

# OSHA

## Reporting injuries and illnesses



### BACKGROUND

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) recently mandated that certain employers electronically submit Form 300A, “Summary of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses.” It applies to employers with 20 to 249 employees in all states. Its applicability to dentistry and dentistry’s obligation to record and report injuries and illnesses to OSHA were discussed.

### APPLICABILITY TO DENTISTRY

Dentistry is considered a partially exempt industry. If a dental practice receives a written request from OSHA, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, or a state agency relating to industrial relations to record injuries and illness on these forms, the practice must do so for the period of time requested. Such forms are not required if no written request to log injuries and illness has been received.

The dental practice must report injuries to state agencies. This includes any serious injury, illness, or death of an employee in a place of employment or in connection with employment. If fire or police agencies are called on to respond to a serious accident, that agency will notify the state authorities as soon as is practically possible but no longer than 8 hours after the employer knows or would have known of the occurrence. Reports should be filed for any paid employee. This would be executives, hourly, salaried, part-time, seasonal, and temporary employees supervised day to day. If a temporary agency has been used, the dentist must confirm with the agency whether it will report or the dental practice will report the incident, which requires only a single report. Self-employed persons, sole proprietors, or partners are not considered employees for record-keeping purposes.

What must be recorded includes the time and date of the accident; the employer’s contact information; the name and job title of the person who is reporting; the address of the site of the accident; the name of the person to contact at the accident site; the contact information for the injured/ill employee; the nature of the injury; where the injured person(s) was/were moved to;

and any law enforcement agencies present. The accident should be described, also noting any alterations to the accident scene or instrumentality.

### WHAT IS REPORTED AND PRIVACY CONCERNS

Recordable injuries include work-related cuts, fractures, sprains, or amputations. Recordable illnesses are work-related abnormal conditions or disorders or acute or chronic illness, such as skin disease, respiratory disorders, or poisonings.

For needle-stick or sharps injuries contaminated with another person’s blood or other potentially infectious material, the employee’s name should not be entered to protect his or her privacy. If an employee asks not to have his or her name included, the dental practice can honor that request. Employee names should not be listed for injuries/illnesses that involve sexual assault, mental illness, intimate body parts, the reproductive system, HIV infection, hepatitis, or tuberculosis. Employers should maintain a separate, confidential list of case numbers and employee names.

**Clinical Significance**

Dental practices must be aware of their regulatory compliance responsibilities. Reporting of injuries and illnesses that affect employees during their working assignments using OSHA Form 300A or 300 is required only if requested in writing by that agency or a similar state organization. Injuries must be reported to state agencies, as required under state law.

CDA Practice Support: Employee injury reporting and records. CDA J 46:523-524, 2018

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