

Cal/OSHA “Recordable” Guidelines & Definition of First Aid

Cal/OSHA defines “first aid” as any one-time treatment, and any followup visit for the purpose of observation of minor scratches, cuts, burns, splinters, or other minor industrial injury, which do not ordinarily require medical care. This one-time treatment, and followup visit for the purpose of observation, is considered first aid even though provided by a physician or registered professional personnel. *Labor Code 5401 (a).*

Cal/OSHA “RECORDABLE” GUIDELINES:

Record those work-related injuries and illnesses that result in:

- Death,
- Loss of consciousness,
- Days away from work,
- Restricted work activity or job transfer, or
- Medical treatment beyond first aid.

You must also record work-related injuries and illnesses that are significant (as defined below) or meet any of the additional criteria listed below.

You must record any significant work-related injury or illness that is diagnosed by a physician or other licensed health care professional. You must record any work-related case involving cancer, chronic irreversible disease, a fractured or cracked bone, or a punctured eardrum.

What are the additional criteria?

- You must record the following conditions when they are work-related:
- Any needlestick injury or cut from a sharp object that is contaminated with another person’s blood or other potentially infectious material;
- Any case requiring an employee to be medically removed under the requirements of an Cal/OSHA health standard;
- Tuberculosis infection as evidenced by a positive skin test or diagnosis by a physician or other licensed health care professional after exposure to a known case of active tuberculosis.

An employee's hearing test (audiogram) reveals 1) that the employee has experienced a Standard Threshold Shift (STS) in hearing in one or both ears (averaged at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz) and 2) the employee's total hearing level is 25 decibels (dB) or more above audiometric zero (also averaged at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz) in the same ear(s) as the STS.

What is medical treatment?

Medical treatment includes managing and caring for a patient for the purpose of combating disease or disorder. The following are not considered medical treatments and are NOT recordable:

- Visits to a doctor or health care professional solely for observation or counseling;
- Diagnostic procedures, including administering prescription medications that are used solely for diagnostic purposes; and
- Any procedure that can be labeled first aid.

The fact that an “Employer's Report of Occupational Injury or Illness” has been submitted to your worker's compensation insurance carrier does not necessarily make the case “recordable” for Cal/OSHA.

Cal/OSHA NON-RECORDABLE “FIRST-AID” GUIDELINES:

First-Aid Treatment:

The following are generally considered “first-aid” treatment (e.g., one-time treatment and subsequent observation of minor injuries) and need not be recorded if the work-related injury does not involve loss of consciousness, restriction of work or motion, or transfer to another job:

- Using non-prescription medications at nonprescription strength;
- Administering tetanus immunizations;
- Cleaning, flushing, or soaking wounds on the skin surface;
- Using wound coverings, such as bandages, bandaids[™], gauze pads, etc., or using steristrips[™] or butterfly bandages.
- Using hot or cold therapy;
- Using any totally non-rigid means of support, such as elastic bandages, wraps, non-rigid back belts, etc.;
- Using temporary immobilization devices while transporting an accident victim (splints, slings, neck collars, or back boards).
- Drilling a fingernail or toenail to relieve pressure, or draining fluids from blisters;
- Using eye patches;
- Using simple irrigation or a cotton swab to remove foreign bodies not embedded in or adhered to the eye;
- Using irrigation, tweezers, cotton swab or other simple means to remove splinters or foreign material from areas other than the eye;
- Using finger guards;
- Using massages; and,
- Drinking fluids to relieve heat stress.

The administration of a tetanus or booster shot, by itself, is not considered a medical treatment. However, injuries requiring a tetanus shot may be recordable for other reasons.

Injuries or illnesses that are not work-related are not recordable for Cal/OSHA.



Courtesy Pacific Employers