

Visitor/General Public Incident/Injury Response Procedures for the State of Delaware

Purpose: To establish the guidelines to be followed when a visitor or member of the general public is injured while visiting a State agency.

Procedure: When a visitor injury occurs:

1) Assess the situation and take care of the injured person's medical needs following these guidelines:

- Make the injured person as comfortable as possible and provide applicable first aid.
- Call 911# when: the injured person is not ambulatory without assistance; head trauma exists; the complaining party shows signs of broken bones; there are complaints of chest pain, pain radiating from the arms, shoulders, jaw or back; there is profuse bleeding that cannot be stopped or slowed; the injured party is unable to provide his/her own transport to the closest treatment facility or there are any other signs of a debilitating injury that would prevent the injured person from self-transport to the closest treatment facility.
- Never transport an injured visitor to a treatment facility in their car, your car or a State vehicle.
- Do not move the injured person. If the injured person requests assistance in sitting up, getting back to their feet or regaining balance, you may then assist them in doing so as long as these actions are initiated by the injured party and do not appear as though they may negatively affect the injured person.
- As you attend to the person's medical needs pay particular attention to any statements from the injured party that indicate the accident may have been the result of a prior medical condition such as diabetes, epilepsy, uncontrolled blood pressure, an equilibrium problem or medications that may have been taken/not taken as prescribed.
- Obtain all the information that you can about the injured party and how the accident happened including visitor name, address, home phone and work phone.

2) Bring the accident scene under control and secure the area until a thorough accident investigation can be completed.

3) Conduct a thorough accident investigation following these guidelines:

- Start the investigation immediately after the accident has occurred and the area has been secured.
- Determine whether there were any witnesses to the accident. If there were witnesses, obtain their names, address, home and work phones.
- Interview all possible witnesses attempting to answer: who, what, when, where, why and how questions regarding the accident. If applicable, be sure to consider three important categories: equipment, materials, and people involved. Take copious notes or use a tape recorder to record the interview.
- To avoid undue influence interview all witnesses separately.
- Obtain witness statements regarding the incident. Check with all witnesses to make sure that you may contact them in the future if their assistance is needed.
- Take photographs of the accident scene or draw a sketch of the scene at the time of the accident. Take appropriate measurements.
- For slips, trips and falls take note of the following things: weather conditions outside, type of shoes worn by the accident victim (especially the type of sole, whether the shoes had laces, if they were tied and the appropriate length for the shoes worn), type and condition of the floors where the accident victim fell, the availability of handrails, the presence of “Caution” or “Wet Floor” signs, and whether or not there were appropriate walk off mats at the entrance doors. Also note the distance from the point of entry to the point where the accident victim slipped, tripped or fell.
- Write down all significant information. Edit and review your notes later as more information is discovered.
- Develop a chronological timeline of the events that led to the accident as well as the accident itself.
- If applicable, provide definitive recommendations and a schedule for corrective actions.
- Follow up to ensure that appropriate actions have been taken.

4) Notify the State of Delaware Insurance Coverage Office of the accident via email as soon as possible following the accident, but no later than 24 hours after the incident has occurred. The Insurance Coverage Office email address is inscov@state.de.us.

5) Complete an Incident, Injury and Illness Report (found on the Insurance Coverage website at <http://www.inscov.delaware.gov>) and submit the report and all witness statements via fax to State of Delaware, Insurance Coverage Office at 302-739-5345. Maintain a hard copy of the report, all notes and witness statements at the agency for reference.

6) Follow these additional general visitor accident procedures:

- Never admit responsibility/liability of any kind.
- Do not agree to pay any expenses related to the injury.
- Remember that the manner in which the visitor is treated at the accident scene can set the tone for a possible claim. The first few minutes following a visitor incident are often the most important. Treat the visitor with care and compassion; however, also observe and note the facts surrounding the incident.
- As the accident investigator you are the only person able to gather critical initial information that will assist the State in investigating the loss. It is critical to obtain all the necessary information regarding the visitor and the incident while the visitor is on the premises. Once the visitor leaves the premises the information is lost. The smallest incident should be treated with the same attention and concern given to a major injury. Sometimes it is the small incidents that later become major problems.
- Identify any and all conditions or circumstances which deviated from normal, no matter how insignificant they may seem at the time.

7) If there are any comments or questions regarding the contents of this procedure please contact the Insurance Coverage Office at 1-877-277-4185 or 302-739-3651 or via email at inscov@state.de.us.