

WORKERS COMPENSATION

Purpose:

To provide insurance benefits for work-related injury or illness as required by law.

Scope:

This policy applies to all members of the district.

Policy:

In compliance with regulatory requirements, all members of the district are insured and provided benefits under the Worker's Compensation Act in the event of job-related injury or illness.

Guidelines:

- A. It is the responsibility of both member and management to comply with occupational safety and health standards, as well as hazard identification and elimination, which are applicable to their own actions and job responsibilities.
- B. Members are required to immediately report to their supervisor any illness or injury that is attributable to work, regardless of the severity.
- C. A district representative should maintain frequent contact with an injured member to provide support and encouragement in the recovery process.
- D. It is the philosophy of the district to return injured or ill workers to employment within the district as soon as they are physically capable of carrying out the duties of the job and are released to return to work by the district's designated physician. The availability of light duty work shall be evaluated by the Chief on an individual case basis. Every effort shall be made to return the employee to the pre-injured job, a modified similar job, or another position available within the district.
- E. Any employee who has been absent due to a work-related illness or injury will be required to have a written physician's release prior to returning to work.
- F. While on leave for a work-related illness or injury, the district will continue to pay premiums for district-provided insurance for up to a period of 12 months. Beyond that period, the employee shall be required to pay such premiums or to discontinue coverage.
- G. In the event an employee suffers an injury or occupational illness while on the job and leaves work due to such an event, the employee shall be paid for the entire scheduled shift.

- H. In the event of a Worker's Compensation injury or illness that would also be considered a qualifying event under the Family and Medical Leave Act, the time off work shall be charged against the employee's FMLA entitlement. Determination of whether the FMLA leave is paid or unpaid shall be based upon the dispensation of the Worker's Compensation claim. If after 30 days, a determination has not yet been made by the Worker's Compensation carrier, the employee's sick leave accrual shall be charged. If the determination later yields coverage by Worker's Compensation, such sick leave accrual shall be credited back to the employee.

Procedure for Filing a Workers Compensation Claim:

- A. The employee is to immediately notify his/her supervisor (or in his/her absence, another member of management) of any work-related injury or illness. The employee and supervisor must both complete and sign a *Supervisor's Report of Industrial Accident* form and submit it to the Chief within 24 hours.
- B. The employee will be given a form to present to the individual or facility where he/she is to receive treatment.
- C. The supervisor will also complete the *Supervisor's Investigation* segment of the form as directed in the instructions. The supervisor shall obtain pertinent information about the accident, noting injury details, unsafe acts and conditions, witness statements, and remedies to prevent similar accidents from occurring in the future. This form is also to be submitted to the Chief.
- D. The Chief will notify the Worker's Compensation carrier to send forms directly to the employee for completion and submission in order to process payments when applicable.
- E. Worker's Compensation provides three types of benefits:
 - 1. Compensation: When an employee is unable to work because of disability arising out of employment, he/she is eligible for weekly payments, in the amount of 66 2/3% of weekly pay, up to a mandated monthly maximum. Payment begins after seven calendar days.
 - 2. Medical Payments: Payment for medical attention, including hospitalization, doctor's fees, etc. which are necessitated because of work-connected disability are paid in accordance with state law.
 - 3. Awards: If partial or permanent disability results from accident or illness arising out of employment, a further award may be made by the insurance carrier in accordance with the state law.
- F. Under some circumstance, the district may require an injured or ill employee to be seen by a district designated medical provider as a condition of filing a worker's compensation claim on behalf of the employee. If such requirement is made, and the employee chooses not to be seen by the district designated medical provider in accordance with this

policy, the employee may be denied eligibility for worker's compensation payments.