

# DIVISION OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION

*Minimizing the impact of work-related injuries and illnesses. Helping resolve disputes over workers' compensation benefits. Monitoring the administration of claims.*

FACT SHEET

## What is workers' compensation?

If you get hurt on the job, your employer is required by law to pay for workers' compensation benefits. You could get hurt by:

One event at work. Examples: hurting your back in a fall, getting burned by a chemical that splashes on your skin, getting hurt in a car accident while making deliveries.

—or—

Repeated exposures at work. Examples: hurting your wrist from doing the same motion over and over, losing your hearing because of constant loud noise.

## What are the benefits?

- **Medical care:** Paid for by your employer, to help you recover from an injury or illness caused by work.
- **Temporary disability benefits:** Payments if you lose wages because your injury prevents you from doing your usual job while recovering.
- **Permanent disability benefits:** Payments if you don't recover completely.
- **Supplemental job displacement benefits:** Vouchers to help pay for retraining or skill enhancement if you don't recover completely and don't return to work for your employer.
- **Death benefits:** Payments to your spouse, children or other dependents if you die from a job injury or illness.

## What should I do if I have a job injury?

### Report the injury to your employer

Tell your supervisor right away. If your injury or illness developed gradually (like tendinitis or hearing loss), report it as soon as you learn or believe it was caused by your job.

### **Get emergency treatment if needed**

If it's a medical emergency, go to an emergency room right away. Your employer may tell you where to go for treatment. Tell the health care provider who treats you that your injury or illness is job-related.

### **Fill out a claim form and give it to your employer**

Your employer must give or mail you a claim form ([DWC 1](#)) within one working day after learning about your injury or illness. Use it to request workers' compensation benefits.

### **Get good medical care**

Get good medical care to help you recover. You should be treated by a doctor who understands your particular type of injury or illness. Tell the doctor about your symptoms and the events at work that you believe caused them. Also describe your job and your work environment.

### **I'm afraid I might be fired because of my injury. Can my employer fire me?**

It's illegal for your employer to punish or fire you for having a job injury, or for filing a workers' compensation claim when you believe your injury was caused by your job.

If you feel your job is threatened, find someone who can help. Note that there are deadlines for taking action to protect your rights.

The California Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) is the state agency that oversees the delivery of benefits for injured workers and helps resolve disputes over benefits between injured workers and employers.

DWC information and assistance (I & A) officers can help you navigate the workers' compensation system and can provide claim forms or other forms you need to receive benefits.

*The FREE publication, "A Guidebook for Injured Workers," can be downloaded from [www.dwc.ca.gov](http://www.dwc.ca.gov).*

*Call 1-800-736-7401 to hear recorded information on a variety of workers' compensation topics 24 hours a day, or go on line to [www.dwc.ca.gov](http://www.dwc.ca.gov) to find the [I & A office](#) near you.*

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