

§152. Authority of board; administration

1. General responsibility. The board has general supervision over the administration of this Act and responsibility for the efficient and effective management of the board and its employees.

[PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §8 (NEW); PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §§9-11 (AFF).]

2. Rules. Subject to any applicable requirements of the Maine Administrative Procedure Act, the board shall adopt rules to accomplish the purposes of this Act. Those rules may define terms, prescribe forms and make suitable orders of procedure to ensure the speedy, efficient, just and inexpensive disposition of all proceedings under this Act.

The board shall adopt rules establishing a policy and procedures to safeguard the confidentiality of the records of the former Workers' Compensation Commission and the Workers' Compensation Board pertaining to individual injured employees. The policy must make records available on a need-to-know basis only and must include legitimate research purposes while protecting individual confidentiality.

[PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §8 (NEW); PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §§9-11 (AFF).]

2-A. Electronic filing rulemaking. The board shall adopt rules requiring the electronic filing of information required by this Act and by board rule. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules as defined in Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

A. The rules must be developed through the consensus-based rule development process set forth in Title 5, section 8051-B and must include as participants representatives of employers, insurers and 3rd-party administrators. [PL 2003, c. 425, §1 (NEW).]

B. The rules must include written standards and procedures for implementation of the standards, which may include definition of the applicable programming interface for in-state and out-of-state entities required to submit reports. The rules must relate specific forms required to be filed with data points in the standards. [PL 2003, c. 425, §1 (NEW).]

Before adopting the rules, the board shall test the applicable application programming interfaces and standards to ensure that the program operates successfully.

[PL 2003, c. 425, §1 (NEW).]

3. Employment of executive director.

[PL 2003, c. 608, §10 (RP).]

4. Employment of general counsel. The board shall employ a general counsel, who is the legal adviser to the board and who shall perform such other duties as may be assigned by the board, and assistants as necessary. The general counsel and assistants to the general counsel are unclassified employees, serve at the pleasure of the board and are not subject to the Civil Service Law.

The board shall appoint a staff attorney to advise the advocates pursuant to section 153-A. The staff attorney is subject to the Civil Service Law and works under the direction of the general counsel.

[PL 1997, c. 486, §2 (AMD).]

5. Employment of and contracts with administrative law judges and mediators. The board shall obtain the services of persons qualified by background and training to serve as administrative law judges, who are authorized to take action and enter orders consistent with this Act in all cases assigned to them by the board, and mediators. Beginning January 1, 2020, except for the reappointment of administrative law judges appointed prior to that date, the board may not contract for the services of or employ administrative law judges without a vote supported by 5 of the 7 members of the board notwithstanding section 151, subsection 5. In the exercise of its discretion, the board may obtain the services of administrative law judges and mediators by either of the 2 following methods:

A. The board may contract for the services of administrative law judges and mediators, in which case they must be paid reasonable per diem fees for their services plus reimbursement of their

actual, necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, consistent with policies established by the board; or [PL 2015, c. 297, §3 (AMD).]

B. The board may employ administrative law judges and mediators to serve at the pleasure of the board and who are not subject to the Civil Service Law. They are entitled to receive reimbursement of their actual, necessary and reasonable expenses incurred in the performance of their duties, consistent with policies established by the board. [PL 2015, c. 297, §3 (AMD).]
[PL 2019, c. 344, §2 (AMD).]

6. Hiring of personnel. The board shall appoint the directors of the bureaus and divisions of the board and their deputies and assistants, who are unclassified employees, serve at the pleasure of the board and are not subject to the Civil Service Law.
[PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §8 (NEW); PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §§9-11 (AFF).]

7. Powers and duties of board. The board has all powers as are necessary to carry out its functions under the law. The board may delegate any powers and duties as necessary.
[PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §8 (NEW); PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §§9-11 (AFF).]

8. Conflict of interest. Each member of the board and each employee, contractor, agent or other representative of the board are "executive employees" for purposes of Title 5, section 18 and are subject to the limitations of that section. In addition, Title 17, section 3104 is applicable, in accordance with its provisions, to all such representatives of the board.
[PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §8 (NEW); PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §§9-11 (AFF).]

9. Accepting gifts, grants or donations. The board may accept gifts, grants or donations for the use of the board as provided by rules adopted by the board.
[PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §8 (NEW); PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §§9-11 (AFF).]

10. Case administration. The board shall assume an active and forceful role in the administration of this Act to ensure that the system operates efficiently and with maximum benefit to both employers and employees. It shall continually monitor individual cases to ensure that benefits are provided in accordance with this Act.
[PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §8 (NEW); PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §§9-11 (AFF).]

11. Recommending legislative change. The board shall consider and recommend to the Legislature changes in this Act. Recommended changes must be forwarded to the Legislature annually on or before December 1st.
[PL 1995, c. 103, §1 (AMD).]

12. Advisory committees. The board may appoint advisory committees as it determines necessary to assist the board in matters that arise under this Act. Advisory committee members are not entitled to compensation but may be reimbursed for travel and reasonable expenses as determined by the board.
[PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §8 (NEW); PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §§9-11 (AFF).]

13. Budget. The board shall administer its budget, with the assistance of the executive director.
[PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §8 (NEW); PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §§9-11 (AFF).]

14. Reimbursement. The board shall impose reasonable charges for reimbursement for the provision of services, facilities and materials, including, but not limited to, reproduction and distribution of forms, reports and publications, photocopying and the use of facilities.
[PL 1993, c. 145, §3 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1991, c. 885, §A8 (NEW). PL 1991, c. 885, §§A9-11 (AFF). PL 1993, c. 145, §3 (AMD). PL 1995, c. 103, §1 (AMD). PL 1997, c. 486, §2 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 425, §1 (AMD). PL 2003, c. 608, §10 (AMD). PL 2015, c. 297, §3 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 344, §2 (AMD).

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