§359. Audits; penalty; monitoring

1. Audits. The board shall audit claims, including insurer, self-insurer, Maine Insurance Guaranty Association and 3rd-party administrator claim files, on an ongoing basis to determine whether insurers, self-insured employers, the Maine Insurance Guaranty Association and 3rd-party administrators have met their obligations under this Act and to identify the disputes that arose, the reasons for the disputes, the method and manner of their resolution, the costs incurred, the reasons for attorney involvement and the services rendered by the attorneys.

If as a result of an examination and after providing the opportunity for a hearing the board determines that any compensation, interest, penalty or other obligation is due and unpaid to an employee, dependent, service provider or any other entity, the board shall issue a notice of assessment detailing the amounts due and unpaid in each case and shall order the amounts paid to the unpaid party or parties.

[PL 2009, c. 129, §11 (AMD); PL 2009, c. 129, §13 (AFF).]

2. Penalty. In addition to any other penalty assessment permitted under this Act, the board may assess civil penalties not to exceed $25,000 upon finding, after hearing, that an employer, insurer or 3rd-party administrator for an employer has engaged in a pattern of questionable claims-handling techniques or repeated unreasonably contested claims. The board shall certify its findings to the Superintendent of Insurance, who shall take appropriate action so as to bring any such practices to a halt. This certification by the board is exempt from the provisions of the Maine Administrative Procedure Act. The amount of any penalty assessed pursuant to this subsection must be directly related to the severity of the pattern of questionable claims-handling techniques or repeated unreasonably contested claims. All penalties collected pursuant to this subsection must be deposited in the General Fund. An insurance carrier's payment of any penalty assessed under this section may not be considered an element of loss for the purpose of establishing rates for workers' compensation insurance.

[PL 2007, c. 265, §2 (AMD).]

3. Monitoring. No later than July 1, 1993 the board shall implement a monitoring program to evaluate and compare the cost, utilization and performance of the workers' compensation system for each calendar year beginning with 1988. The information compiled must include the number of injuries occurring and claims filed as compared to employment levels, the type and cost of the benefits provided, attorney involvement and litigation levels, and the long-term, postinjury economic status of injured workers, as well as any other data that is actuarially valid and can be utilized to accomplish the purposes of this Act, including rulemaking and recommending legislation.


SECTION HISTORY


The State of Maine claims a copyright in its codified statutes. If you intend to republish this material, we require that you include the following disclaimer in your publication:

All copyrights and other rights to statutory text are reserved by the State of Maine. The text included in this publication reflects changes made through the First Regular Session of the 129th Maine Legislature and is current through October 1, 2019. The text is subject to change without notice. It is a version that has not been officially certified by the Secretary of State. Refer to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and supplements for certified text.

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes also requests that you send us one copy of any statutory publication you may produce. Our goal is not to restrict publishing activity, but to keep track of who is publishing what, to identify any needless duplication and to preserve the State's copyright rights.

PLEASE NOTE: The Revisor's Office cannot perform research for or provide legal advice or interpretation of Maine law to the public. If you need legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.