

Time is Money: Report Workplace Injuries Promptly

The old saying is that time is money. The Pennsylvania Workers' Compensation Appeal Board recently proved the adage true when it reversed a grant of an injured worker's claim for compensation. The reason for the reversal: the injury was reported to the employer past the 120-day deadline for notification.

The Case in Question

In the case ruled on by the Appeal Board, a woman claimed to have suffered a work-related disc herniation in May 2007. She said she'd cleaned 42 tanning beds for her employer that day and felt numbness in an arm and fingers, as well as shoulder pain.

The workers' comp judge awarded her temporary total disability benefits, clearly believing that the injury was both severe and sustained on the job.

The Appeal Board reversed this decision because the woman didn't report her injury to her employer until October 2007. More than 130 days had passed since the injury by the time she made the report. Because Section 311 of Pennsylvania's Workers' Compensation Act requires an employee to report a work-related injury to the employer within 120 days, this woman lost a significant award for a substantial injury.

Nearly Everyone is Covered

As the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry states on its website, "nearly every Pennsylvania worker is covered by the PA Workers' Compensation Act." But your coverage means little if you don't tell your employer about your work-related injury or illness.

If a workers' compensation claim is denied, employees should then contact a workers' compensation attorney who knows the law and can have an injury diagnosed to determine if the ruling on a claim should be reversed. A workers' comp lawyer understands the system and the key elements of a successful appeal.

As the state of Pennsylvania notes on its workers' compensation website, workers' compensation "litigation is complex, and your employer or your employer's insurance carrier will be represented by an experienced attorney." You should be, too. Contact an experienced workers' comp attorney at Martin Banks serving Pennsylvania.

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