



TECHNICAL UPDATE

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2024 WORKERS' COMPENSATION LEGISLATION OVERVIEW

During Colorado's 2024 legislative session, several laws were passed to strengthen employee protections and raise penalties for violations of key employment statutes. These recent updates continue the Colorado legislature's trend of increasing employee protections year after year.

Many of these new laws will go into effect on August 7, 2024, while others are set to go into effect in 2025. Counties should analyze their employment policies, agreements and other relevant documents to ensure they are prepared for compliance with these new laws.

There were several bills that impact the workers' compensation system, including:

- [SB24-155](#) Payment of Family & Medical Leave Benefits
- [SB24-149](#) Workers' Compensation State Employees
- [SB24-121](#) Creation of a Separate Health Facility License for Critical Access Hospitals
- [HB24-1219](#) First Responder Employer Health Benefit Trust

Below are three notable changes for employers in Colorado.

SB24-089 FIREFIGHTER HEART BENEFITS TRUST

[SB24-089](#) creates a program designed to provide financial support to firefighters who develop heart conditions due to their work. This trust ensures that firefighters receive benefits to help cover medical expenses and other related costs if they suffer from heart issues due to their demanding jobs. The goal is to protect the health and well-being of firefighters who risk their lives to serve our counties. The act exempts firefighter employers that, as of July 2022, have a population of 400,000 or more and, as of April 30, 2024, have enacted an ordinance to provide the required monetary benefits that remain in effect.

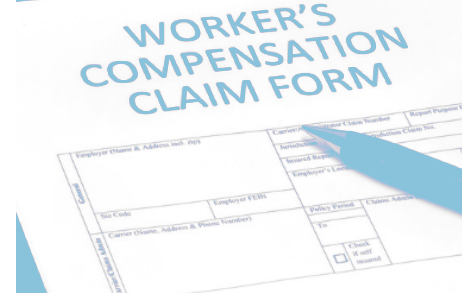
HB24-1139 DEATH BENEFIT FOR STATE EMPLOYEE SURVIVING SPOUSE

[HB24-1139](#) states that death benefits will be paid to the widow(er) for life, even if they remarry, if the deceased was a state employee with a high-risk classification. Classifications include state patrol, peace officer, corrections officer, fire prevention, wildlife officer, and Department of Transportation.

HB24-1220 WORKERS' COMPENSATION DISABILITY BENEFITS

[HB24-1220](#) provides workers' compensation claimants with additional rights and raises the maximum amount they may claim. Some of these additional rights include: (1) a workers' compensation claimant can refuse an offer of modified employment if the employment requires the claimant to drive to and from work, and a treating physician has restricted the claimant from driving; (2) a claimant may elect direct deposit of temporary disability benefits; and (3) a claimant may claim whole-person permanent impairment benefits for the loss of an ear. In addition, HB24-1220 allows claimants to claim a larger amount of money based on their impairment rating:

- For an impairment rating of 19% or less, from \$75,000 to \$185,000
- For an impairment rating greater than 19%, from \$150,000 to \$300,000



WHAT THIS MEANS FOR COUNTIES

Counties should review their workers' compensation policies and consult their county attorneys to ensure compliance with the 2024 legislative changes. For CWCP members, our staff will ensure full compliance with any new legislation affecting claims. If you have questions on the new legislation or require more information, please contact CTSI at (303) 861-0507.