

# Tool: Written Confirmation of Permission to Clean an Accident Scene



Although you're allowed to clean up an accident scene where necessary to prevent serious injury, illness and/or property damage, veteran safety lawyers say that OHS officials may be willing to grant permission for immediate clean up after minor incidents not involving injury, particularly at public workplaces like airports, restaurants and shopping malls. You can get such permission on the phone but need to clearly document it in writing to verify that it was provided in case the official tries to take back the permission or denies ever making it. Here's a Model Form based on a fictionalized situation that you can adapt for the real thing if an incident occurs at your workplace.

## Model Documentation of Permission to Clean Accident Scene

To: Jane Smith, OHS Investigator, Badge No. 124-AB-56789

From: Bob Brown, ABC Diner, Health & Safety Co-Ordinator

Date: September 15, 2019

Re: Confirmation of permission to clean-up accident scene

For my records, I want to confirm that I spoke to you this afternoon at approximately 1 PM to report that one of our waiters, Mr. John Johnson, had fallen while carrying a tray of food. I told you that Mr. Johnson did not appear to be seriously hurt but was being taken to the doctor for precautions.

We are aware that under OHS laws, we are not supposed to disturb an accident scene before an OHS inspector investigates except where necessary to prevent serious injury, illness or property. I acknowledged that this was not the situation in this case but explained that our workplace is a restaurant and that the seemingly minor accident occurred in the middle of a crowded lunch period and asked for permission to clean up right away. You agreed as long as we first took photos of the scene. We took the photos.

Will you please be so kind as to sign this note to confirm that you agree with this account so that we may have it for our records' Of course, if you disagree with, would like to add new information or have any other comments on this account, please let me know and I will make the necessary modifications. Thank you.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_