

HOW TO BUILD A JOB SITE INJURY RESPONSE PROCESS

Someone Gets Hurt. Know Exactly What Happens Next.

Most field service businesses have some form of safety program, but far fewer have a clear, written protocol for exactly what happens in the moments right after an injury occurs on a job site. Without one, those first minutes and hours get handled inconsistently – different supervisors reacting differently, delays in reporting, incomplete documentation of what happened. That gap doesn't just slow down care for the injured employee. It also weakens the business's position with the insurance carrier and creates real exposure if the incident is ever reviewed or disputed later. This guide isn't the protocol itself – it's what to actually put in writing so every supervisor already knows the plan before it's ever needed.

Six Things Every Injury Response Protocol Should Include

1 Name Who Gets Notified, and How
Your protocol should specify a real name or role – not “management” as a vague category – along with a backup if that person isn't reachable, and exactly how they're contacted. Whoever's on scene should never have to think about who to reach or go looking for a number.

2 Define How Severity Gets Assessed and When to Call for Help
Spell out what the notified person is responsible for confirming: what happened, how, where, and how severe it appears to be – along with a clear instruction that any real question about medical attention means calling for it immediately, no exceptions and no hesitation.

3 Build a Standard Set of Documentation Questions
Rather than leaving documentation to whatever someone happens to remember, the protocol should include an actual list of questions – what happened, when, where, who was involved, who witnessed it, what equipment or conditions were involved – to be completed in writing that same day.

4 Include a Checklist for Preserving the Scene
Specify exactly what should be photographed or preserved before anything is moved, cleaned up, or repaired – the equipment, the location, the conditions at the time. This is what turns “we should probably get some photos” into something that actually happens, consistently, every time.

5 Document Your Reporting Requirements and Deadlines
Lay out, in writing, what OSHA recordkeeping is required – federal, and consistent regardless of state – and what your state and insurance carrier separately require for workers' comp reporting, including the actual deadlines. Nobody should be looking these up for the first time under pressure.

6 Build In a Review and Update Step
The protocol itself should require a written post-incident review – what happened and why, whether the protocol was followed, how well it worked, and what should change. That's what turns the document into something that improves safety after every incident.

An injury response protocol is one piece of a much bigger picture – policies, training, incident reporting, and safety committee structure all working together. Dark Horse Works builds complete, OSHA-informed safety programs for field service businesses as part of The Gambit, our Operational Compliance System. Not sure where your current program actually stands? Take our free Safety Assessment at [darkhorseworks.consulting.com/tools](https://www.darkhorseworks.consulting.com/tools).