

**§215. Death benefits**

**1. Death of employee; date of injury prior to January 1, 2013.** If an injured employee's date of injury is prior to January 1, 2013 and if death results from the injury of the employee, the employer shall pay or cause to be paid to the dependents of the employee who were wholly dependent upon the employee's earnings for support at the time of the injury a weekly payment equal to 80% of the employee's after-tax average weekly wage, but not more than the maximum benefit under section 211, for a period of 500 weeks from the date of death. If the employee leaves dependents only partially dependent upon the employee's earnings for support at the time of injury, the employer shall pay weekly compensation equal to the same proportion of the weekly payments for the benefit of persons wholly dependent, as 80% of the amount contributed by the employee to such partial dependents bears to the annual earnings of the deceased at the time of injury. If, at the expiration of the 500-week period, any wholly or partially dependent person is less than 18 years of age, the employer shall continue to pay or cause to be paid the weekly compensation until that person reaches the age of 18.

If a dependent spouse dies or becomes a dependent of another person, the payments must cease upon the payment to the spouse of the balance of the compensation to which the spouse would otherwise have been entitled but in no event to exceed the sum of \$500.00. The remaining weeks of compensation, if any, are payable to those persons either wholly or partially dependent upon the employee for support at the employee's death. When, at the expiration of the 500-week period, any wholly or partially dependent person is less than 18 years of age, the employer shall continue to pay or cause to be paid the weekly compensation, until that person reaches the age of 18. The payment of compensation to any dependent child after the expiration of the 500-week period ceases when the child reaches the age of 18 years, if at the age of 18 years the child is neither physically nor mentally incapacitated from earning, or when the child reaches the age of 16 years and thereafter is self-supporting for 6 months. If the child ceases to be self-supporting thereafter, the dependency must be reinstated. As long as any of the 500 weeks of compensation remain, that compensation is payable to the person either wholly or partially dependent upon the deceased employee for support at the time of the employee's death, with the exception of a dependent spouse who becomes a dependent of another. If a wholly dependent or partially dependent child who reaches 18 years of age is either physically or mentally incapacitated so as to be unable to earn a living as determined by the board, the payments must continue until such time as the child either dies or is no longer physically or mentally incapacitated from earning.

[PL 2011, c. 647, §12 (AMD).]

**1-A. Death of employee; date of injury on or after January 1, 2013.** If an injured employee's date of injury is on or after January 1, 2013 and if death results from the injury of the employee, the employer shall pay or cause to be paid to the dependents of the employee who were wholly dependent upon the employee's earnings for support at the time of the injury a weekly payment equal to 2/3 of the employee's gross average weekly wages, earnings or salary, but not more than the maximum benefit under section 211, for a period of 500 weeks from the date of death. If the employee leaves dependents only partially dependent upon the employee's earnings for support at the time of injury, the employer shall pay weekly compensation equal to the same proportion of the weekly payments for the benefit of persons wholly dependent, as 2/3 of the amount contributed by the employee to such partial dependents bears to the annual earnings of the deceased at the time of injury. If, at the expiration of the 500-week period, any wholly or partially dependent person is less than 18 years of age, the employer shall continue to pay or cause to be paid the weekly compensation until that person reaches the age of 18.

If a dependent spouse dies or becomes a dependent of another person, the payments must cease upon the payment to the spouse of the balance of the compensation to which the spouse would otherwise have been entitled but in no event to exceed the sum of \$500.00. The remaining weeks of compensation, if any, are payable to those persons either wholly or partially dependent upon the employee for support at the employee's death. When, at the expiration of the 500-week period, any wholly or partially dependent person is less than 18 years of age, the employer shall continue to pay or cause to be paid

the weekly compensation, until that person reaches the age of 18. The payment of compensation to any dependent child after the expiration of the 500-week period ceases when the child reaches the age of 18 years, if at the age of 18 years the child is neither physically nor mentally incapacitated from earning, or when the child reaches the age of 16 years and thereafter is self-supporting for 6 months. If the child ceases to be self-supporting thereafter, the dependency must be reinstated. As long as any of the 500 weeks of compensation remain, that compensation is payable to the person either wholly or partially dependent upon the deceased employee for support at the time of the employee's death, with the exception of a dependent spouse who becomes a dependent of another. If a wholly dependent or partially dependent child who reaches 18 years of age is either physically or mentally incapacitated so as to be unable to earn a living as determined by the board, the payments must continue until such time as the child either dies or is no longer physically or mentally incapacitated from earning.

[PL 2011, c. 647, §13 (NEW).]

**1-B. Death of employee; date of injury on or after January 1, 2020.** If an injured employee's date of injury is on or after January 1, 2020, if death results from the injury of the employee and if the employee has no dependents, the employer shall pay or cause to be paid to the parents of the employee during the parents' lifetime a weekly payment equal to 2/3 of the employee's gross average weekly wages, earnings or salary, but not more than the maximum benefit under section 211, for a period of 500 weeks from the date of death. This subsection does not apply to an injury or death of an employee occurring before January 1, 2020, except that for a death of an employee resulting from an injury the date of which is on or after January 1, 2019 but before January 1, 2020, payment made to the Treasurer of State under section 355, subsection 14, paragraph F must be transferred to the parents of the deceased employee. For the purposes of this subsection, "parent" means a natural or adoptive parent, unless that parent's parental rights have been terminated.

[PL 2019, c. 344, §9 (NEW).]

**2. Death of an injured employee.** The death of the injured employee prior to the expiration of the period within which the employee would receive weekly payments ends the disability and all liability for the remainder of the payments that the employee would have received in case the employee had lived is terminated, but the employer is liable for the following death benefits in lieu of any further disability indemnity.

A. If the injury received by the employee was the proximate cause of the employee's death and the deceased employee leaves dependents wholly or partially dependent on the employee for support, the death benefit is equal to the full amount that the dependents would have been entitled to receive under subsection 1 if the injury had resulted in immediate death. Benefits under this paragraph are payable in the same manner as if the injury resulted in immediate death. [PL 2007, c. 361, §1 (AMD); PL 2007, c. 361, §2 (AFF).]

B. If an application for benefits has been filed but has not been decided by the board or is on appeal and the employee dies from a cause unrelated to the employee's injury, the proceedings may be continued in the name of the employee's personal representative. In such a case, any benefits awarded are payable up to time of death and must be paid to the same beneficiaries and in the same amounts as would have been payable if the employee had suffered a compensable injury resulting in death. [PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §8 (NEW); PL 1991, c. 885, Pt. A, §§9-11 (AFF).]

[PL 2007, c. 361, §1 (AMD); PL 2007, c. 361, §2 (AFF).]

#### SECTION HISTORY

PL 1991, c. 885, §A8 (NEW). PL 1991, c. 885, §§A9-11 (AFF). PL 2007, c. 361, §1 (AMD). PL 2007, c. 361, §2 (AFF). PL 2011, c. 647, §§12, 13 (AMD). PL 2019, c. 344, §9 (AMD).

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 Second Regular Session of the 131st Maine Legislature and is current through January 1, 2025. 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.