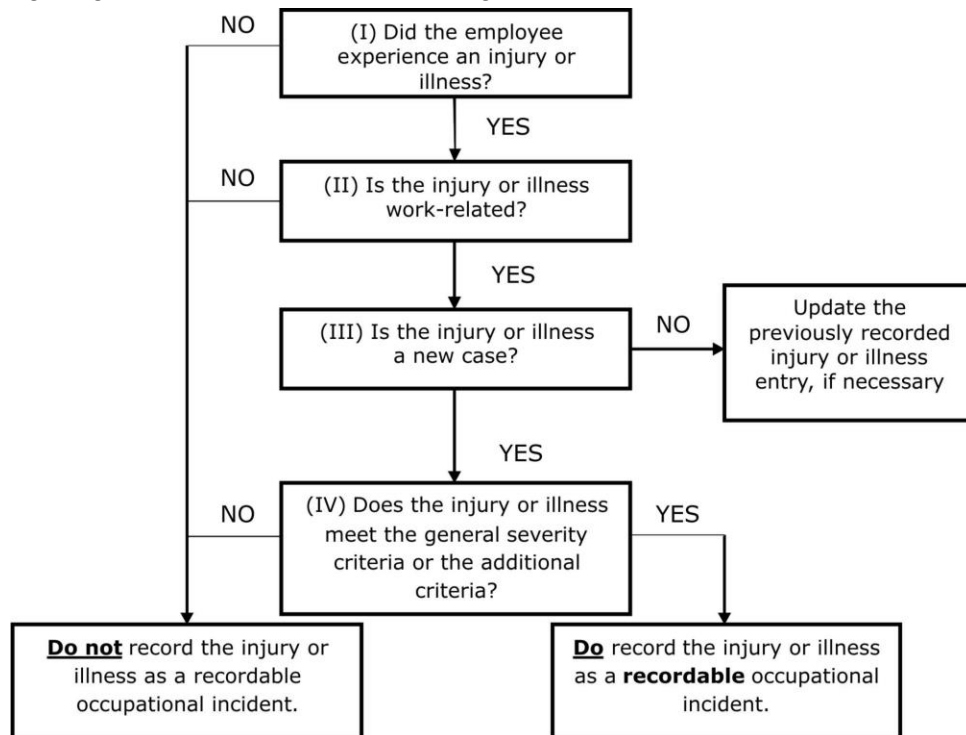
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## Purpose

This User Guide provides a summary of key recordability requirements.

## Occupational Injuries & Illnesses


The following diagram summarizes the four stages that determine whether a case is recordable.



### Step 1: Did the employee experience an injury or illness case?

A case is an event or exposure in the work environment that has an impact or effect on an employee. The impact might be an injury or illness that is easy to identify, or it might be a condition that is hard to detect, such as mild muscle soreness or stress. The event or exposure might be easy to recognize, such as a slip, trip, or fall, or a sudden release of a chemical, or a prolonged exposure that is harder to detect.

- Consider:
  - Injuries
  - Acute and chronic illnesses
  - Pain
  - Employee allegations
  - Events or exposures that impact the employee
- Remember:

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- Not all cases meet the recordability standard.
- The existence of a case always requires further investigation and analysis to determine recordability.

**Note**

Cases which result from instantaneous events are generally considered **injuries**, while cases which result from non-instantaneous events, such as a latent disease or cumulative trauma disorder, are considered **illnesses**.

**Step 2: Is the injury / illness work-related?**

An incident is generally presumed to be work-related if the injury or illness results from workplace events or exposures that either cause an adverse effect or result in a significant aggravation to a preexisting condition. The workplace includes the physical location, as well as the equipment and materials used by employees or contract employees during their work activities. Exceptions exist and are documented in the [OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1904.5: Determination of Work-Relatedness](#).

By using the following three-step process to analyze work relationship, the decision is relatively straightforward. In sequence, consider:


1. Geographic presumption
2. Work contribution
3. Exceptions

**1. Geographic presumption:** Work relationship is presumed for injuries and illnesses resulting from events or exposures occurring in the work environment.

The work environment comprises the company premises and other locations where employees and contract employees work as a condition of employment. The work environment may also include equipment or materials (including various transportation issues on company business). The burden of proof is typically on the company to show why the case is not work-related in these situations.

**2. Work contribution:** Although the event or exposure in the work environment might only contribute very slightly to the case, it may still be considered work-related. A case is work-related if an event or exposure in the work environment either caused or contributed to the resulting condition. For example, cases involving soft tissues are often considered work-related, even when they result from a combination of work and nonwork (personal) factors where the personal contribution is significantly greater than the work contribution.

- If the employee has a preexisting condition which is worsened because of an event or exposure at work, the case could be considered work-related if the event or exposure significantly aggravated the preexisting condition.
- A preexisting injury or illness is significantly aggravated in the work environment if it results in death, days away from work, days of restricted work activity, or medical treatment, and these outcomes would not have occurred without the event or exposure in the work environment.
- If it is not obvious that a case resulted from an event or exposure in the work environment, determine whether it is more likely the event or exposure:

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- Significantly aggravated a preexisting condition, or
- Contributed (even slightly) to all other injury or illness cases.
- To make the more likely determination:
  - Identify non-occupational exposure(s) that solely caused the case (non-occupational)
  - Eliminate the possibility of an exposure at work

### **3. Nine exceptions and special rules:**

1. If the employee is present in the work environment as a member of the general public.

**Example**

Injuries occurring in non company-owned parking lots, while the employee is deemed to be within the commuting status, are considered nonwork-related and meet the definition of exception #1.

2. Symptoms which surface at work solely due to nonwork-related events or exposures.

**Example**

Epileptic seizures are a symptom of a disease of non-occupational origin, and the fact that they occur at work does not make them work-related. Because epileptic seizures are not work-related, injuries resulting solely from the seizures, such as a broken arm from a fall during an epileptic episode, are not recordable.

OR

An employee, walking down a well-maintained, safe hallway at a company facility has a preexisting knee injury that is suddenly reinjured without impact. In this example, a preexisting condition that was not significantly impacted by the working environment would not be considered recordable.

3. Cases which result from voluntary participation in a wellness program, medical, fitness, or recreational activity.


**Example**

Employee bowl-a-thons or ski trips are examples of exception #3. Injuries occurring at an off-site team-building event might not meet the intent of exception #3.

4. Eating, drinking, or preparing food or drink for personal consumption.

**Example**

Employees who reside in staff houses and burn themselves on a cooking stove while preparing food outside of their normal working hours, or employees who contract food poisoning from a lunch they brought into the work environment, are examples of exception #4. Employees who are injured during their normally scheduled lunch breaks are considered to be working within their normal working hours and might not meet exception #4.

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5. Personal tasks at an establishment outside assigned working hours.

<b>Example</b>	For the personal tasks exception #5 to apply, the injury or illness must:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be solely the result of the employee doing personal tasks (unrelated to their employment).</li> <li>• Occur outside of the employee's assigned working hours.</li> </ul> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Scheduled breaks (e.g., lunch breaks) are considered part of the normal work schedule and are not considered to be outside of assigned working hours.</p>

6. Personal grooming, self-medication for nonwork-related condition, or intentionally self-inflicted injuries or illnesses.

<b>Example</b>	Personal grooming activities are activities directly related to personal hygiene, such as combing and drying hair, brushing teeth, clipping fingernails, and the like. Bathing or showering at the workplace to remove exposure from a substance at work is not personal grooming. Therefore, if an employee slips and falls while showering at work, to remove a contaminant exposed at work, and sustains an injury that meets the general severity criteria, the injury is a recordable incident.
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7. Motor vehicle accident in a company parking lot / access road during commute.

<b>Example</b>	<p>Exceptions are limited to the specific wording provided in the guidance, and the element of the exception must be present for the exception to apply. For example, for the exception #7 to apply, all three elements must be present:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a motor vehicle accident</li> <li>• in a company parking lot or on a company access road</li> <li>• during the commute.</li> </ul>
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8. Common cold or flu.

<b>Example</b>	<p>Illnesses such as the common cold or the flu are examples of exemption #8.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Contagious diseases such as tuberculosis, brucellosis, hepatitis A, H1N1, or plague are considered work-related if the employee is infected at work.</p>
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9. Mental illness (unless employee volunteers opinion from a physician or appropriately trained Licensed Health Care Practitioner).

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**Example**

Mental illness will not be considered work-related under exemption #9 unless the employee voluntarily provides the employer with an opinion from a physician or other licensed health care professional with appropriate training and experience (psychiatrist, psychologist, psychiatric nurse practitioner, etc.) stating that the employee has a mental illness that is work-related.


In addition to the exceptions, there are special rules for assessing work relationship when employees are on travel status and when they commute from home.

Cases that occur while the employee is on travel status are considered work-related if they occur while the employee is engaged in work activities in the interest of the employer.

- When a traveling employee checks into a hotel, they establish a "home away from home." From that point forward, their activities are treated as if they never left their home base. The commute from their new "home" (the hotel) to their first work stop is not considered work-related. The commute from their last work visit back to the hotel is not considered work-related. Normal living activities in the evenings or on off-duty hours are not considered work-related, etc.
- Exceptions to the "home away from home" rule include those injuries and illnesses occurring at housing sites owned, managed, or controlled by employers and furnished to employees as a condition of employment (meaning there is no other reasonable accommodation alternative, e.g., offshore platforms). The furnishing of housing accommodations by employers to employees is considered to be a "condition of their employment" when (1) employees are required by the employer to use them or (2) are compelled by the practical realities of the employment situation to use them. This means that employer-provided living accommodations are considered a condition of employment when there is an employer policy or contractual agreement that the employee resides at the employer-furnished housing, or a practical, economical, geographical, or physical necessity leading to the same result. However, if housing made available by the employer is accepted by the employee voluntarily, for example, on a normal landlord-tenant base, and in preference to other reasonably-available facilities, such housing would not constitute a condition of employment.
- Travel detours for personal reasons are also not work-related.
- Injuries and illnesses occurring in the home environment are only considered work-related if the employee is paid or compensated for working at home, and the injury or illness is directly related to the performance of the work rather than to the general home environment. Do not include cases related to the general home environment.
- Cases must directly relate to work.
- Cases NOT directly related to work may be classified as Non-Occupational Injuries or Non-Occupational Illnesses for tracking and trending purposes.

**Step 3: Is the injury or illness a new case?**

New injury / illness records are made for new cases. Change in the extent or outcome of existing cases (or continuing conditions) are reflected by changing existing records. Therefore, each time a case worker is confronted with a case, they must decide whether it is a new case or a continuation of an existing record.

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New cases occur when:

- The employee has not had a recorded injury or illness of the same type that affects the same part of the body.
- The employee previously had a recorded injury or illness of the same type that affects the same part of the body, but:
  - The employee has recovered completely.
  - There was a new event or exposure in the work environment that caused the signs and symptoms to reappear.
- Continuing symptoms or continuing treatment is often indicative of continuing cases.

#### Step 4: Determination of the Severity Criteria

Although a case is determined to be work-related and a new case, not every case meets the recordable criteria. Cases must reach a specified level of severity to be considered a recordable injury / illness incident. Compensable injury / illness incidents are not the sole measure of the recordable criteria but can be used to help determine a portion of the severity criteria. There are compensable incidents which might be considered First Aid or Non-occupational but do not meet the Recordability Criteria.

To be recordable, a case must result in one of the six severity criteria listed below. There are general severity criteria that apply to all conditions, and select criteria for a number of specific conditions:


#### 1. Fatality

#### 2. Days Away From Work (DAFW):

- Occurs when the injured or ill employee experiences days away from work beyond the day of injury or onset of illness, or days away are prescribed by a physician or licensed health care practitioner.
- Count calendar days (i.e., days of disability) worker is unavailable for work, including weekends and holidays.
- Assess what happened as well as the real impact on the employee's ability to do their job.
- Stop counting when return to duty is permanent—MUST COUNT AT LEAST ONE DAY.
- A partial day away is a full day of restricted work activity.
- Cap count of days (days away and days of restricted work activity combined) is maximized at 180 days.

#### 3. Job Transfer / Restricted Work Activity (JTRW):

- Occurs when the employee is prevented from:
  - Performing one or more routine job functions
  - Working a full workday
- Occurs when the injured or ill employee is assigned to a job other than their regular job for part of the day

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- Occurs when a physician or Licensed Health Care Practitioner recommends either of the above (again, focus is on employee's "ability")
- Restriction limited to the day of the injury / illness onset is not recordable.
- Production of fewer goods or services is not considered JTRW.
- Vague restrictions from a physician or Licensed Health Care Practitioner (e.g., "light duty" or "take it easy for a week") may or may not be recordable.
- Restriction in the abstract is not recordable; it must be a restricted work activity.
- Assess worker capability using routine job function criteria, or record as a JTRW case if no further information is available
- Do not include the day of injury / illness onset
- Stop counting when the injured / ill employee returns to their normal job function—**MUST COUNT AT LEAST ONE DAY.**

#### 4. Medical Treatment Beyond First Aid (MTBFA):

- Defined as the management and care of a patient to combat disease or disorder
- Excluded:
  - Visits to a physician or Licensed Health Care Practitioner solely for observation or counseling
  - Diagnostic procedures (e.g., x-rays, blood tests, prescriptions used solely for diagnostic purposes)
  - Other actions and measures as is defined by First Aid
- Focus is on the type of treatment required by the case, not necessarily on what was done or not done (often determined by doctor / Licensed Health Care Practitioner opinion)
- Not determined by who provides treatment or where the treatment is provided

#### 5. Loss of Consciousness:


- Partial or complete loss of consciousness with interruption of awareness of oneself and one's surroundings is considered an entry level recordability threshold (examples include hydrogen sulfide (H<sub>2</sub>S) knockdown, heat exhaustion, etc., that do not result in a MTBFA, JTRW, or DAFW case or death)

#### 6. First Aid (Nonrecordable cases):

- Any other injury / illness that does not meet the other five severity criteria
- Generally less severe in nature, but given slightly different circumstances, could have resulted in a more severe incident.

#### Note


When an injury / illness case transitions between severity thresholds (e.g., from a JTRW case to a DAFW case, or vice versa), choose the MOST severe classification to reflect the nature of the event, not both. However, record the calendar days lost in both appropriate categories (e.g., DAFW and JTRW).

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If work relationship is confirmed, refer to the applicable tables below for further clarification on classifying the incident as either Non-recordable or Recordable.

Non-recordable Incident	
Near Miss Incident	First Aid Incident
<p>An incident that does not result in injury or death, but could have resulted in major or serious consequences (Significant Near Miss) or minor consequences (Near Miss), given slightly different circumstances. Contact without visible physical effects (e.g., no redness, bruising, cut, etc.) is also classified as a Near Miss. The event can be further classified as a result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substandard condition</li> <li>• Substandard practice</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tool fell from an elevated height and just missed an employee working below. It didn't cause injury but could have resulted in serious injury under different circumstances.</li> <li>• A hammer hits an employee on the hand, causing no injury.</li> </ul>	<p>Any contact that results in a physical effect (such as a bruise, welt, or cut) or medical provider evaluation, even if no treatment is administered. Also, a minor injury that results in a one-time treatment, and any follow-up visit for the purpose of observation, that does not require medical treatment.</p> <p><b>Examples Include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physician visit solely for observation or diagnostic procedures (such as X-rays or blood test), including prescription medications for diagnostic purposes</li> <li>• Minor cuts that do not require sutures (Steri-Strip™ and butterfly bandages)</li> <li>• Minor burns</li> <li>• Removing splinters or foreign material from areas other than eye by irrigation, tweezers, cotton swabs, or other simple means</li> <li>• Using non-prescription medications at non-prescription strengths</li> <li>• Administering tetanus shots or boosters</li> <li>• Cleaning, soaking, or flushing wounds on skin surface</li> <li>• Using temporary immobilization devices while transporting an accident victim</li> <li>• Drilling a fingernail to relieve pressure</li> <li>• Using hot or cold therapy</li> <li>• Using non-rigid means of support such as elastic bandages, wraps, or back belts</li> <li>• Using eye patches or finger guards</li> <li>• Using massages</li> <li>• Removing foreign bodies from the eye using only irrigation or a cotton swab</li> <li>• Using wound coverings such as bandages, Band-Aids®, gauze pads, etc.</li> <li>• Drinking fluids for relief of heat stress</li> </ul>




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Recordable Occupational Injury		
Medical Treatment Beyond First Aid (MTBFA)	Job Transfer / Restricted Work Activity (JTRW)	Days Away from Work (DAFW)
<p>Any work injury that requires medical treatment beyond first aid and did not result in Days Away from Work (DAFW) or Job Transfer / Restricted Work Activity (JTRW) duties.</p> <p><b>Examples Include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sutures to close wounds</li> <li>• Treatment of infection</li> <li>• Prescription strength medications</li> <li>• Cutting away dead skin</li> <li>• Positive X-ray results</li> <li>• Physical therapy</li> <li>• Removing foreign bodies embedded in the eye other than using only irrigation or a cotton swab</li> <li>• Removing foreign bodies from the wound if the procedure is complicated because of the depth of embedment, size, or location</li> <li>• Using devices with rigid stays or other systems designed to immobilize parts of the body</li> <li>• Intravenous fluids</li> </ul>	<p>Any injury that results in limited or restricted normal work / shift practices for the injured employee on subsequent day(s) after the day of the injury.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A monthly report is required indicating the number of injury-related calendar days that employee was restricted or transferred.</li> <li>• Count the number of calendar days after the day of the injury that employee was unable to perform all routine functions or assigned to another job.</li> <li>• If a permanent transfer is made, stop counting days when transfer is made permanent.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples Include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee was assigned to another job on a temporary basis due to the nature of the injury.</li> <li>• Employee worked a permanent job less than full time due to the nature of the injury.</li> <li>• Employee worked a permanent job, but could not perform all the duties normally connected with it due to the nature of the injury.</li> </ul>	<p>Any injury that results in an employee unable to return to work for 1 or more days after the day of the injury.</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A monthly report of calendar DAFW is required.</li> <li>• Count number of calendar days after the day of the injury that employee was unable to work, regardless of whether the employee was scheduled on those days.</li> <li>• Total number of days recorded includes weekend days, holidays, vacation days, and other days.</li> </ul> <p><b>Examples Include:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee injures his back while lifting a tool box on Wednesday morning. Employee received medical treatment by a doctor. As instructed in writing by the doctor, employee shall remain off work for 2 days and may return to work Monday. This is a DAFW injury and is counted as 4 days away (according to OSHA 1904.7(b)(3)(iv), all calendar days are counted if the employee would not have been able to work on those days.</li> </ul>

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Occupational Illness Recordable vs Non-recordable	
Recordable Illnesses	Nonrecordable Illness
<p>Any occupational illness that involves a significant illness diagnosed by a physician or licensed health care professional, even if it does not result in death, days away from work, restricted work or transfer to another job, medical treatment beyond first aid, or loss of consciousness.</p> <p>The following are generally considered occupational illnesses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Occupational skin diseases or disorders (e.g., contact dermatitis, chemical burns or inflammations, rashes caused by primary irritants and sensitizers)</li> <li>• Diseases of the lung (e.g., silicosis, asbestosis, siderosis, histoplasmosis, or coccidioidomycosis)</li> <li>• Respiratory conditions due to toxic agents (e.g., pneumonitis, rhinitis, or acute congestion due to chemicals, dusts, mists, gases, or fumes)</li> <li>• Poisoning—Systemic effects of toxic materials (e.g., poisoning by lead, mercury, cadmium, or organic solvents)</li> <li>• Disorders due to physical agents, other than toxic agents (e.g., heatstroke, heat exhaustion, sunstroke, freezing, frostbite, effects of radiation, etc.)</li> <li>• Disorders associated with repeated trauma (e.g., noise-induced hearing loss, carpal tunnel syndrome, Raynaud’s phenomenon)</li> <li>• Musculoskeletal Disorders—Disorder of the muscles, nerves, tendons, ligaments, joints, cartilage or spinal discs, (e.g., epicondylitis, rotator cuff syndrome, tendonitis, carpet layer’s knee, tarsal tunnel syndrome, herniated spinal disc, sciatica and lower back pain)</li> <li>• Noise-induced hearing loss—A change in hearing threshold relative to the baseline audiogram of an average of 10 dB or more in either ear at 2000, 3000 and 4000 hertz.</li> </ul> <p>Other occupational illnesses may include: decompression sickness, effects of ionizing radiation (isotopes, X-rays, radium); effects of nonionizing radiation (e.g., welding flash, ultraviolet rays, lasers); anthrax; bloodborne pathogenic diseases, such as HIV / AIDS, hepatitis B or C; brucellosis; malignant or benign tumors.</p>	<p>Any work-related illness that does not result in one of the following: death, days away from work, restricted work or transfer to another job, medical treatment beyond first aid, or loss of consciousness.</p>

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**Note**

Cases of malaria, dengue fever, SARS, yellow fever, or other country-endemic illnesses are to be reported, but will not be counted in incident statistic calculations (i.e., TRIR—Total Recordable Incident Rate, DAFWCR—Days Away From Work Case Rate) because they cannot be directly linked to working situations.