

Incident Reporting and Stop-Work Standard

What to do in the first fifteen minutes, and who has the authority to stop.

Document reference	BRL-BIO-2026-09
Issued	31 August 2026
Revision	public revision 2 of 5
Owner	Biosafety Officer
Applies to	All personnel, all sites, all contractors

This standard is the first response for a biosafety, biosecurity, occupational-health or containment concern. It is written for the person who sees the problem, not only for the person who owns the room. Protect people, stop the hazard from growing, and report what is known without guessing.

1. First fifteen minutes

The first fifteen minutes are a sequence, not a test of memory. Use the safest action that fits the incident, call for help early, and do not re-enter or handle material to make the scene look tidy. If someone is injured or in immediate danger, call emergency services and follow the site emergency plan.

1. Stop the activity. Say "stop work" clearly, warn anyone in the immediate area and keep non-essential people away.
2. Protect life. Move to a safe position using the approved route; provide first aid only when trained and when doing so does not create another exposure.
3. Control the boundary. Close or secure the relevant area if it is safe, preserve doors, alarms, labels, containers and instruments, and do not improvise a decontamination method.
4. Notify the nearest supervisor and the Biosafety Officer. State the location, incident type, people involved, current danger and whether material or inventory is unaccounted for.
5. Contact occupational health for any actual or suspected exposure, injury, bite, scratch, symptom or contamination concern. Do not self-clear.
6. Record what happened while memories and instrument indications are fresh. Separate observation from assumption; the investigation will establish causes.

Any member of staff, contractor or visitor may stop work in good faith. No seniority or prior permission is required, and there is no consequence for raising a safety concern.

2. Immediate actions by incident type

Incident type	Immediate response
Suit breach	Stop work; use the approved alarm and communication method; follow the suit-laboratory exit and chemical-shower procedure; do not remove or repair the suit in the work area; notify the Biosafety Officer and occupational health immediately.
Sharps injury	Stop and place the sharp where it can be safely identified without further handling. Follow the approved immediate first-aid and decontamination procedure, seek occupational-health assessment without delay, and preserve the instrument and relevant records.
Spill inside primary containment	Stop manipulation, keep primary containment operating if safe, secure the work area and use only the approved spill response for that agent and cabinet or enclosure. Do not open the enclosure to investigate or clean beyond your training.
Spill outside primary containment	Stop; warn others; leave by the approved route if safe; close and control the area; do not walk through or attempt an unapproved clean-up. Notify the Biosafety Officer immediately and await the response team and release decision.
Loss of negative pressure	Stop work and secure materials without delaying egress. Check the approved alarm and communication channel, leave or shelter as directed by the site procedure, and do not defeat interlocks or reset alarms unless authorised.
Unaccounted inventory	Stop transactions involving the affected material; secure the authorised area and records; notify the custodian, supervisor and Biosafety Officer immediately. Do not recreate a count by moving containers or silently correcting the log.
Animal bite or scratch	Stop work; separate the animal only under the approved procedure; perform trained first aid, notify occupational health immediately, secure the room or enclosure as directed, and preserve identification and exposure information.

This table does not replace agent-specific procedures, emergency plans, medical advice or regulator instructions. When the incident type is uncertain, use the more protective response and escalate.

When the first action is not obvious

If two incident types apply, follow both controls without compromising egress or medical care. For example, a sharps injury during a spill is both an occupational-health event and a containment event. If the safe route, containment state or material identity is uncertain, do not return to clarify it. Tell the Biosafety Officer what is uncertain.

3. Decision table and notification chain

Question	If yes	If no or unknown
Is anyone injured, exposed or in immediate danger?	Protect life, call emergency services when needed and contact occupational health immediately.	Continue to control the area and assess containment.
Could material be outside the approved primary barrier?	Treat as a Class 3 or Class 4 event until the Biosafety Officer documents otherwise.	Continue under the approved deviation or near-miss path.
Is negative pressure, suit integrity, effluent or another critical barrier lost?	Stop work, control access and wait for an authorised release decision.	Do not infer that containment held from the absence of an alarm. Record observations.
Is Tier 1 inventory missing, mismatched or inaccessible?	Treat as a Class 4 event; preserve the records and notify the Biosafety Officer immediately.	Reconcile only under the custodian and verifier process.
Is an external notification potentially required?	The Biosafety Officer coordinates with the IBC chair and the responsible compliance role within the applicable legal time limit.	Document the basis for the decision and continue internal reporting.

Notification chain

Role	Required action	Time limit
Person who observes or receives the report	Stop work or support safe egress; give the first factual notification.	Immediately; never wait for a written form.
Nearest supervisor or responsible investigator	Secure the work group, identify the protocol and account for people and material.	Immediately after the first alert.
Biosafety Officer	Classify provisionally, control the scene, start the incident record and coordinate containment and occupational health.	Immediately for Class 3 or 4; within 1 hour for Class 2.
IBC chair	Confirm governance escalation, conditions for continued work and need for independent review.	Without delay for Class 3 or 4; within 1 business day for Class 2.
Occupational health	Assess exposure or injury, provide clinical direction and preserve confidential health records.	Immediately for any suspected exposure, injury, bite or scratch.
Executive duty officer and compliance role	Support resources, legal review and authority notifications where required.	Within applicable legal limits; sooner when directed by the Biosafety Officer.

The reporter is not responsible for deciding the final class or legal reporting status. The reporter is responsible for making the concern visible and preserving what they know. If a notified person cannot be reached, use the next role in the chain and record the attempted contact.

4. Reporting form and review record

Required form fields

Field	What to enter
Reporter and contact	Name, role, employer or contractor, safe callback method and whether the report is being made on behalf of another person.
Event identity	Date, local time, site, room or controlled area, protocol or work order, material or specimen identifier if known, and provisional class.
People and care	People present, injured or potentially exposed; first aid; emergency services; occupational-health contact; and any immediate restriction or relocation.
Observed facts	What was seen, heard or recorded; alarms or indications; sequence of actions; and what remains unknown. Avoid conclusions presented as facts.
Containment and inventory	Barrier state, area controls, package or container status, inventory discrepancy, transfers paused, and material secured.
Notifications	Who was told, by which channel, at what time, what was communicated and whether a callback or escalation was required.
Evidence and attachments	Relevant procedure version, training status, instrument or alarm record, photographs when authorised, chain-of-custody record and witness accounts.
Corrective action and closure	Immediate controls, owner, due date, independent verification, IBC decision, release criteria and closure date.

No-blame and non-retaliation commitment

Baxtra separates accountability from blame. A person who reports a concern, gives evidence, cooperates with a review or uses stop-work authority in good faith will not be penalised for doing so. Retaliation includes adverse treatment for raising a concern, participating in an investigation or declining unsafe work. Suspected retaliation is reported to the Biosafety Officer, IBC chair or the confidential compliance route and is reviewed independently of the underlying event where necessary.

This commitment does not excuse deliberate misconduct, concealment, falsification or knowing disregard of a control. Those questions are handled fairly, with evidence and due process, and never by discouraging early reporting.

A short factual report made promptly is more useful than a polished account made after records, alarm states or memories have changed.

5. Findings, feedback and external obligations

How findings are fed back

The Biosafety Officer issues a factual initial account and coordinates a proportionate review with the IBC. The review identifies causes, barrier performance, training or engineering gaps and actions that reduce recurrence. Sensitive operational details are not published merely to make the account appear complete.

- Immediate controls are communicated before work resumes.
- Lessons become procedure, training, engineering, inventory or contract actions with owners and due dates.
- The IBC reviews trends, including near misses and stop-work reports, not only events that caused harm.
- The reporter and work group receive a close-out summary where confidentiality, security and law permit; effectiveness is checked before an action is closed.

External notification obligations

Certain select-agent incidents, suspected exposures, reportable releases, occupational injuries, transport deviations, public-health concerns or contract events may require external notification. The Biosafety Officer, IBC chair and compliance role determine the recipient, content and time limit under the applicable US framework, permit, contract or public-health direction.

Personnel must not speculate or make an informal external statement without authorisation, but this must never delay a required notification. Baxtra preserves the report, notification time, recipient, acknowledgement and instructions received.

Ready reference

Immediate danger	Call emergency services and use the site emergency plan.
Any suspected exposure	Stop work; seek occupational-health assessment; notify the Biosafety Officer immediately.
Containment uncertainty	Leave or secure as directed; do not re-enter to investigate.
Inventory uncertainty	Stop transactions; preserve the log; notify the custodian and Biosafety Officer.
Good-faith stop	Any person may stop; no seniority or permission is required.
Written report	Complete the form within the timeline assigned to the provisional class.

This standard is read with the Biosafety and Biosecurity Policy, agent-specific procedures, occupational-health direction, emergency plans and applicable authority requirements. Where two instructions conflict, use the more protective action and escalate the conflict to the Biosafety Officer.

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Cleared for external publication by the Disclosure Review Board · DRB-2026-0521 · public revision 2 of 5 · issued 31 August 2026. The internal revision of this document is not published. Queries to disclosure@baxtra.pages.dev.