



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Consumer and Business Services

Workers' Compensation Division

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To: Workers' compensation insurers, self-insured employers, service companies, workers, and attorneys

Subject: Applicability of House Bill 2007 relating to domestic partnerships

House Bill 2007 (HB 2007) recognizes domestic partnerships in Oregon and affects workers' compensation benefits. It becomes effective Jan. 1, 2008.

HB 2007 (chapter 99, Oregon Laws 2007) defines domestic partnership as "a civil contract entered into in person between two individuals of the same sex who are at least 18 years of age, who are otherwise capable and at least one of whom is a resident of Oregon." The bill provides the process partners must follow to register their partnership. Under the new law, privileges, immunities, rights, benefits, and responsibilities under Oregon law that apply to individuals because of a marriage also apply to individuals because of a domestic partnership.

Effective Jan. 1, 2008, any references in ORS chapter 656, OAR chapter 436, or the division's bulletins, forms, and publications to a worker's "husband," "wife," "spouse," or "beneficiary" will include a worker's domestic partner. In addition, benefits that are payable to a worker's beneficiaries because of the worker's marital relationship will be payable to a worker's beneficiaries because of the worker's domestic partnership. The primary impact will be in the payment of death benefits under ORS 656.204.

The division will review its rules, bulletins, forms, and other publications to determine whether language needs to be updated as those publications are revised in the regular course of business.

HB 2007 can be accessed at the Oregon Legislature's Web site under "Bills/Laws,"

<http://www.leg.state.or.us/index.html>.

If you have any questions about this notice or the impact of HB 2007 on the payment of workers' compensation benefits, please contact Dan Schmelling, Benefits & Certification Unit manager, (503) 947-7706 or send e-mail to daniel.p.schmelling@state.or.us.

John L. Shilts, Administrator
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