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State of California

DWCNewsline

Division of Workers' Compensation
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Division of Workers' Compensation releases return to work data

Analysis shows more permanently disabled employees returning to workforce

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) has released return-to-work rate information on permanently disabled workers. The division's analysis shows a more than five percent average increase in return-to-work rates for workers injured between Jan. 1, 2005 and Jun. 30, 2005 in comparison to workers injured prior to Jan. 1, 2005. For more information on the data, please visit the division's Web site at

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dwc/ReturnToWorkRates/ReturnToWorkRates.htm>.

"Employees with back and knee injuries, which are very common in workers' comp, are getting back to work at even higher rates than the average," said DWC acting Administrative Director Carrie Nevans. "These early indicators show more employees are returning to the workforce after proper treatment for their injuries, and that's a move in the right direction."

The DWC will hold two public forums to discuss the return-to-work data. Interested parties are invited to attend the forums to hear information on the analysis, ask questions, make comments on the permanent disability rating schedule (PDRS) and discuss upcoming further analysis of the PDRS. The public forums on the return-to-work data will be held:

Thursday, Feb. 15, 2007 – Los Angeles
1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Junipero Serra State Building auditorium
320 West 4th Street
Los Angeles CA 90013

Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2007 – San Francisco
1 p.m. – 5 p.m.
Milton Marks Conference Center auditorium
455 Golden Gate Avenue, lower level
San Francisco CA 94102

Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations, section 9805.1, requires the DWC administrative director to collect data under the 2005 PDRS for 18 months, evaluate that data and revise, if necessary, the diminished future earning capacity multiplier, assuming a statistically valid sample exists.

The return-to-work data being released represents the first phase of the division's plan to analyze the effect of the 2005 PDRS.

The second phase, expected to be completed by March, will include an examination of three-year wage loss information for workers injured between Jan. 1, 2003 and Jun. 30, 2003. This information will be correlated with the return-to-work rates and indemnity payments from that period to provide information on how much uncompensated wage loss there was under the 1997 PDRS. This uncompensated wage loss will then be compared to the 2005 schedule.

A second set of public forums will be scheduled to discuss the three-year wage loss data once that information is released.

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