

HOUSE BILL NO. 148

INTRODUCED BY D. BROWN

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16
17
18
19
20
21
22
23
24
25
26
27
28
29
30

A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT DEFINING "COURSE OF EMPLOYMENT" AS AN EMPLOYEE'S ACTUAL PERIOD OF EMPLOYMENT AND THE PERIOD OF TIME DURING WHICH THE EMPLOYEE, WHILE ON THE EMPLOYER'S PREMISES, PREPARES TO COMMENCE WORK OR TO DEPART FROM WORK; EXCLUDING FROM THE DEFINITION AN EMPLOYEE'S TRAVEL TO AND FROM WORK; AND AMENDING SECTION 39-71-116, MCA."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

Section 1. Section 39-71-116, MCA, is amended to read:

"39-71-116. Definitions. Unless the context otherwise requires, in this chapter, the following definitions apply:

(1) "Actual wage loss" means that the wages that a worker earns or is qualified to earn after the worker reaches maximum healing are less than the actual wages the worker received at the time of the injury.

(2) "Administer and pay" includes all actions by the state fund under the Workers' Compensation Act necessary to:

- (a) investigation, review, and settlement of claims;
- (b) payment of benefits;
- (c) setting of reserves;
- (d) furnishing of services and facilities; and
- (e) use of actuarial, audit, accounting, vocational rehabilitation, and legal services.

(3) "Aid or sustenance" means a public or private subsidy made to provide a means of support, maintenance, or subsistence for the recipient.

(4) "Beneficiary" means:

- (a) a surviving spouse living with or legally entitled to be supported by the deceased at the time of injury;
- (b) an unmarried child under 18 years of age;
- (c) an unmarried child under 22 years of age who is a full-time student in an accredited school or is enrolled in an accredited apprenticeship program;

1 (d) an invalid child over 18 years of age who is dependent, as defined in 26 U.S.C. 152, upon the
2 decedent for support at the time of injury;

3 (e) a parent who is dependent, as defined in 26 U.S.C. 152, upon the decedent for support at the time
4 of the injury if a beneficiary, as defined in subsections (4)(a) through (4)(d), does not exist; and

5 (f) a brother or sister under 18 years of age if dependent, as defined in 26 U.S.C. 152, upon the decedent
6 for support at the time of the injury but only until the age of 18 years and only when a beneficiary, as defined in
7 subsections (4)(a) through (4)(e), does not exist.

8 (5) "Business partner" means the community, governmental entity, or business organization that provides
9 the premises for work-based learning activities for students.

10 (6) "Casual employment" means employment not in the usual course of the trade, business, profession,
11 or occupation of the employer.

12 (7) "Child" includes a posthumous child, a dependent stepchild, and a child legally adopted prior to the
13 injury.

14 (8) (a) "Claims examiner" means an individual who, as a paid employee of the department, of a plan No.
15 1, 2, or 3 insurer, or of an administrator licensed under Title 33, chapter 17, examines claims under chapter 71
16 to:

17 (i) determine liability;

18 (ii) apply the requirements of this title;

19 (iii) settle workers' compensation or occupational disease claims; or

20 (iv) determine survivor benefits.

21 (b) The term does not include an adjuster as defined in 33-17-102.

22 ~~(8)~~(9) (a) "Construction industry" means the major group of general contractors and operative builders,
23 heavy construction (other than building construction) contractors, and special trade contractors listed in major
24 group 23 in the North American Industry Classification System Manual.

25 (b) The term does not include office workers, design professionals, salespersons, estimators, or any
26 other related employment that is not directly involved on a regular basis in the provision of physical labor at a
27 construction or renovation site.

28 ~~(9) (a) "Claims examiner" means an individual who, as a paid employee of the department, of a plan No.~~
29 ~~1, 2, or 3 insurer, or of an administrator licensed under Title 33, chapter 17, examines claims under chapter 71~~
30 ~~to:~~

- 1 ~~_____ (i) determine liability;~~
 2 ~~_____ (ii) apply the requirements of this title;~~
 3 ~~_____ (iii) settle workers' compensation or occupational disease claims; or~~
 4 ~~_____ (iv) determine survivor benefits.~~
 5 ~~_____ (b) The term does not include an adjuster as defined in 33-17-102.~~

6 (10) (a) "Course of employment" means an employee's actual period of employment and the period of
 7 time during which the employee, while on the employer's premises, prepares to commence work or to depart from
 8 work.

9 (b) The term does not include an employee's travel to or from work if the employee is not involved in
 10 carrying out any task on behalf of the employer while traveling to or from work.

11 ~~(10)(11)~~ "Days" means calendar days, unless otherwise specified.

12 ~~(11)(12)~~ "Department" means the department of labor and industry.

13 ~~(12)(13)~~ "Fiscal year" means the period of time between July 1 and the succeeding June 30.

14 ~~(13)(14)~~ (a) "Household or domestic employment" means employment of persons other than members
 15 of the household for the purpose of tending to the aid and comfort of the employer or members of the employer's
 16 family, including but not limited to housecleaning and yard work.

17 (b) The term does not include employment beyond the scope of normal household or domestic duties,
 18 such as home health care or domiciliary care.

19 ~~(14)(15)~~ "Insurer" means an employer bound by compensation plan No. 1, an insurance company
 20 transacting business under compensation plan No. 2, or the state fund under compensation plan No. 3.

21 ~~(15)(16)~~ "Invalid" means one who is physically or mentally incapacitated.

22 ~~(16)(17)~~ "Limited liability company" has the meaning provided in 35-8-102.

23 ~~(17)(18)~~ "Maintenance care" means treatment designed to provide the optimum state of health while
 24 minimizing recurrence of the clinical status.

25 ~~(18)(19)~~ "Medical stability", "maximum healing", or "maximum medical healing" means a point in the
 26 healing process when further material improvement would not be reasonably expected from primary medical
 27 treatment.

28 ~~(19)(20)~~ "Objective medical findings" means medical evidence, including range of motion, atrophy, muscle
 29 strength, muscle spasm, or other diagnostic evidence, substantiated by clinical findings.

30 ~~(20)(21)~~ (a) "Occupational disease" means harm, damage, or death arising out of or contracted in the

1 course and scope of employment caused by events occurring on more than a single day or work shift.

2 (b) The term does not include a physical or mental condition arising from emotional or mental stress or
3 from a nonphysical stimulus or activity.

4 ~~(24)~~(22) "Order" means any decision, rule, direction, requirement, or standard of the department or any
5 other determination arrived at by the department.

6 ~~(22)~~(23) "Palliative care" means treatment designed to reduce or ease symptoms without curing the
7 underlying cause of the symptoms.

8 ~~(23)~~(24) "Payroll", "annual payroll", or "annual payroll for the preceding year" means the average annual
9 payroll of the employer for the preceding calendar year or, if the employer has not operated a sufficient or any
10 length of time during the calendar year, 12 times the average monthly payroll for the current year. However, an
11 estimate may be made by the department for any employer starting in business if average payrolls are not
12 available. This estimate must be adjusted by additional payment by the employer or refund by the department,
13 as the case may actually be, on December 31 of the current year. An employer's payroll must be computed by
14 calculating all wages, as defined in 39-71-123, that are paid by an employer.

15 ~~(24)~~(25) "Permanent partial disability" means a physical condition in which a worker, after reaching
16 maximum medical healing:

17 (a) has a permanent impairment established by objective medical findings;

18 (b) is able to return to work in some capacity but the permanent impairment impairs the worker's ability
19 to work; and

20 (c) has an actual wage loss as a result of the injury.

21 ~~(25)~~(26) "Permanent total disability" means a physical condition resulting from injury as defined in this
22 chapter, after a worker reaches maximum medical healing, in which a worker does not have a reasonable
23 prospect of physically performing regular employment. Regular employment means work on a recurring basis
24 performed for remuneration in a trade, business, profession, or other occupation in this state. Lack of immediate
25 job openings is not a factor to be considered in determining if a worker is permanently totally disabled.

26 ~~(26)~~(27) "Primary medical services" means treatment prescribed by a treating physician, for conditions
27 resulting from the injury, necessary for achieving medical stability.

28 ~~(27)~~(28) "Public corporation" means the state or a county, municipal corporation, school district, city, city
29 under a commission form of government or special charter, town, or village.

30 ~~(28)~~(29) "Reasonably safe place to work" means that the place of employment has been made as free

1 from danger to the life or safety of the employee as the nature of the employment will reasonably permit.

2 ~~(29)~~(30) "Reasonably safe tools or appliances" are tools and appliances that are adapted to and that are
3 reasonably safe for use for the particular purpose for which they are furnished.

4 ~~(30)~~(31) (a) "Secondary medical services" means those medical services or appliances that are
5 considered not medically necessary for medical stability. The services and appliances include but are not limited
6 to spas or hot tubs, work hardening, physical restoration programs and other restoration programs designed to
7 address disability and not impairment, or equipment offered by individuals, clinics, groups, hospitals, or
8 rehabilitation facilities.

9 (b) (i) As used in this subsection ~~(30)~~ (31), "disability" means a condition in which a worker's ability to
10 engage in gainful employment is diminished as a result of physical restrictions resulting from an injury. The
11 restrictions may be combined with factors, such as the worker's age, education, work history, and other factors
12 that affect the worker's ability to engage in gainful employment.

13 (ii) Disability does not mean a purely medical condition.

14 ~~(31)~~(32) "Sole proprietor" means the person who has the exclusive legal right or title to or ownership of
15 a business enterprise.

16 ~~(32)~~(33) "State's average weekly wage" means the mean weekly earnings of all employees under
17 covered employment, as defined and established annually by the department before July 1 and rounded to the
18 nearest whole dollar number.

19 ~~(33)~~(34) "Temporary partial disability" means a physical condition resulting from an injury, as defined in
20 39-71-119, in which a worker, prior to maximum healing:

21 (a) is temporarily unable to return to the position held at the time of injury because of a medically
22 determined physical restriction;

23 (b) returns to work in a modified or alternative employment; and

24 (c) suffers a partial wage loss.

25 ~~(34)~~(35) "Temporary service contractor" means a person, firm, association, partnership, limited liability
26 company, or corporation conducting business that hires its own employees and assigns them to clients to fill a
27 work assignment with a finite ending date to support or supplement the client's workforce in situations resulting
28 from employee absences, skill shortages, seasonal workloads, and special assignments and projects.

29 ~~(35)~~(36) "Temporary total disability" means a physical condition resulting from an injury, as defined in this
30 chapter, that results in total loss of wages and exists until the injured worker reaches maximum medical healing.

