

Injury Categories & Subcategories Reference

1 Assaults & Violent Acts (by a Person or an Animal)

Definition: Any deliberate act—physical, verbal, or behavioural—intended to cause or threaten harm to a person, including acts perpetrated by animals under human control (e.g., research animals, service animals) or wildlife on campus.

Sub-category	Short Description	Typical Example (illustrative only)
Assaults & Violent Acts by Person(s)	Physical attacks or violent behaviour inflicted by one or more individuals. Includes hitting, kicking, pushing, strangling, or use of weapons.	A laboratory technician is punched in the torso by a co-worker during an argument about equipment use.
Assault by Animals	Any bite, scratch, mauling, or other injurious contact from an animal, whether wild or domesticated, under campus jurisdiction.	A security guard is bitten on the hand while trying to contain a stray dog near the loading dock.
Bully, Harass, Intimidate	Repeated verbal, written, or behavioural conduct that demeans, humiliates, or threatens a person, causing psychological or emotional harm.	An administrative employee receives a series of hostile emails from a supervisor belittling their performance and threatening demotion.
Self-inflicted Injury	Intentional or accidental harm a person causes to themselves, excluding normal workplace accidents (e.g., deliberate self-harm, attempted suicide).	A graduate student intentionally cuts their forearm with a scalpel while alone in the lab.
Threat of Violence	Any expressed intent (spoken, written, or gestured) to inflict harm or damage, creating a reasonable fear of injury.	A contractor tells staff, “I’ll come back with a weapon and deal with you,” after being asked to leave the premises.

2 Bodily Reaction & Exertion

Definition: Injuries or illnesses arising from physical stress or strain on the body—without direct impact from an external object—that result from movement, posture, or physiological conditions.

Sub-category	Short Description	Typical Example
Bodily Conditions	Illnesses or episodes stemming from internal physiological states such as heat stress, dehydration, or seizure unrelated to external trauma.	A groundskeeper suffers heat exhaustion while working outdoors in high temperatures.

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Bodily Reaction	Injuries caused by sudden, non-impact movements (twisting, bending, slipping without falling).	An employee twists their knee while stepping sideways to avoid a cart in a hallway.
Overexertion	Injuries due to excessive physical effort—lifting, pulling, pushing, holding, carrying, or throwing.	A custodian strains their lower back while lifting a full garbage bin into a dumpster.
Repetitive Motion	Cumulative trauma from repeating the same motion without sufficient recovery time; often affects tendons and nerves.	A data-entry clerk develops carpal-tunnel syndrome from prolonged keyboard use.
Static Posture with Application of Force to an Object	Maintaining a fixed body position while simultaneously exerting force.	A technician holds a torque wrench at shoulder height for several minutes while tightening bolts.
Static Posture without Application of Force to an Object	Sustained, constrained postures with minimal movement and little to no force applied.	A microscope operator leans forward with neck flexed during extended specimen analysis.
Sustained Viewing	Prolonged visual focus on a screen or object leading to eye strain or associated musculoskeletal discomfort.	A graphic designer experiences eye strain and headaches after an 8-hour session on a high-brightness monitor.

3 Contact with Objects & Equipment

Definition: Injuries resulting from a person coming into forceful or injurious contact with objects, equipment, or materials—including pinching, crushing, striking, or abrasive mechanisms.

Sub-category	Short Description	Typical Example
Caught in or Compressed by Equipment or Objects	Body part pinched, squeezed, or crushed between two or more moving or stationary objects.	A maintenance worker's hand is caught between the rollers of a conveyor belt during cleaning.
Caught in or Crushed in Collapsing Materials	Entrapment or compression due to cave-ins, collapsing structures, or piles of materials.	A technician is partially buried when a stack of heavy crates tips over in the storeroom.

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Rubbed or Abraded by Friction or Pressure	Surface tissue damage from continuous rubbing, scraping, or pressure.	A warehouse employee develops skin abrasions after repeatedly carrying rough cardboard boxes against the forearm.
Rubbed, Abraded or Jarred by Vibration	Injuries arising from prolonged exposure to vibration transmitted through tools, machinery, or vehicles.	A groundskeeper develops hand-arm vibration syndrome (HAVS) after extended use of a gasoline-powered hedge trimmer.
Struck Against Object	Injury occurs when the person—under their own power—bumps into or contacts a stationary object.	An office worker stands up quickly and strikes their head on the underside of an open cabinet door.
Struck by Object	Injury results from contact with a moving object (flying, falling, swinging).	A carpenter is struck on the shoulder by a hammer dropped from scaffolding above.

4 Exposure to Harmful Substances

Definition: Injuries, illnesses, or adverse health effects arising from exposure to hazardous energies, environmental extremes, or harmful physical, chemical, or biological agents.

Sub-category	Short Description	Typical Example
Contact with Electrical Current	Direct or indirect contact with live electrical energy resulting in shock, burn, or electrocution.	An electrician receives an electrical burn after contacting an energised bus bar while servicing a panel.
Contact with Temperature Extremes	Tissue damage from exposure to hot or cold sources—including flames, steam, molten metal, cryogenics, or extreme ambient temperatures.	A catering employee sustains a second-degree burn when hot soup spills onto their forearm.
Exposure to Air Pressure Changes	Physiological injury caused by rapid or prolonged variations in ambient pressure (positive or negative).	A diver experiences ear barotrauma during an uncontrolled ascent.
Exposure to Biological Agent(s)	Infection or allergic response following contact with bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites, or biological toxins.	A laboratory researcher contracts salmonellosis while handling contaminated specimens.
Exposure to Chemical Agent(s)	Acute or chronic effects from contact, inhalation, or ingestion of hazardous chemicals.	A custodian develops respiratory irritation after mixing bleach and

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		ammonia-based cleaners in a small storage room.
Exposure to Designated Substance(s)	Exposure to provincially regulated designated substances (e.g., asbestos, lead, silica) requiring specific controls.	A maintenance worker inhales asbestos fibres while cutting into ageing pipe insulation.
Exposure to Noise	Hearing damage due to sustained or sudden high sound pressure levels.	A stage technician experiences temporary threshold shift after working beside concert loudspeakers.
Exposure to Radiation	Adverse effects from ionising (X-ray, gamma) or non-ionising (laser, UV) radiation sources.	A researcher receives a minor retinal burn after accidental exposure to a class 3B laser beam.
Exposure to Traumatic or Stressful Event	Psychological harm resulting from witnessing or experiencing traumatic incidents.	A cashier develops acute stress disorder after an armed robbery in the campus store.
Oxygen Deficiency	Harm due to atmospheric oxygen falling below safe levels (<19.5% v/v).	A technician loses consciousness in a nitrogen-purged chamber lacking proper ventilation.

5 Slips, Trips & Falls

Definition: Incidents caused by loss of traction, balance, or support resulting in slips, trips, or falls—either on the same level or involving a change in elevation.

Sub-category	Short Description	Typical Example
Fall	General fall where the specific nature is unspecified or does not fit another sub-category.	A researcher loses balance while descending a gentle ramp and lands on their side.
Fall on Same Level	Fall occurring on the same working or walking surface without a change in elevation.	An office employee trips over a loose cable and falls onto the floor.
Fall to Lower Level	Unintentional descent from one level to another (e.g., ladder, scaffold, mezzanine).	A technician falls from a stepladder onto the lab floor 1 m below.
Jump to Lower Level	Intentional jump or step-off to a lower level that results in injury.	A delivery driver jumps from a truck tailgate and twists an ankle.

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Sub-category	Short Description	Typical Example
Slip	Loss of traction where the individual does not necessarily fall but sustains injury.	A custodian slips on a wet tile floor, straining the groin while regaining balance.
Slip/Trip/Fall on Same Level	Sequence where a slip or trip results in a fall on the same surface.	A student slips on ice at an entrance and lands on their elbow.
Slip/Trip/Fall to Lower Level	Slip or trip that causes a fall to a lower elevation such as stairs or a loading dock.	A caretaker slips on a stair tread and tumbles down several steps.

6 Fire & Explosion

Definition: Incidents involving uncontrolled ignition of combustible materials, rapid energy release, or detonation that result in fire, explosion, or both.

Sub-category	Short Description	Typical Example
Fire & Explosion	Any event where combustion or detonation causes injury, including standalone fires, explosions without fire, or combined events.	A solvent vapour ignites inside a fume hood, causing a brief flash fire that burns the operator's hands.