



Workplace Safety Incident Reporting

CUPE 1883 Member FAQ

A MESSAGE FROM CUPE 1883

CUPE 1883 believes that every worker has the right to a safe, healthy, and respectful workplace. Reporting incidents, injuries, or hazards no matter how small helps protect one another and strengthens our collective voice for safer working conditions.

Health and safety is a shared responsibility between workers and the employer. This FAQ outlines when and how to complete a workplace incident report and who to contact for support. By speaking up and reporting concerns, CUPE 1883 members help create a stronger, safer workplace for everyone.

BACKGROUND: WHY REPORTING HEALTH AND SAFETY ISSUES MATTERS

Everyone plays a role in keeping our workplace safe. Reporting health and safety concerns, hazards, or incidents helps identify risks early so they can be addressed before someone gets hurt. When employees take the time to report even small issues it gives the Region of Waterloo and CUPE 1883 the information needed to:

- Investigate the cause of incidents and prevent them from happening again.
- Make improvements to workplace practices, equipment, and environments.
- Ensure compliance with Ontario's *Occupational Health and Safety Act*.
- Support the physical and psychological wellbeing of all employees.

A strong safety culture depends on open communication and trust. Reporting incidents and hazards isn't about blame it's about working together to create a workplace where everyone can feel safe, supported, and respected.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

1. What is an incident report?

An incident report (previously known as an HR18) is used to record any work-related event or situation that causes, or could cause, harm to someone's physical or mental health. Completing a report helps keep everyone safe and ensures the Region meets its obligations under Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act.

2. When should I complete a workplace incident report?

You should complete an incident report **as soon as possible** after any of the following:

- You are **injured or become ill** because of your work (even if the injury seems minor).
- You experience a **near miss**, something happened that could have caused harm but didn't. (example: almost slipping on ice in the parking lot).
- You are **exposed** to something harmful (for example, a chemical, loud noise, or stressful or traumatic event).
- You experience or witness **violence, harassment, or a threatening situation** in the workplace.
- You notice an **unsafe condition or hazard** that could cause injury or illness if not fixed.

If you're unsure whether to report, **it's always better to complete a report or check with your supervisor or CUPE 1883 representative.**

3. Why is reporting important?

Reporting helps:

- Prevent injuries and improve safety for everyone.
- Ensure hazards are identified and corrected quickly.
- Support the Region's workplace health and safety investigations and improvements.
- Protect your rights under Ontario's health and safety laws and the **CUPE 1883 collective agreement.**

4. How do I complete a workplace incident report?

1. **Notify your supervisor right away** in writing about what happened.
2. The supervisor will complete the **Workplace Incident Report Form**, they may sit down with you to gather all the information required.
3. Include as many details as possible — what happened, where, when, and who was involved.
4. The supervisor must submit the report as soon as possible, ideally within **24 hours** of the incident.

Your supervisor will review the report, take steps to address any hazards, and share it with the Health and Safety Committee

5. Who sees the report?

Incident reports are reviewed by your supervisor, Human Resources, and the Region's Health and Safety and Committee. CUPE 1883 may also be involved in follow-up discussions where appropriate. All information is kept confidential and is only used for safety and compliance purposes.

6. What if I'm not sure whether something should be reported?

When in doubt, report it! If you're unsure, **talk to your supervisor, a health and safety committee member or your CUPE 1883 representative.** They can help determine whether a report is needed and guide you through the process. It's always safer to report than to leave something unrecorded.

7. Does reporting an incident mean I'm in trouble?

No. Reporting an incident is about **safety, not blame.** The goal is to understand what happened and prevent it from happening again. The Region of Waterloo and CUPE 1883 are committed to supporting a safe and respectful workplace for all employees.

If you have any questions about health and safety send us an email at healthsafety@cupe1883.ca.