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**A SUPERVISOR'S GUIDE TO
WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

**DEPARTMENT
OF
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES**

**THE DIVISION OF
RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES
AND
KEY RISK MANAGEMENT SERVICES**

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TO ALL STATE OF GEORGIA SUPERVISORS

This Supervisor's Handbook contains information prepared by the Department of Administrative Services, Division of Risk Management Services (RMS) Workers' Compensation Unit to assist you in the effective and expeditious reporting and handling of on-the-job injury claims.

The primary focus of the DOAS/RMS Workers' Compensation Unit and Key Risk Management Services is to administer workers' compensation claims as defined by the Rules and Regulations of the State Board of Workers Compensation governed under O.C.G.A. 34-9, and to safely return injured employees to productive employment.

You have a single point of contact -- your agency's dedicated Workers' Compensation Specialist is here to help you. Please feel free to call with your questions and concerns.

Workers' Compensation Staff

SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

WHAT SHOULD THE SUPERVISOR DO WHEN AN EMPLOYEE IS INJURED ON THE JOB?

A Supervisor should always take a productive role when an employee advises he/she has been injured on the job. The supervisor is the most effective person in the initial handling of the claim, as he/she is normally the only person with whom the injured employee communicates. We encourage supervisors to do the following:

- Take time to handle the injury. Find out what happened; obtain the names of any witnesses; and ensure the area is free of any hazards that could contribute to additional injuries.
- Report the injury to 1-877-656-RISK (7475) as soon as possible but at least within 24 hours following the incident.
- After you have reported the injury, the intake coordinator at the Call Center will transfer you to the Managed Care Organization (Amerisys). At this time, you may let the employee speak with Amerisys to obtain medical treatment and coordination of medical appointments. ***If your employee has an emergency and needs treatment immediately, do not delay getting medical help for the employee while you report the claim and speak with Amerisys.***
- ***The employee is your first concern.*** If the employee needs emergency care, get them to the nearest emergency room immediately; all follow-up treatment must be coordinated through Amerisys. If the employee feels treatment is not needed, have him/her to acknowledge in writing treatment was offered but was declined. Keep the acknowledgement with a copy of the incident report.
- Communicate with the treating physician regarding the physical requirements of the job by utilizing the Georgia Activity Analysis (GAA)
- Remember that DOAS/RMS and Key Risk Management Services are your partners and communicate openly with your Workers' Compensation Specialist handling the claim.
- Demonstrate your concern by communicating frequently with your injured employee during the recovery process (*calls, cards, visits, invitations to agency events*)
- Make every effort to return your employee to work **as soon as possible** through transitional employment, by working closely with your WC claims team members.

REPORT THE INJURY

All calls are answered by *The Network*, a Telephonic Reporting Vendor (TRV) who is experienced and specializes in handling First Reports of Injury.

TELEPHONIC REPORTING INSTRUCTIONS:

- Call toll-free, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week 1-877-656-RISK (7475).
- Claims must be reported by the supervisor or the person designated by the agency to report on-the-job injuries.
- Employees *should not* call in their own claims unless special circumstances require the employee to report the injury.

In order for the Telephonic Reporting Specialist at The Network to serve you better, you will need the following minimal information available when you call.

- Your Agency Location (client ID number)
- Name, Address, Social Security Number, Age and Sex of Injured Employee
- Name of Employing Agency, Address and Telephone #
- Date, Time and Description of Accident (How, Where, Why)
- Part of Body Injured and Type of Injury (cut, scrape, burn, etc.)
- Hourly/Weekly /Monthly Wage
- Name and Address of Physician/Hospital
- Has Injured Employee Returned to Work?

Injuries should be reported to The Network as soon as possible but at least within 24 hours of an accident.

Once a claim has been reported through The Network any correction to the above information should be made by calling your dedicated Workers' Compensation Specialist. A copy of the completed first report of injury will be faxed to both the number designated by your agency and your Workers Compensation Specialist within 24 hours of the report.

Only injuries requiring medical care or lost time from work should be reported to the Telephonic Reporting Vendor. Injuries requiring only first aid or requiring no medical care should be recorded within the agency as an incident notice only.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS WORKERS' COMPENSATION?

Workers' Compensation is an accident insurance program, which may provide medical care, rehabilitation, and income to compensate for lost wages if you are injured on the job. It also provides financial payment to your dependents in the event of death from a job related injury.

WHEN DOES AN EMPLOYEE'S COVERAGE UNDER WORKERS' COMPENSATION BEGIN?

An employee's coverage begins with their first day on the job.

WHO IS COVERED UNDER THE STATE OF GEORGIA'S WORKERS' COMPENSATION PROGRAM?

The State of Georgia's workers' compensation self-insurance program covers all full-time, part-time, salaried, and hourly wage employees of the state. Additionally, coverage is extended to all state departments, instrumentalities, boards, commissions, authorities, including all community service boards and county health departments (with the exception of Fulton), as well as all state universities, colleges, and technical schools.

WHAT IS CONSIDERED AN ON-THE-JOB INJURY?

An on-the-job injury is any injury or illness arising out of and in the course of employment. This means if an employee is injured while performing his/her assigned duties during assigned work hours; he/she is covered under the workers' compensation program. If an employee is injured during his/her lunch, scheduled break, or the employee is not engaging in any assigned work duty, he/she is not covered under the workers' compensation program.

ARE ON-THE-JOB ACCIDENTS INVESTIGATED?

Yes, some investigations of on-the-job accidents are conducted by the Workers' Compensation Specialist and are necessary to determine how an injury occurred and to gather additional information pertaining to the injury. This information often comes in the form of a recorded or written statement from the injured worker, supervisor, and/or witnesses, and assists the agency's designated Workers' Compensation Specialist in deciding compensability of the claim. Anytime a supervisor suspects fraud he/she should advise the designated Workers' Compensation Specialist immediately.

WHAT SHOULD THE SUPERVISOR DO IF THE INJURED EMPLOYEE HIRES AN ATTORNEY?

If the employee retains counsel the supervisor should not discuss issues pertaining to the Workers' Compensation claim with the employee; however, the supervisor must continue to supervise that employee's daily operations. Should questions related to the Workers' Compensation claim arise, the employee's attorney should be referred to the designated Workers' Compensation Specialist.

ARE EMPLOYEES WHO COMMIT WILLFUL MISCONDUCT RESULTING IN INJURY COVERED UNDER WORKERS' COMPENSATION?

In general, workers' compensation does not provide benefits for an injury or accident resulting from an employee's willful misconduct (e.g. fighting, horseplay, intoxication, etc.); however, these accidents should be reported to DOAS/DRMS so that the designated Workers' Compensation Specialist can conduct an investigation and properly determine compensability.

DO EMPLOYEES PAY THEIR PHYSICIAN BILLS AND OTHER MEDICAL EXPENSES RESULTING FROM THE JOB RELATED INJURY?

No. Your employee's medical bills are paid by workers' compensation if their medical treatment is coordinated through Amerisys. If the employee seeks treatment from a physician not coordinated through Amerisys, workers' compensation may not pay.

IF I HAVE AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, DOES THE EMPLOYEE STILL CONTACT AMERISYS FOR REFERRAL TO A PHYSICIAN?

No, the exception to the Managed Care Process is in emergencies. Call 911 or have the employee transported to the nearest emergency room. However, all follow-up care must be rendered by a doctor chosen by the employee coordinated through Amerisys.

WHAT SHOULD AN INJURED EMPLOYEE DO IF HIS/HER CLAIM IS DENIED AND HE/SHE DISAGREES?

If an employee's claim is denied, the Workers' Compensation Specialist will notify him/her of the reason in writing. Employees have the right to request a hearing before the State Board of Workers' Compensation if they disagree with the denial. To request a hearing the employee must file form WC-14 with the State Board of Workers' Compensation. This form, along with detailed information about the hearing process is available from the State Board by calling 404/656-3818 or 1-800-533-0682.

ARE HEART ATTACKS AND STROKES COMPENSABLE?

The workers' compensation statute generally excludes heart attacks and strokes from compensability, unless it can be proven by a preponderance of the evidence that the heart attack or stroke was attributable to on-the-job performance.

WHO SHOULD THE SUPERVISOR CALL AT TO PROVIDE OR REQUEST INFORMATION?

The Workers' Compensation unit is divided into three customer account teams. Each state agency has been assigned a specific customer account team.

We have attempted to answer frequently asked questions by supervisors regarding workers' compensation benefits. For additional information please feel free to contact the Workers' Compensation claims office at 404 656 6245.

We are here to address any questions you or your employees may have regarding benefit entitlement, medical treatment and return to work. We are here to serve you.

Please assist us in continuously improving service to you, our customer! Visit www.Howsmyservice.ga.gov and rate the service you receive. Thank you for letting us know how we can better serve you!

IMPORTANT INFORMATION TO REMEMBER:

When an employee suffers a job related injury, call TNW immediately to report the injury at 1-877-656-RISK (7475), option 1, advise TNW that you wish to report a Workers' Compensation claim.

You may also reach Amerisys by calling 1-877-656-RISK (7475), and selecting option 2.

If you are calling long distance and need to speak with your Workers' Compensation claims specialist, you may also reach him/her by calling 1-877-656-RISK (7475) option 3.

Employer/Agency Name _____

My Agency Location/Client ID Number is _____

My lost time claims adjuster is _____

And the direct phone number is _____

My Medical Only claims adjuster is _____

And the direct phone number is _____

State Board of Workers' Compensation telephone number is 404/656-3818 or 1-800-533-0682. The website for SBWC is www.sbwc.ga.gov .

The direct number for the DOAS/RMS office is 404-656-6245 and office is located at 200 Piedmont Avenue, SE, Suite 1208 West Tower, Atlanta, GA 30334. www.doas.ga.gov