

## Psychological Injuries

The [Workers' Compensation Act, 2013](#) (the Act) provides coverage for psychological injuries.

### Who qualifies for WCB psychological injury coverage?

All workers who are covered by [The Workers' Compensation Act, 2013](#) are eligible for compensation and medical treatment if they suffer a psychological injury from being directly exposed to a traumatic event, or series of traumatic events, as part of or in the course of their employment. This coverage applies to all industries and occupations covered by the Act.

### What is considered a traumatic event?

A single or series of traumatic events or incidents can include:

- Direct exposure to actual or threatened death or serious injury to a worker and or others.
- An event or series of events that are specific or sudden and generally accepted from a public perspective as being unusually shocking, horrific or deeply distressing.
- Workload or work-related interpersonal incidents that are excessive and unusual in comparison to pressures and tensions experienced in normal employment. These incidents are beyond the normal scope of maintaining employment from a public perspective.

### How can someone with a psychological injury apply for workers' compensation?

If you've been exposed to a traumatic event or a series of traumatic events at work and suffer from psychological symptoms:

- Get medical attention immediately if you need it. You should receive appropriate treatment from a qualified care provider.
- Report the traumatic event(s) or incident(s) to your employer immediately. Your employer must report all work injuries to WCB when they become aware of an injury that prevents a worker from earning full wages or that requires medical attention.
- File a [Worker's Initial Report of Injury](#) (W1) form with the WCB as soon as possible.
- If you've already consulted with a psychologist or psychiatrist about the traumatic event, have them report to the WCB. To diagnose a psychological injury, your care provider should complete a full assessment diagnosis in accordance with the criteria established in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5). Further assessment may be required to ensure the diagnosis includes both the clinical information and the psychological testing information.
- The psychologist or psychiatrist should identify any restrictions resulting from your injury and give them to you in writing. You need to let your employer know this information as soon as possible.
- If you haven't consulted with a psychologist or psychiatrist and you've suffered a psychological injury from a traumatic event at work, WCB may arrange for an assessment.

**What if the psychological injury occurred many years ago?**

Any psychological injury that resulted from a traumatic event at work may be covered regardless of when the event occurred. If your psychological injury claim was previously denied under former legislation, you can request a reconsideration of the original decision. Your claim will be considered by the WCB team responsible for the most recent decision (e.g., Claims Entitlement staff, Case Manager, Appeals Officer, and Board Appeal Tribunal).

**Does the psychological injury presumptive coverage guarantee that my WCB claim will be accepted?**

The WCB will gather information to determine if you've been exposed to a traumatic event, or series of traumatic events, that occurred during work and if it is acceptable under the presumption.

**What types of benefits does the WCB cover for psychological injuries**

Some of the costs directly related to your psychological workplace injury that may be covered include:

- Earnings loss benefits if you had to miss work due to your injury.
- Counselling services.
- Medication.
- Other healthcare costs related to your workplace injury.

**Critical incident response information sessions**

To address and respond to the emotional and psychological consequences resulting from exposure to or witnessing a traumatic workplace incident, the WCB offers post-incident response information sessions where it is not provided by employers. These may help prevent the development of further, more serious difficulties. When a traumatic incident occurs, employers can notify the WCB and request an information session to be arranged for their workers.

For further information, please contact the Workers' Compensation Board:

Email: [askwcb@wcbask.com](mailto:askwcb@wcbask.com)

Phone: 306.787.4370

Toll free: 1.800.667.7590