

1 **MEDICAL BENEFITS UNDER WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

2 2010 GENERAL SESSION

3 STATE OF UTAH

4 **Chief Sponsor: D. Chris Buttars**

5 House Sponsor: Wayne A. Harper

6

LONG TITLE

7 **General Description:**

8 This bill modifies the Workers' Compensation Act to address issues related to the
9 payment of medical benefits in the case of an industrial accident.

10 **Highlighted Provisions:**

11 This bill:

- 12 ▶ provides that legislative changes in the time limits in seeking medical benefits made
- 13 in 2007 are to be applied retroactively;
- 14 ▶ addresses what constitutes a medical expense necessary to the industrial accident,
- 15 including for cases that occur before the prior legislative action; and
- 16 ▶ makes technical changes.

17 **Monies Appropriated in this Bill:**

18 None

19 **Other Special Clauses:**

20 None

21 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

22 AMENDS:

23 **34A-2-417**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2007, Chapter 62

24

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:

25 Section 1. Section **34A-2-417** is amended to read:



28 **34A-2-417. Claims and benefits -- Time limits for filing -- Burden of proof.**

29 (1) (a) Except with respect to prosthetic devices or in a permanent total disability case,
30 an employee is entitled to be compensated for a medical expense if:

31 [~~(a)~~] (i) the medical expense is:

32 [~~(i)~~] (A) reasonable in amount; and

33 [~~(ii)~~] (B) necessary to treat the industrial accident; and

34 [~~(b)~~] (ii) the employee submits or makes a reasonable attempt to submit the medical
35 expense:

36 [~~(i)~~] (A) to the employee's employer or insurance carrier for payment; and

37 [~~(ii)~~] (B) within one year from the later of:

38 [~~(A)~~] (I) the day on which the medical expense is incurred; or

39 [~~(B)~~] (II) the day on which the employee knows or in the exercise of reasonable
40 diligence should have known that the medical expense is related to the industrial accident.

41 (b) For purposes of Subsection (1)(a), a medical expense is considered necessary to
42 treat an industrial accident if the medical expense is for treatment of a disability that results
43 from the industrial accident.

44 (c) An employee is entitled to be compensated for a medical expense if the employee
45 meets the requirements of Subsections (1)(a) and (b) regardless of whether the industrial
46 accident that is the basis of the claim occurred before April 30, 2007.

47 (2) (a) A claim described in Subsection (2)(b) is barred, unless the employee:

48 (i) files an application for hearing with the Division of Adjudication no later than six
49 years from the date of the accident; and

50 (ii) by no later than 12 years from the date of the accident, is able to meet the
51 employee's burden of proving that the employee is due the compensation claimed under this
52 chapter.

53 (b) Subsection (2)(a) applies to a claim for compensation for:

54 (i) temporary total disability benefits;

55 (ii) temporary partial disability benefits;

56 (iii) permanent partial disability benefits; or

57 (iv) permanent total disability benefits.

58 (c) The commission may enter an order awarding or denying an employee's claim for

59 compensation under this chapter within a reasonable time period beyond 12 years from the date
60 of the accident, if:

61 (i) the employee complies with Subsection (2)(a); and

62 (ii) 12 years from the date of the accident:

63 (A) (I) the employee is fully cooperating in a commission approved reemployment
64 plan; and

65 (II) the results of that commission approved reemployment plan are not known; or

66 (B) the employee is actively adjudicating issues of compensability before the
67 commission.

68 (3) A claim for death benefits is barred unless an application for hearing is filed within
69 one year of the date of death of the employee.

70 (4) (a) (i) Subject to Subsections (2)(c) and (4)(b), after an employee files an
71 application for hearing within six years from the date of the accident, the Division of
72 Adjudication may enter an order to show cause why the employee's claim should not be
73 dismissed because the employee has failed to meet the employee's burden of proof to establish
74 an entitlement to compensation claimed in the application for hearing.

75 (ii) The order described in Subsection (4)(a)(i) may be entered on the motion of the:

76 (A) Division of Adjudication;

77 (B) employee's employer; or

78 (C) employer's insurance carrier.

79 (b) Under Subsection (4)(a), the Division of Adjudication may dismiss a claim:

80 (i) without prejudice; or

81 (ii) with prejudice only if:

82 (A) the Division of Adjudication adjudicates the merits of the employee's entitlement
83 to the compensation claimed in the application for hearing; or

84 (B) the employee fails to comply with Subsection (2)(a)(ii).

85 (c) If a claim is dismissed without prejudice under Subsection (4)(b), the employee is
86 subject to the time limits under Subsection (2)(a) to claim compensation under this chapter.

87 (5) A claim for compensation under this chapter is subject to a claim or lien for
88 recovery under Section 26-19-5.

Legislative Review Note
as of 2-17-10 1:00 PM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel

S.B. 231 - Medical Benefits Under Workers' Compensation

Fiscal Note

2010 General Session

State of Utah

State Impact

Enactment of this bill will not require additional appropriations.

Individual, Business and/or Local Impact

Enactment of this bill likely will not result in direct, measurable costs and/or benefits for local governments. Individuals and businesses may be impacted due to the proposed change in statute.
