



Question of the Week

July 30, 2025

Question

One of our employees cut their hand on the edge of a broken filing cabinet at work. We asked if they wanted medical treatment, but they declined. Should we still have them fill out an accident report?

ANSWER

Yes, even if the employee declines professional medical treatment, it's important to document the incident and keep it on file.

Having a habit of documenting issues (from safety to harassment to performance) is key to getting them solved. In this case, the broken filing cabinet poses a hazard and should be repaired or replaced promptly before anyone else is injured by it. A paper trail will (hopefully) create accountability and make that more likely to happen.

You should also give the employee the option to complete a workers' compensation claim form, which can be obtained from your insurance provider. Most workers' compensation policies require notice of an injury to be reported within 24 hours of the incident. If the employee declines to file a claim, make note of that in case the injury worsens and they decide to file a claim later.

If your organization is subject to Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) recordkeeping requirements, then the injury should be recorded within seven days on the OSHA Form 300, *Log of Work-Related Injuries and Illnesses*, and Form 301, *Injury and Illness Incident Report*.

We have an [accident investigation report form](#) available for use on the platform.

This Q&A does not constitute legal advice and does not address state or local law.