



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF  
**HEALTH & WELFARE**

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**INFORMATIONAL LETTER #2014-03**  
**Replaces Informational Letter #93-11**

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**DATE:** May 23, 2014

**TO:** ALL LONG TERM CARE FACILITIES IN IDAHO

**FROM:** DEBBY RANSOM, R.N., R.H.I.T., Chief  
Bureau of Facility Standards

**SUBJECT:** MAINTENANCE OF INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS

This Informational Letter is in regard to maintenance of incident and accident reports in the facility. Occasionally surveyors receive questions concerning surveyor access to incident and accident reports. While most facilities properly maintain the investigations and make them available to the surveyors, there are occasions when a new corporation comes to Idaho or an administrator moves here from a state that does not require these investigations be readily available to surveyors. This informational letter is provided to let you know why the survey agency looks at the records, what surveyors look for, how the information is used, and what the benefit is to the residents. It also addresses maintenance of records off-site is not acceptable. This is an Idaho state licensure requirement, which is more prescriptive than the federal requirements. This Informational Letter replaces Informational Letter #93-11.

This is an Idaho state licensure requirement, which is more prescriptive than the federal requirements.

IDAPA Title 3, Chapter 2, Rules and Minimum Standards for Skilled Nursing and Intermediate Care Facilities in Idaho, Section 16.03.02.003.01.a. states:

- a. The facility and all related buildings associated with the operation of the facility, **as well as all records required under these rules, shall be accessible at any reasonable time to authorized representatives of the Department for the purpose of inspection, with or without prior notice.**

Section 16.03.02.100.12.c. states:

- c. An incident-accident record shall be kept of all incidents or accidents sustained by employees, patients/residents, or visitors in the facility, and shall include the following information:
  - i. Name and address of employee, patient/resident, or visitor;
  - ii. A factual description of the incident or accident;
  - iii. Description of the condition of the patient/resident, employee or visitor including any injuries resulting from the accident; and,
  - iv. Time of notification of physician, if necessary.

Section 16.03.02.100.12.f. states:

- f. Immediate investigation of the cause of the incident or accident shall be instituted by the facility administrator and any corrective measures indicated shall be adopted.

These rules have been in effect for many years. A review of previous rules indicates that these requirements were in effect as early as 1963.

**The intent** of these rules is to require each facility to thoroughly investigate each incident or accident, evaluate as to the cause, and make corrections as necessary, thereby ensuring that preventable incidents or accidents are not repeated. The Department reviews the reports during the survey to ensure that a report of each incident is retained, an investigation is made, and that necessary corrective actions are taken in a timely manner. The Department cannot fully verify this process without full access to the written investigations. Residents benefit from this process through the assurance and verification that all reasonable precautions are taken to avoid repeated incidents or accidents.

The Department is aware, regardless of how well this process might work, that no facility is able to ensure that accidents will never occur. Investigations should be used by the facility in its quality assurance and improvement process to identify trends/issues that need to be addressed.

Guidance regarding content of the investigations, as well as reporting to the state's hotline, is addressed in a separate Informational Letter.

In conclusion, in order for survey staff to verify that the facility meets these requirements, they must have unimpeded access to all incident reports that have occurred in the last year or since the last survey, whichever is greater. The intent of the rule is for the facility to maintain these reports on-site, at the facility. In the past, a few facilities have opted to keep the reports at their corporate offices. This procedure is not acceptable, as it results in unnecessary delays in the survey process.

Failure to provide incident and accident reports seriously hinders the Department's ability to verify steps are taken to protect residents' health and safety and will be cited.

If you have any questions, please contact Lorene Kayser, LSW, QIDP, or David Scott, RN, Co-Supervisors of the Long Term Care unit at 208/334-6626, option 2.



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Bureau of Facility Standards

DR/nm

c: Idaho Health Care Association