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## WHEN TO FILE AN INCIDENT REPORT

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Sometimes it's perfectly clear when a BSA incident report needs to be filed. In other circumstances, we may wonder if one is required. In this **BSA Safety Moment**, we will examine how to decide when to file reports on incidents, near misses, and youth protection/membership infractions.

Timely, clear, concise, and complete incident reports allow for an appropriate response and an opportunity for analysis and prevention efforts going forward. This process is crucial for impacting the culture, awareness, and continuous improvement of BSA and the programs we offer youth, which thereby leads to trust in our organization, employees, and volunteers.

### What Is an Incident?

There are three types of reportable incidents:

- Near Miss—A near miss does not result in injury, illness, or damage, by definition, but it had the potential to do so.
- General Liability—Events or allegations of injury, illness, or property damage, including employment, director, and officer issues.
- Youth Protection/Membership Infraction—Allegations of abuse, violations of BSA guidelines or policies, or inappropriate behavior by a Scout, Scout leader, parent, or other individual.

### Is a Report Necessary?

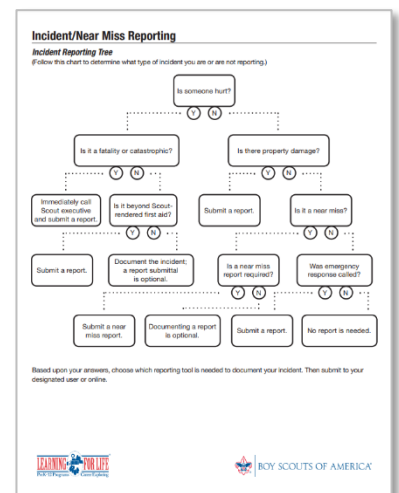
BSA provides a helpful [infographic](#) to help determine whether filing an incident report or a near miss report is indicated. When in doubt, it is always best to document an incident as soon as possible and use the opportunity to determine what actions could help prevent a similar incident in the future.

**Note:** Youth Protection/Membership infractions must be reported to your local council Scout executive. Situations of abuse or neglect may also call for mandatory reporting under BSA policy and/or state/local laws.

### How Do I File a Report?

You can report incidents, near misses, and youth protection/membership infraction incidents to your local council or enter them yourself using the reporting tools found on [Scouting.org](#). Follow these tips when reporting:

- Report incidents as soon as possible, and fill out reports completely.
- Photographs or other supporting documentation can add value to a report.
- Remember to include only pertinent facts about the incident.
- Do not assign blame or include personal opinions. Stick to the facts.



## Resources

- BSA Safety Moment [Incident Reporting Helps](#)
- Incident Reporting Decision Tree [infographic](#)
- BSA's "how to" webpage on [Incident Reporting](#)
- BSA's webpage on [Incident Reviews](#) to prevent similar occurrences
- BSA's [Youth Protection Reporting Procedures for Volunteers](#)