Five (5) Steps for OSHA Injury and Illness Recordkeeping Requirements

Timely completion of the injury and illness records is a key OSHA recordkeeping requirement. Small businesses with 10 or fewer employees throughout the year are exempt from most of the requirements of the OSHA recordkeeping rules for injuries and illnesses, as are a number of specific industries, but not the LBM sector. Employers falling within the NAICS Code, 4441, Building material and supplies dealers, must comply with OSHA injury and illness recordkeeping.

In addition, all employers must report all work-related fatalities within 8 hours and all work-related inpatient hospitalization, all amputations and all losses of an eye within 24 hours. Only fatalities occurring within 30 days of a work-related incident, and only an in-patient hospitalization, amputation, or loss of an eye that occur within 24 hours of the work-related incident, must be reported to OSHA. Employers may report to OSHA by calling a designated 1-800 number, calling the closest OSHA Area Office, or using an online form. See OSHA's Reporting Fatalities and Severe Injuries/Illnesses for more information.

As stated in the OSHA Small Business Handbook, "The primary purpose of OSHA-required recordkeeping is to retain information about accidents that have happened to help determine the causes and develop procedures to prevent a recurrence." (Handbook, page 11) Importantly, good recordkeeping will be evidence of "good faith in reducing any penalties from OSHA inspections" (Ibid.).

The Handbook identifies five (5) steps in OSHA injury and illness recordkeeping system (Ibid.):

1. Obtain a report on every injury or job-related illness requiring medical treatment (other than basic first aid).

2. Record each injury or job-related illness on OSHA Form 300 (Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses) using the instructions provided.

3. Prepare a supplementary record of occupational injuries and illnesses for recordable cases on OSHA Form 301 (Injury and Illness Incident Report).

4. Every year, prepare an annual summary using OSHA Form 300A (Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses). Post it no later than February 1, and keep it posted until May 1. A good place to post it is next to the OSHA Workplace Poster.

5. Retain these records for at least five (5) years.

In addition to the injury and illness reporting and recordkeeping requirements, other OSHA standards also create recordkeeping requirements. The Handbook offers a helpful, but not all-inclusive "self-inspection" checklist.

Was this helpful? How could we improve the information to make it more relevant to your business? Please let us know.