

Workers' Compensation Initial Report Cheat Sheet

Reviewed by the BastionGPT Clinical Advisory Board · August 2026

A workers' compensation initial report is the first claims-facing report a treating clinician sends after evaluating a claimed work-related mental health condition: event, diagnosis, work-relatedness, function, risk, plan, and work status. Every state and scheme names its own form (California Form 5021, BC Form 8P, WorkSafeNB IPAR, NSW AHTR); the duty to report is often law while the template is payer policy. Most run 600 to 1,500 words.

Identifiers and claim linkage match the report to the claim

Do: carry claim number, employer, occupation, date of injury or exposure period, first treatment, and your scheme registration.

Pitfall: unmatchable reports get sent back; California's Form 5021 warns late filing can bring a civil penalty.

Work event and history the worker's account, labeled

Do: record the event or exposure with dates and identify it as the worker's report; note the employer's account where available.

Pitfall: asserting the account as found fact; the adjudicator weighs it against the employer's evidence.

Symptoms, findings, and measures give the claim a baseline

Do: pair observations with at least one dated standardized measure; NSW requires one, and every progress report is scored against it.

Pitfall: adjectives without numbers; the next report has nothing to show change against.

Diagnosis and work-relatedness treating scope, not forensic voice

Do: give the DSM diagnosis with its basis, and state findings as consistent with the reported event, naming sources and limits.

Pitfall: definitive causation percentages on the worker's account alone; that is an independent evaluator's role.

Function, work status, and risk what the employer acts on

Do: state the status call, functional restrictions with a review date, and risk status either way with any action taken.

Pitfall: restrictions phrased as diagnosis; function travels to the employer, diagnosis need not.

Treatment plan, signature, and deadlines authorization hangs here

Do: tie interventions and session counts to measurable goals; sign as the provider your scheme recognizes; file on time (CA: 5 working days).

Pitfall: vague goals and borrowed signatures; a supervisor cosign does not cure an unauthorized signer.

Before you sign

- ☐ Claim number, employer, and injury or exposure dates on the report
- ☐ Worker's account labeled as reported, not asserted as fact
- ☐ At least one dated standardized measure recorded
- ☐ Causation stated as consistency, with sources and limits
- ☐ Restrictions functional, dated, with a review point
- ☐ Risk status stated either way, with action taken
- ☐ Signer, credentials, and provider number your scheme recognizes

Drafting with AI

Give it your interview notes and the scheme form's headings; it drafts the report with the event labeled as the worker's account, measures dated, and causation kept in treating scope.

"Draft a workers' comp initial report: bank robbery witness, PTSD, PCL-5 49, off work, graded return in four weeks, eight CBT sessions."

Never paste worker-identifying information into consumer AI tools. BastionGPT is HIPAA-compliant with a signed BAA on every plan.

600 to 1,500 words

45 to 90 minutes by hand

Due in days, not weeks

CA: 5 working days; BC: 3

No national form

each scheme names its own

Board · insurer · employer

who reads it

Workers' Compensation Initial Report Template

Copy or print for your practice · Adapt fields to your organization's, payer's and jurisdiction's documentation requirements.

Worker (initials): _____ Claim no.: _____ Date of injury / exposure: _____

Employer and occupation: _____ Exam date(s): _____ Report date: _____

Work event or exposure

Worker's account, identified as such · employer's account or first report where available · dates and sequence

Current symptoms and findings

Observations · at least one dated standardized measure where your scheme expects one

Diagnosis, basis, and work-relatedness

DSM diagnosis with code where required · interview / testing / records · consistent-with language, sources, limits

Pre-existing and co-existing conditions

Prior diagnosis and treatment · comorbidities · medications · non-work contributors

Work status and functional restrictions

Full / modified / off work · functional restrictions · expected duration and review date

Risk and treatment plan

Risk status either way, action taken · interventions, frequency, sessions requested · measurable goals, barriers

Signature (scheme-recognized provider): _____ Credentials / provider no.: _____ Date: _____