

WAC 296-14-300 Mental condition/mental disabilities. (1) Claims based on mental conditions or mental disabilities caused by stress do not fall within the definition of an occupational disease.

Examples of mental conditions or mental disabilities caused by stress that do not fall within occupational disease shall include, but are not limited to, those conditions and disabilities resulting from:

- (a) Change of employment duties;
- (b) Conflicts with a supervisor;
- (c) Actual or perceived threat of loss of a job, demotion, or disciplinary action;
- (d) Relationships with supervisors, coworkers, or the public;
- (e) Specific or general job dissatisfaction;
- (f) Work load pressures;
- (g) Subjective perceptions of employment conditions or environment;
- (h) Loss of job or demotion for whatever reason;
- (i) Fear of exposure to chemicals, radiation biohazards, or other perceived hazards;
- (j) Objective or subjective stresses of employment;
- (k) Personnel decisions;
- (l) Actual, perceived, or anticipated financial reversals or difficulties occurring to the businesses of self-employed individuals or corporate officers.

(2) (a) Stress resulting from exposure to a single traumatic event will be adjudicated as an industrial injury. See RCW 51.08.100.

(b) Examples of single traumatic events include: Actual or threatened death, actual or threatened physical assault, actual or threatened sexual assault, and life-threatening traumatic injury.

(c) These exposures must occur in one of the following ways:

- (i) Directly experiencing the traumatic event;
 - (ii) Witnessing, in person, the event as it occurred to others;
- or
- (iii) Extreme exposure to aversive details of the traumatic event.

(d) Repeated exposure to traumatic events, none of which are a single traumatic event as defined in subsection (2) (b) and (c) of this section, is not an industrial injury (see RCW 51.08.100) or an occupational disease (see RCW 51.08.142). A single traumatic event as defined in subsection (2) (b) and (c) of this section that occurs within a series of exposures will be adjudicated as an industrial injury (see RCW 51.08.100).

(3) For certain firefighters, law enforcement officers, and direct care registered nurses there is a presumption that posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is an occupational disease as provided by RCW 51.08.142, 51.32.185, and 51.32.395.

(4) For public safety telecommunicators, PTSD may be considered an occupational disease as provided by RCW 51.08.142.

(5) Mental conditions or mental disabilities that specify pain primarily as a psychiatric symptom (e.g., somatic symptom disorder, with predominant pain), or that are characterized by excessive or abnormal thoughts, feelings, behaviors or neurological symptoms (e.g., conversion disorder, factitious disorder) are not clinically related to occupational exposure.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020, 51.04.030, 51.08.142, and 51.32.395. WSR 24-01-112, § 296-14-300, filed 12/19/23, effective 1/19/24. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020, 51.08.142, and 51.32.185.

WSR 23-08-063, § 296-14-300, filed 4/4/23, effective 5/5/23. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020, 51.04.030, and 51.08.142. WSR 15-19-139, § 296-14-300, filed 9/22/15, effective 10/23/15. Statutory Authority: Chapters 51.08 and 51.32 RCW. WSR 88-14-011 (Order 88-13), § 296-14-300, filed 6/24/88.]