

Serious Injury & Fatality Criteria (SIF)

Effective Date: January 1, 2023

Serious Injuries and Fatalities

What is a SIF?

SIF was developed to be a metric that better defines serious injuries and fatalities. They include work related fatalities, life-threatening and life-altering injuries.

Defining Work Related

If the injury is OSHA recordable, it should be considered work-related.

Identifying and Classifying Serious Injuries

When the work-related criteria have been met, compare the employee injury to the Serious Injury criteria listed below to determine if the injury is deemed “Serious.” (Each case should be counted only once. In cases with multiple injuries, assign the case to the category representing the most severe injury.)

1. Fatalities

2. Amputations (involving bone)

3. Concussions and/or cerebral hemorrhages
 - a. Include all cerebral hemorrhages and only severe concussions resulting in a loss of consciousness and/or symptoms lasting more than 24 hours.

4. Injury or trauma to internal organs

Frequently Asked Questions

- i. When should a case of organ damage be classified as serious, such as an exposure to a chemical substance?

Injuries should be classified as serious if objective medical evidence indicates significant or sustained (beyond initial event, acute treatment and testing) organ damage, or progressive changes in organ function or anatomy. This criterion does not include rapidly dissipating

Occupational Safety & Health Committee

signs and symptoms from the acute event (such as irritation or localized redness) and their associated treatment, or injury from long term or repetitive exposures.

Only cases that involve relatively short-term events should be included in the serious metric, even if the result is an illness (example, reactive upper-dysfunction syndrome resulting from chlorine exposure event). Illnesses that develop from exposure over long periods of time (years) are not to be captured in this metric (example, fibrosis of the lung from asbestos exposure).

- ii. Is a hernia considered a serious case?

A hernia by itself would not be classified as a severe case. However, if the hernia causes damage to an internal organ such as a strangulated colon, it would be classified as a severe case.

- 5. Bone fractures with the following considerations:

- a. Include fractures of the fingers and toes only if they are open, compound, or comminuted (crushed)
- b. Include all bone fractures of the face, skull, or navicular wrist bone
- c. Exclude any hairline fractures unless described above

Frequently Asked Questions

- i. Are all hairline fractures excluded?

Hairline fractures in the face, skull, or navicular wrist bone are considered a serious injury. All other hairline fractures are excluded.

- ii. Are nasal fractures included as a serious injury under the bone fracture criteria?

Typical nasal cartilage-only fractures are not likely to cause life altering or life-threatening injuries unless other facial bone fractures are involved. If the employee has a “broken nose” that involves facial bone fractures, the injury should be included as a serious injury. Nasal cartilage-only fractures should not be included as a serious injury.

- iii. Are broken teeth considered a serious case?

No, unless there were other injuries in addition that meet the criteria (Example: broken jaw).

6. Complete tendon, ligament, and cartilage tears of the major joints (e.g., shoulder, elbow, wrist, hip, knee, and ankle).

Frequently Asked Questions

- i. Are partial tendon, ligament and cartilage tears included as serious injuries?

No. Partial tears are not to be classified as a serious injury.

- ii. **Should muscle tears be classified as a SIF?**

A complete muscle tear commonly occurs when the entire muscle is torn or detached from the tendon. If this occurred, it would be classified as a SIF.

7. Herniated disks (neck or back)

8. Lacerations resulting in severed tendons and/or a deep wound requiring internal stitches.

- a. Do not include **severed tendons and/or** deep wounds requiring internal stitches to the fingers and toes.

Frequently Asked Question

- i. Does a puncture that requires internal sutures meet the laceration criteria?

Yes.

9. 2nd (10% body surface) or 3rd degree burns

10. Eye injuries resulting in eye damage or loss of vision

Frequently Asked Questions

- i. Does a corneal abrasion constitute eye damage injury?

No. Corneal abrasions and/or scratches due to foreign bodies are considered minor and usually heal quickly.

- ii. What are some examples of “eye damage” that meet the criteria?

Examples of eye damage would be cases where the eyeball is penetrated or damaged by a significant foreign body.

Occupational Safety & Health Committee

- iii. Does loss of vision mean total loss or is some degradation of vision all that is required to meet the serious injury criteria?

Loss of vision means any permanent change in the employee's vision or change that requires corrective lenses.

11. Injections of foreign materials (e.g., hydraulic fluid)

12. Severe heat exhaustion and all heat stroke cases (Severe heat exhaustion cases are those where all of the following symptoms are present: profuse sweating, nausea, and confusion). If confirmed fainting occurs due to the heat exposure, this is an automatic severe case.

- a. Exclude cases where confirmed personal medical conditions or medications significantly contributed to heat exhaustion

Frequently Asked Question

- i. If an employee receives an IV for heat exhaustion, does this make it a severe case?

The application of an IV does not necessarily indicate a severe case; further investigation should be conducted to determine if the criteria for severe heat exhaustion were met (profuse sweating, nausea, and confusion or confirmed fainting).

13. Dislocation of a major joint (shoulder, elbow, wrist, hip, knee, and ankle)

- a. Count only cases that required the manipulation or repositioning of the joint back into place under the direction of a treating doctor.

14. The "Other Injuries" category should only be selected for reporting injuries not identified in the existing categories. A description box is also provided to briefly describe the nature of the injury.

Other Terms and Definitions

1. Serious Injury Incidence Rate (SIIR)

The SIIR is calculated using the formula (# cases x 200,000/hours worked). The calculation of the SIIR uses the same hours worked number as your calculation of the Recordable Incidence Rate.