

THE INCIDENT REPORT DEFENSIBILITY TEST

Would Your Incident Report Hold Up In Court?

10 QUESTIONS THAT REVEAL IF YOUR REPORTS WILL HOLD UP

Most incident reporting systems leave your team hoping their reports are good enough. When an incident becomes a lawsuit months or years later, hope isn't enough. **This guide shows you exactly what holds up and what doesn't.**

INCLUDES
10-Point Test

PLUS
**Printable
Checklist**

AND
**Real Report
Examples**

AND
**Vendor
Questions**

BOARD BRIEF

Incident Report Risk Summary

Three Risks Your Documentation May Already Carry

- **Editable reports create legal exposure.** Any report that can be quietly changed can be disputed.
- **Weak chain of custody undermines credibility.** Without a field-level audit trail, the integrity of every report is in question.
- **Incomplete narratives shift liability.** Vague language and missing detail become the opposing counsel's strongest tool.

Recommended action: Conduct a defensibility audit within 30 days. This document will help you get started.

BEFORE YOU START

Most Organizations Assume Their Reports Are Fine.

They were filed and saved. If something ever came up, they assume they could find them. That assumption is what makes documentation expensive.

Four years from now, when an attorney reads your report line by line, your team will not be in the room to explain what they mean.

The document will speak for itself. That's what this test is for.

REALITY CHECK

"We've never had a problem before." That's exactly what most organizations say before they do.

WHAT TO CAPTURE EVERY TIME

The Field Checklist

This page alone will improve the quality of most incident reports.

Before we test your system, here's what a complete report actually requires. Keep this at your front desk, in your security office, or wherever reports get filed. This works for any incident.

TIMING

- ☐ Exact time the incident occurred
- ☐ Exact time the report was started
- ☐ Exact time the report was submitted

PEOPLE INVOLVED

- ☐ Full name of the affected persons
- ☐ Their contact information if provided
- ☐ Their own words, written verbatim

PEOPLE WHO RESPONDED

- ☐ Full name and role of every staff member
- ☐ The order in which they arrived
- ☐ What each person did, specifically

WITNESSES

- ☐ Full names of all witnesses
- ☐ Contact information if provided
- ☐ What they observed, in their own words

LOCATION & CONDITIONS

- ☐ Exact location within the property
- ☐ Lighting, weather, floor/surface conditions
- ☐ Signage present or absent at the scene
- ☐ Any contributing factors visible

MEDICAL & EVIDENCE

- ☐ Medical assistance offered - yes or no?
- ☐ Accepted or declined, in their own words
- ☐ Photos taken within minutes, not hours
- ☐ Physical evidence noted and preserved
- ☐ Camera footage identified and secured

If your system makes capturing this difficult in the moment, the system is part of the problem.

COMPANY TEST

10 Questions. Try To Answer Honestly

If you waiver on answering even 2 of these, your reports can be challenged.

01

Can your reports be edited after they're submitted?

Open your current system right now and try it. If you can change a finalized report with no record of your edit, your documentation has no chain of custody. A report that can be quietly edited and changed is a report that can be quietly disputed.

Can you answer no to this?

02

Can you prove who wrote what, and when?

This isn't who submitted the report, it's who wrote each section, when they wrote it, whether anything was added or changed after the fact. "It's all on that paper." is not an answer an attorney will accept.

Can you pull a field-level audit trail right now?

03

Can you prove when the report was created?

Not when it was submitted, when it was started. A report filed at 9 AM about a 10 PM incident is an issue. If your timestamp only records submission, not creation, you can't prove your staff documented while details were fresh.

Does your system record both creation and submission?

04

Can two final versions of the same report exist?

Could someone export a PDF, email it, then change the original? If there's any scenario where two versions exist and neither is clearly authoritative, you don't have a single source of truth.

Is there one verified version of every report?

05

If a report has been altered, would you know?

This matters because tampering doesn't always come from bad actors. A well-meaning manager who "cleans up" a report after a claim is filed - correcting a typo, clarifying a sentence - can inadvertently destroy its legal value. If your system doesn't detect and flag that change automatically, you have no way to prove the report today is identical to the report filed the night of the incident. That gap is exploitable.

Would an alteration be flagged automatically?

06

Can you prove a photo wasn't modified?

Photos feel like hard evidence, but they are only as reliable as the system that stores them. Metadata can be stripped, timestamps can be changed, a photo taken in the morning after an incident can be made to look like it was captured minutes after the incident. If photos in your system are just uploaded files with no integrity verification, an attorney can and will challenge every single one.

Can you verify each photo's timestamp and integrity?

COMPANY TEST - CONTINUED

07

Could a disgruntled employee delete a report?

This one isn't a hypothetical. Employees involved in incidents sometimes have access to the reports documenting their actions. If deletion is possible, a missing report becomes a missing defence. The absence of a report is its own kind of liability.

Is deletion controlled, logged, or recoverable?

08

Could you reconstruct the full timeline five years from now?

Most claims don't arrive immediately. A guest injury from last spring may not become a lawsuit until next year. If your staff have moved on and the memories are faint, the record is the only thing standing between you and liability.

Would your current reports hold up that far out?

09

Does your current process lead staff to under-report?

Underreporting rarely happens because staff don't care. It happens because the process makes it hard to know what to include. Every field left blank is a question an attorney will ask and you won't have an answer for.

Does your process make it easy to file immediately?

10

Would your lawyer feel calm reviewing your documentation?

This is the only question that really matters. Not whether it passes a quick review, but whether a lawyer who knows exactly what opposing counsel looks for in court could read your report and feel confident in it.

If you're not sure, that becomes a liability.

YOUR RESULTS

What Your Score Means

0-2**IN GOOD SHAPE**

Pull a report from 6 months ago and walk an attorney through it. If they don't ask uncomfortable questions, you're protected!

3-5**REAL EXPOSURE**

Start with alteration and chain of custody gaps first. Those call everything else into question.

You have a documentation system. Not yet a defensibility system.

6+**SIGNIFICANT RISK**

Your team may be doing their best with a tool built to collect information, not protect it.

Use the vendor questions in this guide to evaluate your options.

WHAT GOOD LOOKS LIKE

Same Incident. Two Very Different Reports

These are the gaps that matter in litigation.

1 Slip and Fall

• THE REPORT THAT GETS CHALLENGED

"Guest slipped near the entrance and said they hurt their knee. Staff helped them to a chair. They said they were okay and left."

No timestamp. No names. No exact location. No conditions. No medical refusal documented. No photos. No witnesses. An attorney has ten questions before the first sentence is finished.

• THE REPORT THAT HOLDS UP

"At 9:14 PM, Maria Santos reported slipping on a wet section of the floor near the main entrance, approximately six feet from the front door mat. She stated her right knee struck the floor. James Reyes (Front Desk Associate) and Lisa Park (Shift Supervisor) responded within two minutes. A wet floor sign was not in place at the time of the incident. Ms. Santos was offered medical assistance and declined, stating 'I'm fine, I just want to go home.' She signed a medical declination form at 9:22 PM. Photos of the area were taken at 9:16 PM. Witnesses present: David Cole (Room 214). Report submitted at 9:31 PM."

Every question has an answer. The timeline is clear. The people are named. Nothing left for an attorney to fill in.

2 Employee Injury

• THE REPORT THAT GETS CHALLENGED

"Staff member hurt their back while moving equipment in the storage area. Incident reported to manager. Employee sent home to rest."

Who was the staff member? Which manager? What equipment? How did the injury occur? Was medical attention offered? This report creates more questions than it answers.

• THE REPORT THAT HOLDS UP

"At 2:45 PM, Carlos Mendez (Maintenance Technician) reported lower back pain after lifting a commercial floor buffer in the ground-floor storage room. He stated he felt a sharp pain when lifting the equipment without assistance. The buffer weighs approximately 85 pounds. Supervisor Dana Okafor was notified at 2:48 PM and arrived at 2:52 PM. Carlos was offered transport to urgent care and accepted. Photos taken at 2:55 PM. Report submitted at 3:10 PM."

The timeline is exact. The people are named. The injury, the equipment, and the response are all documented specifically.

3 Property Damage Claim

• THE REPORT THAT GETS CHALLENGED

"Guest reported damage to their vehicle in the parking lot. No witnesses. Guest was upset. Manager spoke with them."

When? Which manager? What damage? What did the manager say? What was agreed? This report protects no one.

• THE REPORT THAT HOLDS UP

"At 6:30 PM, Jennifer Walsh (guest, Room 312) reported a scratch approximately 12 inches long on the driver-side door of her silver 2021 Honda Accord, parked in space 14 of the east lot. General Manager Rachel Torres spoke with Ms. Walsh at 6:38 PM. Ms. Walsh was advised that security camera coverage of the east lot would be reviewed. No camera coverage of space 14 exists. Ms. Walsh declined to file a police report. Photos taken at 6:41 PM. Report submitted at 6:55 PM."

The guest's account, the vehicle details, the camera limitation disclosed, and the guest's decision are all documented. Nothing left to assume.

INSIDER PERSPECTIVE

What Attorneys Actually Challenge

Attorneys rarely argue an entire report. They look for a single point of doubt - one inconsistency, one gap - and build from there.



Inconsistencies in timestamps

Any gap between incident time and documentation time becomes a question.



Edits made after an incident became serious

Changes after a claim is filed can unravel a case entirely.



Missing witness details

Names without contact information.
Statements without dates.



Gaps between occurrence and documentation

Hours between incident and report suggest details were reconstructed



Photos taken hours later

A timestamped photo for hours after raises questions about what changed.



Version conflicts

Two versions of the same report with no authoritative source is damaging.

If your system leaves room for doubt in any of these areas, **the burden shifts to you.**

What A Defensible System Must Do

Every gap identified in this audit traces back to one of five things a documentation system either does or doesn't do. This is the standard. It's not complicated, but most platforms don't meet it.



Lock final reports

Once submitted, a report must be sealed. No quiet edits. No undocumented changes. The version that exists at submission is the version that exists forever.



Preserve every edit

Any change made before submission must be logged at the field level. That includes who changed it, what it said before, what it says now, and exactly when. A log that says "report edited" is not a log.



Verify a single authoritative version

There must be one version of every report that is verifiably official. One that any attorney, insurer, or auditor can confirm matches the original submission, regardless of what copies exist elsewhere.



Protect media evidence

Photos and video attached to a report must carry verified timestamps and integrity checks. An image file without provenance is not evidence, it's an attachment that can be challenged.



Guide complete narratives

A blank text field produces whatever a stressed staff member can remember at the end of a shift. A guided system prompts for every detail that matters while memory is still fresh and the scene is still accessible.

If your current platform cannot do these five things, it is not built for defensibility.

It may be built for convenience, for speed, or for basic record-keeping. Those are not the same thing. When a claim arrives, the difference becomes expensive.

THE RISKS TO CONSIDER

How Easy Is It To Change a Standard Report

Open any PDF incident report. Find a free PDF editor online. Change a date, a name, one sentence. It takes about 90 seconds. **Nothing about the edited file looks suspicious.**

 **LIVE EXAMPLE: AI REWRITES AN INCIDENT NARRATIVE IN SECONDS**

ORIGINAL NARRATIVE	AI-MODIFIED VERSION
"At 11:42 PM, the wet floor sign was not in place when the guest slipped. Staff arrived three minutes after the incident was reported."	"At 11:42 PM, the wet floor sign was clearly visible and properly positioned when the guest slipped. Staff responded immediately upon notification of the incident."

If both versions look identical in format, how would you prove which one is real?

If a document can be changed without detection, **it can be challenged without warning.**

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

The Difference Between Documentation and Protection

IF YOU'RE USING FORMS	SYSTEMS DESIGNED FOR PROTECTION
Reports can be edited	Final reports are locked
No version control	One verified version
No chain of custody	Full audit history
Staff guess what to write	Guided prompts
"I hope this is fine"	"I know this will hold up."

When something serious happens, there should be one trusted version of the truth.

LogEasy was built **exactly for this purpose.**



A FINAL NOTE

Stop Hoping Your Reporting Will Hold Up

If you've identified gaps in this audit, look for a platform designed for defensibility from the ground up.

Reports lock on submission, every edit is logged at the field level, photos carry tamper-evident verification, and one authoritative version always exists.

LogEasy was built for exactly that purpose.

Easy to write. Hard to challenge.
Write it in minutes. Trust it for years.

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