllers of premises and/or employers) are required to notify SafeWork NSW and their workers compensation insurer when a 'notifiable' incident occurs on a church site or off-site ministry activity.

A '**notifiable incident**' under the work health and safety legislation relates to:

- the death of a person
- a serious injury or illness of a person
- a potentially dangerous incident.

A "**Serious injury or illness**" means an injury or illness requiring the person to have:

- Immediate treatment as an in-patient in a hospital, or
- Immediate treatment for:
 - amputation of a body part
 - a serious head injury
 - a serious eye injury
 - a serious burn, or
 - the separation of skin from an underlying tissue, or
 - a spinal injury
 - the loss of a bodily function, or
 - serious lacerations, or
- medical treatment within 48 hours of exposure to a substance

A "**dangerous incident**" includes:

- Uncontrolled escape, spillage or leakage of a substance
- Uncontrolled implosion, explosion or fire
- Uncontrolled escape of gas or steam
- Uncontrolled escape of pressurised substance
- Electric Shock
- Fall or release from height of any plant, substance or thing
- Collapse, overturning, failure, malfunction or damage to plant requiring authorisation as per the regulations
- Collapse or partial collapse of a structure
- Collapse or failure of excavation or of shoring supporting excavation
- In rush of water, mud or gas in workings in underground excavation or tunnel
- Interruption of main system of ventilation in underground excavation or tunnel

If a death, dangerous incident or significant injury has occurred, the following steps must be taken:

- Notify SafeWork NSW immediately by calling 13 10 50.
- Ensure that the area is isolated (not disturbed) until an inspector arrives at the site or directs otherwise unless this would prevent assistance to an injured person or the removal of a deceased person or makes the site unsafe.
- Notify the General Manager (Church Offices: general@pcnsw.org.au).
- Undertake the steps as outlined in the following section: *Accident/Incident/Near Miss Reporting Procedure*.

SafeWork will ask for:

- an overview of what happened, including date, time and location
- information about anyone who was injured, including their date of birth, contact details and their relationship to you (worker, site visitor, volunteer, contractor, member of the public)
- information about the injury, including treatment received and hospital details, if they were taken to hospital
- your details, including business information and contact details
- immediate action taken to make the site safe
- further safety action taken, or actions that will be taken, to prevent the incident happening again.

For what to expect from SafeWork with regard incident response and investigations see:

https://www.safework.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/956224/SafeWork-NSW-incident-response-and-investigations-what-to-expect-Customer-Service-Standard.pdf

2. Accident/Incident/Near Miss Reporting Procedure

The following steps are to be undertaken for **all incidents requiring more than simple first aid, and that have the potential to give rise to an insurance claim** (including notifiable incidents). This includes employee (and volunteer) injury claims under the personal accident and workers compensation policies, and public liability claims. Examples include:

- fatalities
 - fractures and broken bones
 - head or spinal injuries
 - dislocations and sprains
 - cases of mental anguish, trauma, or anxiety arising from an incident
- Complete the “**Incident Report Form**” and “**Investigation Report Form**” (See <https://pcnsw.org.au/work-health-and-safety/> (Accident, Incident, Near Miss and Hazard Management) and where possible take photos of the site, and forward to the Insurance Department (insurance@pcnsw.org.au) who will notify the insurer.
 - Where a paid worker is injured at work, contact icare (13 44 22) or other relevant workers compensation insurer.

In addition, the following steps are to be undertaken for **all injuries, incidents and near misses**:

- Record the incident or injury in the local church’s register of incidents and injuries. (A ‘**Record of First Aid**’ can also be completed if these are used by the church. See <https://pcnsw.org.au/work-health-and-safety/> (First Aid)).
- All physical incidents are to be reported to and managed by the Committee of Management (CoM).
- All psychosocial injuries (e.g. bullying, fatigue, other psychosocial) are to be reported to and managed by the Session.
- The CoM/Session are to investigate the accident/incident to determine the root cause, assess the risk and assign corrective actions, pastoral follow-up and what can be undertaken to ensure the accident/incident does not happen again. Where possible, the person/s conducting the investigation should take photos of the incident site to assist with determining causation and identify relevant witnesses to the event. This discussion is to be recorded in CoM/Session minutes.
- “Near misses” should also be reported because they serve as a warning sign of potential hazards, allowing the church to identify and address safety issues before a serious accident or injury occurs. If a hazard is noted a ‘**Hazard Report Form**’ (See <https://pcnsw.org.au/work-health-and-safety/> Accident, Incident, Near Miss and Hazard Management) is to be completed and sent to Session (psychosocial) or CoM (physical).

A flowchart of the steps to be undertaken when an incident or accident occurs is outlined in the following section.

Where an Incident Report is received by the Insurance Department from someone outside the CoM or Session, the Insurance Manager will send a copy of the report to the relevant Session (psychosocial reports) or CoM (physical reports) and in some cases will require a report back regarding how Session or CoM have managed the incident/accident and what they have done to ensure it does not happen again.

The Insurance Manager will record the incident in the PCNSW Accident/Incident/Near Miss Register, accessible by the WHSE Manager, and reported each year to the General Manager and Trustees. Reports will be used to determine risks, training requirements and allocation of resources.

3. Psychosocial Reporting which Involves Minister/Session

It is recognised that in some instances, particularly psychosocial incidents which involve the Minister or members of Session, it may be necessary for the person with the concern to address their incident report to one member of session and seek delegation of a small commission (not those involved in the incident/concern and to maintain anonymity). In some instances, it may be necessary for Session to escalate the concern/incident to the Presbytery who may involve Assessor Elders. See **'Grievance Policy'**, **'Psychosocial Policy Template'** and **'Psychosocial Risk Assessment Procedure'** See <https://pcnsw.org.au/work-health-and-safety/> (Psychosocial).

4. Incident, Accident, Near Miss and Hazard Register

Congregations are legally required to keep a register of injuries and illnesses sustained by workers or visitors regardless of whether there has been a claim made to the insurer. There are penalties for failing to keep a register of injuries.

The register of injuries must include:

- the name of the injured worker
- the worker's address
- the worker's age at the time of injury
- the worker's occupation at the time of injury
- the industry in which the worker was engaged at the time of injury
- the time and date of injury
- the nature of the injury
- the cause of the injury.

A template is available at safework.nsw.gov.au. See also 'Incident, Accident, Near Miss and Hazard Register': <https://pcnsw.org.au/work-health-and-safety/> (Accident, Incident, Near Miss and Hazard Management). Over time this register can provide information on areas of greatest risk, patterns of incidents and where to focus resources and training.

Incident Notification & Management Flowchart

