

§201. Entitlement to compensation and services generally

1. Entitlement. If an employee who has not given notice of a claim of common law or statutory rights of action, or who has given the notice and has waived the claim or rights, as provided in section 301, receives a personal injury arising out of and in the course of employment or is disabled by occupational disease, the employee must be paid compensation and furnished medical and other services by the employer who has assented to become subject to this Act.

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

2. Injury while participating in rideshare programs. An employee injured while participating in a private, group or employer-sponsored car pool, van pool, commuter bus service or other rideshare program, having as its sole purpose the mass transportation of employees to and from work, for the purposes of this Act, may not be deemed to have received personal injury arising out of or in the course of employment. Nothing in the foregoing may be held to deny benefits under this Act to employees such as drivers, mechanics and others who receive remuneration for their participation in the rideshare programs.

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

3. Mental injury caused by mental stress.

[PL 2017, c. 294, §1 (RP).]

3-A. Mental injury caused by mental stress. Mental injury resulting from work-related stress does not arise out of and in the course of employment unless:

A. It is demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence that:

- (1) The work stress was extraordinary and unusual in comparison to pressures and tensions experienced by the average employee; and
- (2) The work stress, and not some other source of stress, was the predominant cause of the mental injury.

The amount of work stress must be measured by objective standards and actual events rather than any misperceptions by the employee; or [PL 2017, c. 294, §2 (NEW).]

B. The employee is a law enforcement officer, corrections officer, 9-1-1 dispatcher, firefighter or emergency medical services person and is diagnosed by an allopathic physician or an osteopathic physician licensed under Title 32, chapter 48 or chapter 36, respectively, with a specialization in psychiatry or a psychologist licensed under Title 32, chapter 56 as having post-traumatic stress disorder that resulted from work stress, that the work stress was extraordinary and unusual compared with that experienced by the average employee and the work stress and not some other source of stress was the predominant cause of the post-traumatic stress disorder, in which case the post-traumatic stress disorder is presumed to have arisen out of and in the course of the worker's employment. This presumption may be rebutted by clear and convincing evidence to the contrary. For purposes of this paragraph, "law enforcement officer," "corrections officer," "firefighter" and "emergency medical services person" have the same meaning as in section 328-A, subsection 1. For the purposes of this paragraph, "9-1-1 dispatcher" means a person who receives calls made to the 9-1-1 system and dispatches emergency services. "9-1-1 dispatcher" includes an emergency medical dispatcher as defined in Title 32, chapter 2-B, section 85-A, subsection 1, paragraph D.

Each time the Legislature amends this paragraph to provide for a rebuttable presumption for a new category of employees, the board shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the Legislature having jurisdiction over labor matters no later than the January 1st after the 5th year of the addition of the category of employees and no later than the January 1st after the 10th year of the addition of the category of employees. The reports must include an analysis of the number of claims brought under this paragraph, the portion of those claims that resulted in a settlement or

award of benefits and the effect of the provisions of this paragraph on costs to the State and its subdivisions. The Department of Administrative and Financial Services, Bureau of Human Resources and the Department of Public Safety shall assist the board in developing the reports, and the board shall seek the input of an association whose membership consists exclusively of counties, municipalities and other political or administrative subdivisions in the development of the report. [PL 2025, c. 167, §49 (AMD); PL 2025, c. 433, §1 (AMD).]

A mental injury is not considered to arise out of and in the course of employment if it results from any disciplinary action, work evaluation, job transfer, layoff, demotion, termination or any similar action, taken in good faith by the employer.

[PL 2025, c. 167, §49 (AMD); PL 2025, c. 433, §1 (AMD).]

4. Preexisting condition. If a work-related injury aggravates, accelerates or combines with a preexisting physical condition, any resulting disability is compensable only if contributed to by the employment in a significant manner.

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

5. Subsequent nonwork injuries. If an employee suffers a nonwork-related injury or disease that is not causally connected to a previous compensable injury, the subsequent nonwork-related injury or disease is not compensable under this Act.

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

6. Prior work-related injuries. If an employee suffers a work-related injury that aggravates, accelerates or combines with the effects of a work-related injury that occurred prior to January 1, 1993 for which compensation is still payable under the law in effect on the date of that prior injury, the employee's rights and benefits for the portion of the resulting disability that is attributable to the prior injury must be determined by the law in effect at the time of the prior injury.

[PL 1997, c. 647, §1 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 1991, c. 885, §A8 (NEW). PL 1991, c. 885, §§A9-11 (AFF). PL 1997, c. 647, §1 (AMD). PL 2017, c. 294, §§1, 2 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 419, §1 (AMD). PL 2021, c. 629, §2 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 405, Pt. A, §143 (AMD). PL 2025, c. 167, §49 (AMD). PL 2025, c. 433, §1 (AMD).

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