



This factsheet has been prepared for general information purposes. It is not a legal document. Please refer to the *Workers Compensation Act* and the *Rehabilitation Services and Claims Manual, Volumes I and II* for purposes of interpretation and application of the law.

Factsheet #33
Updated: January 2013

REOPENING AND RECURRENCE

Can WorkSafeBC reopen my closed claim?

Yes. WorkSafeBC may reopen your closed claim, at any time, if:

- you have experienced a significant change in your previously accepted injury or condition; or
- you have experienced a recurrence of your previously accepted injury or condition.

Generally, a “significant change” includes a worsening or improvement of your physical or psychological injury, but does not include the usual and expected fluctuations of a permanent condition for which you are receiving a permanent disability award.

Generally, the “recurrence of an injury” refers only to a situation where the workplace injury has completely resolved but comes back.

WorkSafeBC will not reopen your old claim if the cause of the “significant change” or “recurrence” is a new injury. If the new injury is work related, you should report this to your employer and to WorkSafeBC.

What information does WorkSafeBC need to reopen my claim?

If your old injury gets worse or comes back, you must see your doctor about this. You should ask your doctor to send medical reports to WorkSafeBC. Your doctor should describe the “significant change” or “recurrence” in the medical reports.

Your doctor should also report his or her opinion about what caused the “significant change” or “recurrence” of your condition and whether the “significant change” or “recurrence” is temporary or permanent.

For more information:
Website: www.labour.gov.bc.ca/wab



Lower Mainland/Fraser Valley/Kootenays: 1-800-663-4261
Northern & Central Interior: 1-800-663-6695
Vancouver Island: 1-800-661-4066

REOPENING AND RECURRENCE

What happens if WorkSafeBC reopens my claim?

WorkSafeBC will assess the medical information provided by your doctor in order to determine whether you are entitled to any additional benefits.

If WorkSafeBC reopens your claim for a recurrence, benefits may include health care, wage loss, permanent disability, and/or vocational rehabilitation benefits.

If your claim is reopened on the basis of a significant change in your old injury, benefits may include health care, wage loss, permanent disability, increased permanent disability and/or vocational rehabilitation benefits.

Important: a significant change in your old injury can include improvement. If you already receive a permanent disability award and your old injury significantly improves, WorkSafeBC may reopen your claim and either reduce or stop your permanent benefits.

What If I disagree with the decision?

If you do not agree with WorkSafeBC's decision, you have the right to request a review. You must request a review within **90 days**. If you disagree with the Review Division decision you have **30 days** to file an appeal to the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal.