HB4177

LRB104 14073 SPS 27205 b

104TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

State of Illinois

2025 and 2026

HB4177

Introduced 10/28/2025, by Rep. Martha Deuter

SYNOPSIS AS INTRODUCED:

820 ILCS 305/7

Amends the Workers' Compensation Act. Provides that the sum of $10,000 (rather than $8,000) for burial expenses shall be paid by the employer to the widow or widower, other dependent, next of kin, or person or persons incurring the expense of burial.

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A BILL FOR

AN ACT concerning employment.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois, represented in the General Assembly:

Section 5. The Workers' Compensation Act is amended by changing Section 7 as follows:

(820 ILCS 305/7)

Sec. 7. The amount of compensation which shall be paid for an accidental injury to the employee resulting in death is:

(a) If the employee leaves surviving a widow, widower, child or children, the applicable weekly compensation rate computed in accordance with subparagraph 2 of paragraph (b) of Section 8, shall be payable during the life of the widow or widower and if any surviving child or children shall not be physically or mentally incapacitated then until the death of the widow or widower or until the youngest child shall reach the age of 18, whichever shall come later; provided that if such child or children shall be enrolled as a full-time ~~full time~~ student in any accredited educational institution, the payments shall continue until such child has attained the age of 25. In the event any surviving child or children shall be physically or mentally incapacitated, the payments shall continue for the duration of such incapacity.

The term "child" means a child whom the deceased employee left surviving, including a posthumous child, a child legally adopted, a child whom the deceased employee was legally obligated to support or a child to whom the deceased employee stood in loco parentis. The term "children" means the plural of "child".

The term "physically or mentally incapacitated child or children" means a child or children incapable of engaging in regular and substantial gainful employment.

In the event of the remarriage of a widow or widower, where the decedent did not leave surviving any child or children who, at the time of such remarriage, are entitled to compensation benefits under this Act, the surviving spouse shall be paid a lump sum equal to 2 years compensation benefits and all further rights of such widow or widower shall be extinguished.

If the employee leaves surviving any child or children under 18 years of age who at the time of death shall be entitled to compensation under this paragraph (a) of this Section, the weekly compensation payments herein provided for such child or children shall in any event continue for a period of not less than 6 years.

Any beneficiary entitled to compensation under this paragraph (a) of this Section shall receive from the special fund provided in paragraph (f) of this Section, in addition to the compensation herein provided, supplemental benefits in accordance with paragraph (g) of Section 8.

(b) If no compensation is payable under paragraph (a) of this Section and the employee leaves surviving a parent or parents who at the time of the accident were totally dependent upon the earnings of the employee then weekly payments equal to the compensation rate payable in the case where the employee leaves surviving a widow or widower, shall be paid to such parent or parents for the duration of their lives, and in the event of the death of either, for the life of the survivor.

(c) If no compensation is payable under paragraph ~~paragraphs~~ (a) or (b) of this Section and the employee leaves surviving any child or children who are not entitled to compensation under the foregoing paragraph (a) but who at the time of the accident were nevertheless in any manner dependent upon the earnings of the employee, or leaves surviving a parent or parents who at the time of the accident were partially dependent upon the earnings of the employee, then there shall be paid to such dependent or dependents for a period of 8 years weekly compensation payments at such proportion of the applicable rate if the employee had left surviving a widow or widower as such dependency bears to total dependency. In the event of the death of any such beneficiary the share of such beneficiary shall be divided equally among the surviving beneficiaries and in the event of the death of the last such beneficiary all the rights under this paragraph shall be extinguished.

(d) If no compensation is payable under paragraph

~~paragraphs~~ (a), (b), or (c) of this Section and the employee leaves surviving any grandparent, grandparents, grandchild or grandchildren or collateral heirs dependent upon the employee's earnings to the extent of 50% or more of total dependency, then there shall be paid to such dependent or dependents for a period of 5 years weekly compensation payments at such proportion of the applicable rate if the employee had left surviving a widow or widower as such dependency bears to total dependency. In the event of the death of any such beneficiary the share of such beneficiary shall be divided equally among the surviving beneficiaries and in the event of the death of the last such beneficiary all rights hereunder shall be extinguished.

(e) The compensation to be paid for accidental injury which results in death, as provided in this Section, shall be paid to the persons who form the basis for determining the amount of compensation to be paid by the employer, the respective shares to be in the proportion of their respective dependency at the time of the accident on the earnings of the deceased. The Commission or an Arbitrator thereof may, in its or his discretion, order or award the payment to the parent or grandparent of a child for the latter's support the amount of compensation which but for such order or award would have been paid to such child as its share of the compensation payable, which order or award may be modified from time to time by the Commission in its discretion with respect to the person to whom shall be paid the amount of the order or award remaining unpaid at the time of the modification.

The payments of compensation by the employer in accordance with the order or award of the Commission discharges such employer from all further obligation as to such compensation.

(f) The sum of $10,000 ~~$8,000~~ for burial expenses shall be paid by the employer to the widow or widower, other dependent, next of kin or to the person or persons incurring the expense of burial.

In the event the employer failed to provide necessary first aid, medical, surgical or hospital service, he shall pay the cost thereof to the person or persons entitled to compensation under paragraphs (a), (b), (c), or (d) of this Section, or to the person or persons incurring the obligation therefore, or providing the same.

On January 15 and July 15, 1981, and on January 15 and July 15 of each year thereafter the employer shall within 60 days pay a sum equal to 1/8 of 1% of all compensation payments made by him after July 1, 1980, either under this Act or the Workers' Occupational Diseases Act, whether by lump sum settlement or weekly compensation payments, but not including hospital, surgical or rehabilitation payments, made during the first 6 months and during the second 6 months respectively of the fiscal year next preceding the date of the payments, into a special fund which shall be designated the "Second Injury Fund", of which the State Treasurer is ex officio ~~ex-officio~~

custodian, such special fund to be held and disbursed for the purposes hereinafter stated in paragraphs (f) and (g) of Section 8, either upon the order of the Commission or of a competent court. Said special fund shall be deposited the same as are State funds and any interest accruing thereon shall be added thereto every 6 months. It is subject to audit the same as State funds and accounts and is protected by the General bond given by the State Treasurer. It is considered always appropriated for the purposes of disbursements as provided in paragraph (f) of Section 8~~, paragraph (f),~~ of this Act, and shall be paid out and disbursed as therein provided and shall not at any time be appropriated or diverted to any other use or purpose.

On January 15, 1991, the employer shall further pay a sum equal to one half of 1% of all compensation payments made by him from January 1, 1990 through June 30, 1990 either under this Act or under the Workers' Occupational Diseases Act, whether by lump sum settlement or weekly compensation payments, but not including hospital, surgical or rehabilitation payments, into an additional Special Fund which shall be designated as the "Rate Adjustment Fund". On March 15, 1991, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to one half of 1% of all such compensation payments made from July 1, 1990 through December 31, 1990. Within 60 days after July 15, 1991, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to one half of 1% of all such compensation payments made from January 1, 1991 through June 30, 1991. Within 60 days after January 15 of 1992 and each subsequent year through 1996, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to one half of 1% of all such compensation payments made in the last 6 months of the preceding calendar year. Within 60 days after July 15 of 1992 and each subsequent year through 1995, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to one half of 1% of all such compensation payments made in the first 6 months of the same calendar year. Within 60 days after January 15 of 1997 and each subsequent year through 2005, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to three-fourths of 1% of all such compensation payments made in the last 6 months of the preceding calendar year. Within 60 days after July 15 of 1996 and each subsequent year through 2004, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to three-fourths of 1% of all such compensation payments made in the first 6 months of the same calendar year. Within 60 days after July 15 of 2005, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to 1% of such compensation payments made in the first 6 months of the same calendar year. Within 60 days after January 15 of 2006 and each subsequent year through 2024, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to 1.25% of such compensation payments made in the last 6 months of the preceding calendar year. Within 60 days after July 15 of 2006 and each subsequent year through 2023, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to 1.25% of such compensation payments made in the first 6 months of the same calendar year. Within 60 days after July 15 of 2024 and each subsequent year thereafter, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to 1.375% of such compensation payments made in the first 6 months of the same calendar year. Within 60 days after January 15 of 2025 and each subsequent year thereafter, the employer shall pay into the Rate Adjustment Fund a sum equal to 1.375% of such compensation payments made in the last 6 months of the preceding calendar year. The administrative costs of collecting assessments from employers for the Rate Adjustment Fund shall be paid from the Rate Adjustment Fund. The cost of an actuarial audit of the Fund shall be paid from the Rate Adjustment Fund. The State Treasurer is ex officio custodian of such Special Fund and the same shall be held and disbursed for the purposes hereinafter stated in paragraphs (f) and (g) of Section 8 upon the order of the Commission or of a competent court. The Rate Adjustment Fund shall be deposited the same as are State funds and any interest accruing thereon shall be added thereto every 6 months. It shall be subject to audit the same as State funds and accounts and shall be protected by the general bond given by the State Treasurer. It is considered always appropriated for the purposes of disbursements as provided in paragraphs (f) and (g) of Section 8 of this Act and shall be paid out and disbursed as therein provided and shall not at any time be appropriated or diverted to any other use or purpose. Within 5 days after December 7, 1990 (the effective date of Public Act 86-1448) ~~this amendatory Act of 1990~~, the Comptroller and the State Treasurer shall transfer $1,000,000 from the General Revenue Fund to the Rate Adjustment Fund. By February 15, 1991, the Comptroller and the State Treasurer shall transfer $1,000,000 from the Rate Adjustment Fund to the General Revenue Fund. The Comptroller and Treasurer are authorized to make transfers at the request of the Chairman up to a total of $19,000,000 from the Second Injury Fund, the General Revenue Fund, and the Workers' Compensation Benefit Trust Fund to the Rate Adjustment Fund to the extent that there is insufficient money in the Rate Adjustment Fund to pay claims and obligations. Amounts may be transferred from the General Revenue Fund only if the funds in the Second Injury Fund or the Workers' Compensation Benefit Trust Fund are insufficient to pay claims and obligations of the Rate Adjustment Fund. All amounts transferred from the Second Injury Fund, the General Revenue Fund, and the Workers' Compensation Benefit Trust Fund shall be repaid from the Rate Adjustment Fund within 270 days of a transfer, together with interest at the rate earned by moneys on deposit in the Fund or Funds from which the moneys were transferred.

Upon a finding by the Commission, after reasonable notice and hearing, that any employer has willfully and knowingly failed to pay the proper amounts into the Second Injury Fund or the Rate Adjustment Fund required by this Section or if such payments are not made within the time periods prescribed by this Section, the employer shall, in addition to such payments, pay a penalty of 20% of the amount required to be paid or $2,500, whichever is greater, for each year or part thereof of such failure to pay. This penalty shall only apply to obligations of an employer to the Second Injury Fund or the Rate Adjustment Fund accruing after December 18, 1989 (the effective date of Public Act 86-998) ~~this amendatory Act of 1989~~. All or part of such a penalty may be waived by the Commission for good cause shown.

Any obligations of an employer to the Second Injury Fund and Rate Adjustment Fund accruing prior to December 18, 1989 (the effective date of Public Act 86-998) ~~this amendatory Act of 1989~~ shall be paid in full by such employer within 5 years of December 18, 1989 (the effective date of Public Act 86-998) ~~this amendatory Act of 1989~~, with at least one-fifth of such obligation to be paid during each year following December 18, 1989 (the effective date of Public Act 86-998) ~~this amendatory Act of 1989~~. If the Commission finds, following reasonable notice and hearing, that an employer has failed to make timely payment of any obligation accruing under the preceding sentence, the employer shall, in addition to all other payments required by this Section, be liable for a penalty equal to 20% of the overdue obligation or $2,500, whichever is greater, for each year or part thereof that obligation is overdue. All or part of such a penalty may be waived by the Commission for good cause shown.

The Chairman of the Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission shall, annually, furnish to the Director of the Department of Insurance a list of the amounts paid into the Second Injury Fund and the Rate Adjustment Fund by each insurance company on behalf of their insured employers. The Director shall verify to the Chairman that the amounts paid by each insurance company are accurate as best as the Director can determine from the records available to the Director. The Chairman shall verify that the amounts paid by each self-insurer are accurate as best as the Chairman can determine from records available to the Chairman. The Chairman may require each self-insurer to provide information concerning the total compensation payments made upon which contributions to the Second Injury Fund and the Rate Adjustment Fund are predicated and any additional information establishing that such payments have been made into these funds. Any deficiencies in payments noted by the Director or Chairman shall be subject to the penalty provisions of this Act.

The State Treasurer, or his duly authorized representative, shall be named as a party to all proceedings in all cases involving claim for the loss of, or the permanent and complete loss of the use of one eye, one foot, one leg, one arm or one hand.

The State Treasurer or his duly authorized agent shall have the same rights as any other party to the proceeding, including the right to petition for review of any award. The reasonable expenses of litigation, such as medical examinations, testimony, and transcript of evidence, incurred by the State Treasurer or his duly authorized representative, shall be borne by the Second Injury Fund.

If the award is not paid within 30 days after the date the award has become final, the Commission shall proceed to take judgment thereon in its own name as is provided for other awards by paragraph (g) of Section 19 of this Act and take the necessary steps to collect the award.

Any person, corporation or organization who has paid or become liable for the payment of burial expenses of the deceased employee may in his or its own name institute proceedings before the Commission for the collection thereof.

For the purpose of administration, receipts and disbursements, the Special Fund provided for in paragraph (f) of this Section shall be administered jointly with the Special Fund provided for in <u>paragraph (f) of</u> Section 7~~, paragraph (f)~~ of the Workers' Occupational Diseases Act.

(g) All compensation, except for burial expenses provided in this Section to be paid in case accident results in death, shall be paid in installments equal to the percentage of the average earnings as provided for in <u>paragraph (b) of</u> Section 8~~, paragraph (b)~~ of this Act, at the same intervals at which the wages or earnings of the employees were paid. If this is not feasible, then the installments shall be paid weekly. Such compensation may be paid in a lump sum upon petition as provided in Section 9 of this Act. However, in addition to the benefits provided by Section 9 of this Act where compensation for death is payable to the deceased's widow, widower or to the deceased's widow, widower and one or more children, and where a partial lump sum is applied for by such beneficiary or beneficiaries within 18 months after the deceased's death, the Commission may, in its discretion, grant a partial lump sum of not to exceed 100 weeks of the compensation capitalized at their present value upon the basis of interest calculated at 3% per annum with annual rests, upon a showing that such partial lump sum is for the best interest of such beneficiary or beneficiaries.

(h) In case the injured employee is under 16 years of age at the time of the accident and is illegally employed, the amount of compensation payable under paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), and (f) of this Section shall be increased 50%.

Nothing herein contained repeals or amends the provisions of the Child Labor Law of 2024 relating to the employment of minors under the age of 16 years.

However, where an employer has on file an employment certificate issued pursuant to the Child Labor Law of 2024 or work permit issued pursuant to the Federal Fair Labor Standards Act, as amended, or a birth certificate properly and duly issued, such certificate, permit or birth certificate is conclusive evidence as to the age of the injured minor employee for the purposes of this Section only.

(i) Whenever the dependents of a deceased employee are noncitizens not residing in the United States, Mexico or Canada, the amount of compensation payable is limited to the beneficiaries described in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this Section and is 50% of the compensation provided in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of this Section, except as otherwise provided by treaty.

In a case where any of the persons who would be entitled to compensation is living at any place outside of the United States, then payment shall be made to the personal representative of the deceased employee. The distribution by such personal representative to the persons entitled shall be made to such persons and in such manner as the Commission orders.

(Source: P.A. 102-1030, eff. 5-27-22; 103-590, eff. 6-5-24; 103-721, eff. 1-1-25; revised 10-10-24.)