

**STATE OF CALIFORNIA**  
**LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

**DIVISION OF**  
**WORKERS' COMPENSATION**

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**WORKERS' COMPENSATION**  
**APPEALS BOARD**

**POLICY AND PROCEDURAL MANUAL**



**2013 Revision**

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Division of Workers' Compensation – Workers' Compensation Appeals Board  
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2013 Revision

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State of California

# MEMORANDUM

**Date:** February 14, 2013

**To:** WORKERS' COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGES  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**From:** RONNIE G. CAPLANE                      DESTIE OVERPECK  
Chairwoman                                      Acting Administrative Director  
Workers' Compensation                      Division of Workers' Compensation  
Appeals Board

**Subject:** DWC/WCAB POLICY AND PROCEDURAL MANUAL  
2012 REVISION

This Policy and Procedural Manual, which became operative as of October 6, 2003, with all prior versions and sections rescinded and deemed inoperative as of October 6, 2003, has been amended.

This is not a final document. The Appeals Board and the Administrative Director will entertain suggestions for additional sections or revisions of existing sections. Those suggestions may be forwarded to

WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS BOARD  
Post Office Box 429459  
San Francisco CA 94142-9459

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**PROJECT MANAGER**

**PAIGE LEVY**  
Presiding Workers' Compensation Judge  
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The Revision Committee acknowledges and thanks the Workers' Compensation Section Executive Committee of the The State Bar of California for their assistance with the 2012-2013 amendments, and also extends thanks to Annette Gabrielli for her administrative assistance.

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## INTRODUCTION

This 2013 revision of the DWC/WCAB Policy and Procedural Manual was prepared under the direction of the Administrative Director of the Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) and Chairwoman of the Workers' Compensation Appeals Board (WCAB) pursuant to Labor Code Section 133, which section confers on the DWC Administrative Director and the Appeals Board the power and jurisdiction "to do all things necessary or convenient in the exercise of any power or jurisdiction conferred upon it under this code."

This manual consists of policies and procedures that DWC/WCAB employees are required to follow and to assist the DWC and the WCAB in providing uniformity and direction to its employees in the day-to-day operation of the Board and its district offices.

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## 1.0 EX PARTE ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Issued by

**MERLE C. RABINE**

Chairman

Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**RICHARD P. GANNON**

Administrative Director

Division of Workers' Compensation

Effective: October 6, 2003

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When a WCJ receives an ex parte letter or other document from any party or lien claimant in a case pending before the WCJ, he or she shall serve copies of the letter or document on all other parties to the case with a cover letter explaining that the letter or document was received ex parte in violation of WCAB Rule 10324.



## 1.5 PETITIONS FOR AUTOMATIC REASSIGNMENT

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013  
Effective: October 6, 2003

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Reassignments pursuant to WCAB Rule 10453 shall be made, to the extent possible, in such a manner that the identity of the WCJ to whom the case is reassigned is unpredictable. Use of random rotation systems is encouraged.

All WCJs in an office must be included in initial assignments to try cases. The fact that a particular attorney, law firm, employer or carrier regularly challenges a particular WCJ is not a sufficient reason to exclude that WCJ from an initial assignment to a case.

Upon timely request to reassign, the matter shall promptly be reassigned to another WCJ. If another WCJ is not available in the district office, the PWCJ shall advise the Chief Judge or designee thereof and request reassignment.

## 1.10 DECLARATIONS OF READINESS TO PROCEED

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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- A. Review of declarations of readiness to proceed (DORs) by the WCJ or his or her designee is no longer required. However, review of the following categories of DORs is permissible prior to calendaring:
1. DORs filed by lien claimants, to determine whether the case-in-chief has been resolved (see Labor Code Section; 4903.5(c) and 4903.6(c).
  2. DORs to proceed to expedited hearing, to determine whether an expedited hearing is appropriate under Labor Code Section 5502(b).
- Otherwise, hearings shall be calendared on request. Nonetheless, if prior to a scheduled hearing both parties inform the WCJ that the disputes in issue have been resolved, the hearing shall be taken off calendar without requiring appearances by the parties.
- B. After trial and service of a recommended rating, a party may file a DOR, noting under "other issues" that the party wishes to cross-examine the disability evaluator and/or present rebuttal evidence. The DOR shall be delivered to the office of the WCJ who has heard the case or shall be filed by mail to the personal attention of the WCJ. Upon receipt of the DOR, the WCJ shall schedule the case for trial pursuant to his or her discretion under WCAB Rule 10420.

## **1.20 SCOPE AND REDESIGNATION OF EXPEDITED HEARINGS**

Issued by

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Chairwoman  
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**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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An expedited hearing may be set upon request where an injury has been accepted as compensable by the employer and the issues include medical treatment, treatment within an MPN, temporary disability indemnity or treatment for a disputed body part or parts. However, a WCJ assigned to a case involving a disputed body part or parts may re-designate the hearing as a mandatory settlement conference, receive a pretrial conference statement pursuant to Labor Code Section 5502(d)(3), close discovery, and schedule the case for trial on the issues presented, if the WCJ determines, after consultation with the PWCJ, that the case is not appropriate for expedited determination. Such re-designation may be appropriate where, for example, the direct and cross-examination of the applicant will be prolonged, or where there are multiple witnesses who will offer extensive testimony.

## 1.25 WALK-THROUGHS

Issued by

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Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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Walk-through documents may only be filed at the district office having venue over the case, or one of the cases, pursuant to Rule 10280(g).

Walk-through documents may include a Compromise and Release, Stipulations with Request for Award, Petition for Deposition Attorney Fees, or petition to compel attendance at medical examination or deposition.

Walk-through settlements (i.e. Compromise and Release or Stipulations with Request for Award) may be presented to the judge by a party to the case, by an attorney who has filed a Notice of Representation, or by a non-attorney representative who has filed a letter of authorization in the case pursuant to Policy & Procedural Manual Index No. 1.120.

Where a settlement signed by a non-attorney employee of a law firm is submitted to a workers' compensation judge for approval, the settlement need not be signed or specifically authorized by the supervising attorney, if the attorney has previously signed and filed a specific authorization for the employee to sign settlement documents in the case or cases being settled. Pursuant to Labor Code Section 4903(a), no fee for legal services shall be awarded to any representative who is not an attorney.

A party, law firm office, or a representative office is limited to presenting five (5) walk-through documents to a district office per court day absent permission from the Presiding Judge.

Conference dates may not be obtained by interpreters or other "independent contractors" employed by a party or law firm for the purpose of obtaining dates.

## **1.26 EMERGENCY PETITIONS TO STAY**

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Effective: February 1, 2013

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A party seeking to stay an action by another party may present a petition to the Presiding Judge or a designee of the district office having venue. The petition must comply with the notice and declaration requirements of Rule 10281. If the Presiding Judge or designee determines that the petitioner has timely complied with the requirements, the Presiding Judge or designee shall do one of the following:

- 1) Deny the petition;
- 2) Grant a temporary stay and set the petition for a formal hearing;
- 3) Set the petition for a formal hearing, without either denying the petition or granting a temporary stay.

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### 1.30 CALENDAR CLERK CANCELLATION OF HEARING

Issued by

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Chairwoman  
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Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013  
Effective: October 6, 2003

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When a workers' compensation judge (WCJ) orders the cancellation of a hearing prior to the date of hearing, the WCJ or the WCJ's secretary shall *ensure the hearing is cancelled in EAMS*. The calendar clerk will then substitute another proceeding, or proceedings, consistent with legal notice requirements.

The presiding workers' compensation judge will periodically monitor the calendar for compliance with this rule.

### 1.35 TRIAL PRIORITIES

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

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Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013  
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The WCJ conducting a trial should proceed at the time scheduled, allowing a minimal amount of time for settlement negotiations. The parties should be encouraged to appear earlier than the scheduled time to conduct negotiations. Where several trials are scheduled to begin at the same time (e.g., 8:30 a.m. or 1:30 p.m.), and the parties in two or more of those cases are ready to proceed to trial, the trial judge will determine case priority with due consideration being given to an expeditious determination and the setting of priorities discussed below.

#### PROCEEDING PRIORITIES

Cases set on the trial calendar shall be subject to the following priorities:

1. Cases set for Expedited Hearing;
2. Cases which are returned to the calendar for cross-examination of the disability evaluation specialist;
3. Continued cases in which testimony has been received (The judges are encouraged to have these cases set on the first available opening in their calendar with notice waived.);
4. Cases in which the applicant is not working and is receiving no benefits and/or in which the applicant or any witnesses have traveled from out of state or a significant distance within the state to appear;
5. Cases that were previously set for trial but did not commence;
6. Cases in which no benefits have been furnished but the applicant is working;
7. All other cases.

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Cases described in (2) and (3) should be used for filling in spaces created by orders taking off calendar, calendar continuances or resolution of cases by settlement or stipulation. Continuances are not favored and the parties should be fully prepared to present their evidence at the time of trial, pursuant to Rule 10243. The presiding judge shall have authority to assign or transfer cases as necessary pursuant to WCAB Rule 10346, including the utilization of a "rotational calendar" to assign pending trials. When the first trial in order is about to commence, other cases scheduled at the same time shall be referred to the PWCJ for assignment to other available WCJs, when feasible.



## 1.40 FILING AND ORGANIZATION OF TRIAL EXHIBITS – EVIDENCE, HOSPITAL AND MEDICAL RECORDS

Issued by

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Chairwoman  
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The receipt and retention of voluminous hospital and medical records create a storage problem and make review by the WCAB difficult, and parties should be discouraged from filing any unnecessary or duplicate documents. In accordance with WCAB Rule 10629, specific reference should be made to the relevant portions of records which are offered, and only the relevant excerpts of medical records should be admitted into the evidentiary record. The designation of specific records or portions thereof must be made by the parties at the mandatory settlement conference, unless good cause is shown to allow such designation subsequent to the mandatory settlement conference.

Rule 10629 generally requires that each separate report from a particular physician “must be listed as a *separate* exhibit.” (Emphasis added.)

Rule 10629 requires that proposed exhibits be filed in accordance with rules “10233 (sic) and 10603.” The reference to Rule 10233 in Rule 10629 is a clerical error and is meant to refer to Rule 10232. Subsection (b) of the latter rule requires that all documents, and their attachments if any, be filed with document separator sheets and that a document separator sheet precedes each document within a set of documents. Excerpted records are an exception and may be under one sheet.

Rule 10629 was enacted for several reasons. First, Rule 10629 helps ensure a clear and accurate record (and helps to reduce the chance of duplicate exhibits) by requiring the parties to prepare detailed exhibit lists. Second, Rule 10629 facilitates review of the record by the WCJs and the Commissioners. With a paper record, it was possible to “flip” through multiple reports of a single physician even if listed as a single exhibit. In Filenet, however, it is significantly more difficult to electronically “leaf” through the reports of one physician if they are all grouped together as one exhibit. Third, new Rule 10842 requires that petitions for reconsideration make specific references to the record by exhibit number/letter, author of the report, date of the report,

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and relevant page numbers. This rule is easier to administer and to enforce if each report of an individual physician is listed as a separate exhibit.

In other words, be it at a conference or a trial, a stack of documents such as treating reports, QME reports, and AME reports shall **not** be entered with one cover sheet and one separator sheet. If entered with only one sheet, the stack of mixed documents appears in Filenet as one document and makes it almost impossible to find and review specific medical reports within that document. The Commissioners make every effort to review the evidence in the file, and if that cannot be done due to noncompliance with Rule 10629, or because documentary evidence is not properly identified and entered into EAMS and/or a legacy file, the matter may be returned to the judge for correction of the record under *Hamilton v Lockheed Corp.* (2001) 66 Cal. Comp. Cases 473, WCAB en banc, and *Hernandez v. AMF Staff Leasing* (2011) 76 Cal. Comp. Cases 343 (significant panel decision).

With the foregoing in mind, the following procedures should be followed:

- a. When a party files a request for hearing (either by declaration of readiness or request for expedited hearing), such party shall file relevant documents consistent with Rule 10233 and shall identify them consistent with Rule 10629 and this Policy and Procedural Manual section, unless so ordered by the workers' compensation judge or the Appeals Board.
- b. Additional documents filed after a request for hearing has been submitted shall also be filed in accordance with this section.
- c. When filing documents pursuant to (a) or (b) above, a party shall file documents in the following manner:
  - (1) Any medical report which has been issued by a QME, PQME, or AME shall be separately identified, labeled and entered into EAMS.
  - (2) Excerpts of records from different facilities or entities, a PR-4 report or other similar final report by the primary treating physician, or any such medical report offered to establish a fact on a likely contested issue between the parties, may each be separately identified, labeled and filed as one exhibit. In other words, at the discretion of the WCJ or the Appeals Board, certain bundles of records such as chronologically sorted treating reports or PR-2s may be entered as one document so long as no one particular report needs to be used to support a party's contention.
- d. Any report filed pursuant to this section, except for "Other Medical Reports," shall be filed using the doctor's name and date of the report, or, if the doctor's name and date is unavailable, by some other unique descriptive term.

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- e. At a MSC or Expedited Hearing, the WCJ shall carefully review the parties' pretrial conference statement to ensure that it is complete and all the parties' stipulations, issues, and proposed exhibits are listed, and that proposed exhibits are filed and described in accordance with this section.
- f. When proposed exhibits are offered at trial for admission into the record, the proposed exhibits shall be organized and labeled to specify which party is offering the exhibit (e.g., Applicant using 1, 2, 3, et seq., and Defendant using A, B, C, et seq.). Exhibits shall be grouped by doctor in reverse chronological order (e.g., the latest report to be designated as an exhibit first).

At the conclusion of testimony, the WCJ should return all duplicate or unidentified materials and any un-excerpted portions of records to the offering party.

Exhibits shall be filed per the above unless otherwise ordered by the Appeals Board or the workers' compensation judge.

## 1.45 CONFERENCE AND TRIAL MINUTES AND SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013  
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### A. CONFERENCE MINUTES

The WCJ is responsible for the completion of conference minutes for each case assigned to him or her in any conference setting. Hearing reporters are generally not to be used for conferences, and the WCJ shall use either the Minutes of Hearing form or, if a trial is being set, the Pretrial Conference Statement. The minutes of each conference should be prepared for each case as soon as a disposition is reached, or as soon thereafter as possible.

Regardless of which form is used, or in the event a hearing reporter is used, the minutes for each conference shall contain, at a minimum, the following information, written legibly:

- Name of WCJ
- Date, time and place of hearing
- Appearances by parties and attorneys
- Interim orders
- Stipulations and issues (trial setting)
- Exhibits offered or received into evidence (trial setting)
- Disposition

#### 1. When Matter is Not Being Set for Trial

For any disposition other than trial setting, the WCJ shall use the Minutes of Hearing form. The disposition shall clearly specify any one or more of the following: (1) a compromise and release or stipulations with request for award has been submitted and approved, (2) a specified number of days is allowed for submission of a compromise and release or stipulations with request for award, (3) the matter is continued to another conference, (4) the matter is taken off calendar.

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For purposes of this part of the Policy and Procedural Manual, a continuance occurs when a matter set for mandatory settlement conference or other conference is allowed to be set for further conference hearing of any type on a subsequent calendar, and where a matter set for trial is allowed to be set for any type of hearing on a subsequent calendar. For purposes of this part of the Policy and Procedural Manual, setting a case for mandatory settlement conference from a status conference or setting a case for trial from a conference is not considered a continuance.

Should a matter be taken off calendar or continued for further conference, the appropriate boxes on the Minutes of Hearing form should be checked, and a clear and concise statement of the basis for continuing the matter or taking it off calendar should also be provided. Merely checking the boxes without providing a basis for continuance or off-calendar status in writing may not constitute a sufficient record. The minutes shall be prepared so that they are clear and legible and served on all parties and lien claimants, and their representatives.

Stipulations and/or interim order(s) should be included on separate pages and attached to and clearly referenced in the first page of the minutes. The original of the minutes will be scanned into Filenet and will become part of the legal file.

The PWCJs may periodically monitor minutes of hearings prepared at the direction of the WCJs working under their supervision to ensure that good cause has been shown for continuance orders and orders taking off calendar, and that such good cause is stated in the minutes or orders.

## 2. When Matter is Being Set for Trial

Whenever the parties are unable to resolve an issue or issues, and it is appropriate to set the matter for trial, the WCJ should direct the parties to complete the Pretrial Conference Statement. The WCJ shall ensure that the form is complete and contains the following information for each case being set: (1) the parties' stipulations, including all body parts admitted or claimed, (2) the issues raised, including any liens, (3) benefits paid, (4) exhibits, and (5) witnesses.

When the matter has been set for a mandatory settlement conference, the WCJ should take care to ensure that the requirements of Labor Code Section 5502 are properly being followed, and that all witnesses and exhibits are clearly identified at the time of the conference. Where good cause is shown, additional time may be allowed to prepare and file excerpts of records following the conference.

The disposition box on the first page of the Pretrial Conference Statement shall be prepared by the WCJ and shall include: (1) any appropriate discovery or other interim orders (additional pages or minutes using a hearing reporter may be utilized where appropriate), (2) the date and time of trial, (3) the WCJ to whom the trial is assigned, and (4) the time allotted for trial.

## 3. Time Allotted for Trial

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Generally, trials should not be set for more than a full day. For good cause shown, however, a trial may be set for two or more consecutive days. More than one day may be required, for example, when it is clear that, based on the complexity of the issues and/or number of witnesses presented, the trial cannot reasonably be completed in one day. A WCJ shall not set a trial for more than one day without the approval of the PWCJ.

4. Pro Per Applicant

In a case involving an applicant appearing in propria persona, the WCJ should ensure that the unrepresented applicant understands how to prepare the pretrial conference statement, and understands the legal effect of the statement. If necessary, the WCJ should dictate the minutes to a hearing reporter, taking care to ensure that all of the elements required for a trial setting (discussed above) are set forth in the minutes.

B. TRIAL MINUTES: WCJ PROCEDURE

The WCJ shall conduct the proceedings so as to ensure that the minutes are complete and contain a proper record in accordance with WCAB Rule 10566. The stipulations and issues should be recited into the record, noting any changes in either the stipulations or issues as set forth in the MSC statement. The parties' agreement as to the accuracy of the stipulations and issues should be obtained on the record.

The appearances of all parties and attorneys should be noted. All exhibits offered on behalf of the parties should be identified in the minutes, along with any objections to any exhibits, and the WCJs rulings on such objections.

Exhibits shall be filed pursuant to Rules 10233, 10603, and 10629 unless otherwise ordered by the WCJ, see P&P Section 1.40.

Where testimony is taken, the WCJ shall ensure that all witnesses are clearly identified for the reporter, and that names are spelled out and titles identified. The WCJ shall provide a fair and unbiased summary of the testimony given by each witness, and clearly identify direct and cross-examination, redirect and recross-examination, and examination by the WCJ. Where motion pictures are presented as evidence, the Summary of Evidence shall include a brief summary of the contents of the motion pictures.

The WCJ shall provide the disposition order, including the time and action, if any, required for submission. If the disposition is for an order taking off calendar or continuance, the reason for such disposition shall be clearly stated in the record.

The WCJ shall dictate the summary of evidence to the hearing reporter or provide it to the hearing reporter as soon after the hearing as possible and, unless authorized by the PWCJ, no more than three business days after the date of hearing, unless the case is settled after the taking of testimony.

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When no evidence is admitted and a trial is continued, taken off calendar, or the issue or issues for which the trial has been set are resolved, a WCJ may proceed without a hearing reporter and prepare the minutes by hand, utilizing the Minutes of Hearing form.

C. TRIAL MINUTES: HEARING REPORTER PROCEDURE

The minutes of each trial will be prepared by the hearing reporter as soon after completion of the hearing as possible. The minutes shall contain:

- Name of WCJ and hearing reporter;
- Date, time and place of hearing;
- Starting and ending time of hearing;
- Appearances by parties and attorneys;
- Names of witnesses and by whom they are called;
- Stipulations, admissions and issues;
- Interlocutory orders made;
- A descriptive list of all exhibits offered for identification only (with the identity of the party offering the same);
- Exhibits received into evidence and the party offering the same;
- Disposition ordered, which shall include the time and action, if any, required for submission.
- An estimate of the number of pages of transcript will be noted on the lower left-hand corner of the first page of the minutes.
- Where testimony is received, the caption "Summary of Evidence" will follow the disposition order and will be single-spaced.

The original of the minutes and summary will be scanned into Filenet. Whenever possible, on multiple trial days, the summary of evidence should be served on the parties before the next trial session.

## **1.50 PROCEDURES FOLLOWING SUBMISSION OF FORMAL RATING INSTRUCTIONS**

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013  
Effective: October 6, 2003

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Following a WCJ's submission of formal rating instructions to the Disability Evaluation Unit pursuant to AD Rule 10156, the WCJ shall not discuss the instructions or any other aspect of the case with the assigned disability evaluator, except to clarify or correct clerical or technical errors or omissions (e.g., to add the correct occupational group or indemnity rate). Any questions that a WCJ has concerning the correctness of a rating based on his or her instructions shall be communicated by memorandum to the disability evaluator. Any response to this memorandum by a disability evaluator shall also be by memorandum, together with a corrected formal rating, if appropriate. See *Blackledge vs. Bank of America, en banc*, (2010) 75 CCC 613.

If a disability evaluator is unable to prepare a formal rating based on a WCJ's instructions, the evaluator shall not discuss the instructions with the WCJ, but shall provide the WCJ with a memorandum specifically explaining why a formal rating cannot be issued based on the instructions (e.g., instructions are ambiguously worded, factors of disability are insufficient, etc.) A memorandum is not required where the inability to prepare a rating is due solely to a clerical or technical error or omission, in which case the disability evaluator may informally discuss the instructions with the WCJ to correct or clarify the instructions.

Where corrected formal rating instructions are submitted following receipt of a memorandum from the disability evaluator, and a formal rating is prepared, the memorandum should be served on all parties and lien claimants, and their representatives, together with the formal rating, the WCJ's instructions, and all previous instructions, previous ratings, and, all memoranda between the WCJ and the disability evaluator concerning this rating.



## 1.55 TAKING CASES OFF CALENDAR AND SUBMISSIONS

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013  
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The PWCJ may require that: (1) at any time after the commencement of a trial, and before submission of the issues tried, no order taking the case off calendar shall issue from a WCJ without prior consultation with, and approval of, the PWCJ; and/or (2) following submission of an issue or issues, no order to vacate said submission shall issue by the assigned WCJ without prior consultation with, and approval of, the PWCJ.

### Timing of Submission

It is important that the submission date be clear to the WCJ, the parties and to administration. The parties have an expectation of a timely decision and need to know when the decision is due. It is critical that a WCJ not violate Labor Code 123.5(a) by having a case submitted longer than 90 days. The WCJ must be able to track submitted cases and know when submitted cases approach 30, 60 and 90 days. Using the decision forms below provides the clarity that is needed.

Judges should not unnecessarily delay the date of submission of issues following the conclusion of testimony. For example, it is inappropriate to delay submission for any of the following reasons:

1. until dictation of the summary of evidence to the hearing reporter is completed. WCJs shall dictate the summary within three working days from the conclusion of testimony, unless the PWCJ approves of a longer period;
2. until transcription of the Minutes of Hearing and Summary of Evidence by the court reporter. Where there is a delay by the court reporter in transcribing the Minutes of Hearing and Summary of Evidence, the WCJ shall consult with the PWCJ, who shall take appropriate action.

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3. for receipt of post-trial briefs unless the issues tried are unique or unusually complex. In the event post-trial briefs are allowed, the time frames should be as short as reasonably possible and specifically identified.
4. for a potential request for a formal permanent disability rating from the Disability Evaluation Unit beyond 30 days from the conclusion of testimony. If the WCJ believes that there is need for such delay, the WCJ shall consult with the PWCJ who shall take appropriate action.

Form of Submission

Orders of Submission should take one of the forms listed below. Examples of each type are provided as a guide. Note that it is important to have certainty as to the date when the matter will be submitted, even if there is an intervening event.

1. **The matter is submitted.**

When this disposition is used, the issues heard are submitted as of the date of the order.

2. **The matter is going to the DEU.**

This disposition should be used when it is clear that a rating is necessary:

“The matter will be referred to the Disability Evaluation Unit no later than (*no more than 30 days*). The formal permanent disability rating will be served on the parties, who shall have seven days from the date of service, plus five days for mailing, to object to the rating and request cross-examination of the disability evaluator. If no such request is timely made, the matter shall therefore stand submitted on the 12th day following service of the rating.”

3. **The matter may be going to the DEU.**

This disposition should be used when the judge needs time to consider whether a rating will be necessary:

“The matter is submitted. The matter may be referred to the Disability Evaluation Unit by (*no more than 30 days*), in which case a separate order vacating submission will issue. If the matter is referred to the DEU, the formal permanent disability rating will be served on the parties, who shall have seven days plus five for mailing to object to the rating and request cross-examination of the disability evaluator. If no such request is timely made, the matter shall therefore stand submitted on the 12th day following service of the rating.”

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**4. Delay for filing of designated evidence:**

"[Name of party] shall serve and file the document identified in the Minutes of Hearing as Exhibit [#] no later than (no more than twenty days). On that date, the matter shall ... (insert one of the dispositions in 1-3 above)."

**5. Delay for filing of simultaneous or responsive points and authorities.**

Judges should be mindful of the admonition noted above (under "Timing of Submission") that this disposition should be avoided unless the issues are unique or unusually complex:

"Pursuant to the request of (party or WCJ),

- a) Simultaneous: "Applicant and defendant shall serve and file a Memorandum of Points and Authorities on the issue of [designated issue] no later than (generally no more than twenty days) . On that date, the matter shall ... (insert one of the dispositions in 1-3 above)."
- b) Responsive: "(Name of party) shall serve and file a Memorandum of Points and Authorities no later than (generally no more than twenty days). (Name of party) may file a responsive Memorandum of Points and Authorities no later than (generally no more than twenty days). On [the latter date], the matter shall ... (insert one of the dispositions in 1-3 above)."

**ALTERNATE LANGUAGE:**

- a) Simultaneous: "By (date, generally no later than twenty days), applicant and defendant shall serve and file a Memorandum of Points and Authorities on the issue of (designated issue). On that date, the matter shall ... (insert one of the dispositions in 1-3 above)."
- b) Responsive: "By (date, generally no later than twenty days), (applicant) shall serve and file a Memorandum of Points and Authorities. By (date, generally no later than twenty days), (defendant) may file a responsive Memorandum of Points and Authorities. On (the latter date), the matter shall ... (insert one of the dispositions in 1-3 above)."

## 1.60 PROCEDURES FOR PETITIONS FOR RECONSIDERATION

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013

Effective: October 6, 2003

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### A. FILING PETITIONS FOR RECONSIDERATION

Except for carve out cases under WCAB Rule 10865, pursuant to Rule 10840, petitions for reconsideration may be filed at any district office or at the office of the Appeals Board in San Francisco.

### B. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING PETITIONS FOR RECONSIDERATION

Within 15 calendar days following the filing of a petition for reconsideration, a WCJ may modify or amend decisions for substantive or clerical error(s), or may rescind a decision and conduct further proceedings pursuant to WCAB Rule 10859. If a WCJ elects to amend, modify, or rescind a decision under this rule, the district office shall notify the Appeals Board by sending a task to the control unit work queue or an email to [controlunit@dir.ca.gov](mailto:controlunit@dir.ca.gov). The notice shall indicate that an order, decision or award has issued in accordance with WCAB Rule 10859 and shall give the date the decision issued. Alternatively, a copy of the order of modification, amendment or rescission may be forwarded to the Appeals Board. The issuance of the modified or amended order, decision or award or the order of rescission must be scanned into Filenet.

If a petition for reconsideration on a single issue has been filed, the WCJ may exercise any of the options set forth in WCAB Rule 10859.

If (1) a petition for reconsideration is filed on multiple issues on the same case, or (2) multiple petitions for reconsideration are filed by the parties on the same case, or (3) petitions for reconsideration are filed on multiple cases, the WCJ must do one of the following:

1. issue a modified or amended Finding(s) and Award(s) and/or Order(s) granting all of the relief requested by the petitioner(s); or
2. rescind the entire Findings and Award and initiate any further proceedings required within 30 days; or

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3. prepare and submit a report and recommendation on the merits of the petition(s), which may include a recommendation to grant part of the relief sought but deny relief on other contentions. If the WCJ follows this option the WCJ shall review the documents in Filenet and confirm that all evidence and necessary documents are in the Filenet.

It is not permissible for a WCJ to issue a modified or amended decision which does not grant relief to the petitioner(s) with respect to all of the issues raised by the petitioner(s), or to issue a modified or amended decision addressing some issues and a report and recommendation on reconsideration on other issues.

WCAB Rule 10859 requires that where an order, decision or award is rescinded, further proceedings must be initiated within 30 days from the order of rescission. This means that any further hearing must be scheduled and a notice of hearing must issue within 30 days from the order of rescission. Any referral on board motion for further medical evaluation and/or any other action to develop the record required by the WCJ must begin within 30 days from issuance of the order of rescission.

After 15 calendar days have elapsed following the filing of a petition for reconsideration, a WCJ shall not make any order or correct any error in the case until the Appeals Board has denied or dismissed the petition for reconsideration or issued a decision and order after reconsideration. After said 15 calendar days, unless the WCJ has acted under Rule 10859, the WCJ loses all jurisdiction to act on any issue or proceed in any manner on the case, including but not limited to approving settlements, until the Appeals Board has acted on the petition and returned the matter to the WCJ.

**C. MAIL RECEIVED AFTER PETITION FOR RECONSIDERATION FILED**

After a petition for reconsideration has been filed and the electronic file forwarded to the WCAB Office of the Commissioners in San Francisco with the WCJ's report and recommendation, and prior to the return of the file to the district office, the following mail shall be scanned into Filenet:

1. any other petition(s) for reconsideration and any answers to petition(s) for reconsideration;
2. all letters from the parties related to the reconsideration process such as petitions to dismiss the petition for reconsideration or letters seeking withdrawal of the petition for reconsideration;
3. any stipulations with request for award or compromise and release agreement, without action by the WCJ;
4. all change of address notifications from the parties or lien claimants;
5. all responsive pleadings related to the reconsideration process.

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After the mail is scanned into Filenet the Appeals Board must be notified of the new documents by either a phone call to 415 703 4550, a task to the control unit work queue, or an email to [controlunit@dir.ca.gov](mailto:controlunit@dir.ca.gov).

All other mail should be scanned into Filenet with no need to contact the Appeals Board. If there is any question whether mail should be forwarded to the Appeals Board, the Control Unit of the Appeals Board in San Francisco should be contacted immediately by telephone at (415) 703-4550.

D. PETITION FOR RECONSIDERATION OF APPEALS BOARD DECISION

Petitions for reconsideration against decisions issued by the Appeals Board may currently be filed in a district office, although a better practice is to file them at the Appeals Board, Office of the Commissioners in San Francisco.

Any such petition received in a district office should, on a priority basis, be date stamped, scanned, and entered into Filenet, and notice of the filing must be sent by a task to the control unit work queue or by email to [controlunit@dir.ca.gov](mailto:controlunit@dir.ca.gov). No report is necessary.

## 1.65 REPORT OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION JUDGE ON RECONSIDERATION

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013  
Effective: October 6, 2003

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Pursuant to Rule 10860, a WCJ shall prepare a report and recommendation on reconsideration, which shall be sent to the Appeals Board and served on the parties and any affected lien claimants no later than 15 days following the filing of the petition for reconsideration. Extensions of this time limit may be granted by the Appeals Board for good cause. No report is necessary or required if it is a petition from a decision of the Appeals Board.

If a WCJ exercises either of the options provided under Rule 10859 (i.e., modifying and reissuing decision or rescinding entire decision and initiating further proceedings, within 15 days of the filing of the petition for reconsideration), a report is not required. The WCJ however, should have the report scanned into Filenet and so notify the Appeals Board by a task to the control unit work queue or an email to the [controlunit@dir.ca.gov](mailto:controlunit@dir.ca.gov).

If a WCJ does not exercise either of these options within the prescribed 15 days, the WCJ must prepare a report in the format set forth below. The report shall generally be comprised of four parts: an introduction, a statement of facts, a discussion, and a recommendation.

### I INTRODUCTION

The following information shall be contained in the introduction of the report:

1. Applicant's occupation, age at injury, date of injury, part(s) of body injured or alleged to be injured, and the manner in which the injury occurred or was alleged to have occurred.
2. Identity of petitioner(s), and whether the petition is timely filed and verified or is legally defective. If it appears that a petition for reconsideration is untimely, and/or is procedurally defective for any other reason, the WCJ shall note the untimeliness and/or procedural defect in the WCJ's report on reconsideration, and shall also discuss the

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- merits of the petition. The WCJ, after reviewing the file, may recommend that the board grant reconsideration on its own motion pursuant to Labor Code Section 5900(b).
3. The decision or order and issuance date, with specific reference to the portion of the decision or order for which reconsideration is requested.
  4. The petitioner(s)'s contentions.

II  
FACTS

The report shall contain a brief summary of facts sufficient to enable a proper understanding of the issues raised.

Where particular or specific evidence from the record is referenced or set forth in the Report there should be a citation to the Exhibit letter or number, and by the date, page, and line number. If testimony is referenced or set forth there should be a citation to the Summary of Evidence by date, page, and line number. This is necessary to assist the Commissioners in finding and reviewing the evidence in EAMS.

III  
DISCUSSION

1. The discussion portion shall contain the basis for a WCJ's decision, order or other action from which reconsideration is sought, and a reply to each and every contention raised in the petition(s) for reconsideration. The report should contain a sufficient discussion of the facts and legal issues raised so as to explain the petitioner's contentions and to support the WCJ's recommendation(s). However, extensive discussion of established legal principles is unnecessary.
2. The discussion shall reflect a professional attitude, and shall contain no contumacious, demeaning, or derogatory comments with respect to any individual or entity, regardless of provocation. It should be noted that such comments in a report and recommendation on reconsideration reflect poorly upon the professionalism and judicial integrity of the WCAB and the WCJ issuing the report and recommendation; furthermore, such comments preclude the Appeals Board from denying reconsideration and incorporating the report and recommendation as its basis for denial.
3. The WCJ should note any apparent violations of WCAB Rule 10842. Any attachment to the petition for reconsideration that duplicates documents in the record should be removed; other attachments should not be removed. A WCJ need only comment on misstatements of material facts.
4. In order to enable the Appeals Board to deny a petition and adopt and incorporate the WCJ's report as its basis for decision, the report should not incorporate by reference any documents,



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such as the opinion on decision, any answer to the petition for reconsideration, or any medical report(s). Only pertinent parts of the WCJ's opinion on decision should be quoted or summarized to support the recommendation, but generally should not be incorporated by reference. A WCJ may set forth relevant portions of his or her original decision to the extent that it explains or justifies the decision in light of the contentions raised in the petition. *Painter v. WCAB* (1985), 50 CCC 224.

IV  
RECOMMENDATION

1. Every report must contain a recommendation to dismiss, deny, or grant the petition in whole or in part.
2. A recommendation of dismissal or denial generally requires no further elaboration.
3. A recommendation to grant should include suggestions for specific actions to be taken by the Appeals Board, such as the following:
  - a. that a decision after reconsideration issue, recommending specific findings fact and/or provisions to be included in an award;
  - b. that the matter be referred to the Disability Evaluation Unit with new or amended rating instructions;
  - c. that the record in the case be further developed;
  - d. that the matter be returned to the trial calendar for further hearing on all or specific issues.

V  
GENERAL

Reports should be in clear language that employees and employers can easily understand. To this end, reports should be as brief and concise as possible, eliminating unnecessary and immaterial verbiage.

The WCJ shall timely submit a report and recommendation on each case in which reconsideration is sought. Repeated tardiness or failure of a WCJ to complete and forward reports and recommendations on reconsideration shall be brought to the attention of the chief judge for appropriate action.

## 1.70 REFERRAL TO WCJ FOR HEARING FOLLOWING A GRANT OF RECONSIDERATION

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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Effective: October 6, 2003

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The Appeals Board may, after granting a petition for reconsideration, but without issuing a decision, refer the case for assignment to a WCJ for hearing to develop and/or supplement the record. The assigned WCJ shall follow the specific instruction(s) of the Appeals Board in conducting the directed proceedings.

In such cases, the district office should include in the notice of hearing a statement of the purpose and nature of the hearing. This notice may refer to or quote the Appeals Board's Opinion and Order Granting Reconsideration or calendar memorandum.

The WCJ assigned to such cases shall conduct further proceedings pursuant to WCAB Rule 10862. Upon completion of the hearing, the WCJ shall then serve the minutes on the parties pursuant to WCAB Rule 10862, and return the file with the minutes of hearing and summary of testimony to the Appeals Board, or scan the documents into Filenet and notify the Appeals Board by a task to the control unit work queue or by an email to the [controlunit@dir.ca.gov](mailto:controlunit@dir.ca.gov). Any motions, trial briefs, or other pleadings received from a party following the hearing should not be acted upon by a WCJ, but should be forwarded to the Appeals Board.

Any compromise and release or stipulations with request for award filed in relation to such proceedings should be returned to the Appeals Board for action. If before, during, or after the hearing, there are any questions regarding the scope of the proceedings or potential rulings, the WCJ should contact a deputy commissioner of the Appeals Board.

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## 1.75 PETITIONS TO REMOVE

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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The filing of a petition to remove does not terminate a WCJ's authority to proceed in a case, as does a petition for reconsideration, and does not require the WCJ to continue or cancel a previously scheduled hearing absent direction from the Presiding Judge or an Appeals Board Deputy (WCAB Rule 10843(e)). The WCJ should first consult with the PJ and if not resolved then with a Deputy before either cancelling or proceeding. A significant issue is whether proceeding will be a waste of time if the removal is granted or whether cancelling is necessary in view of the issues on removal.

Pursuant to WCAB Rule 10843, within 15 days of the filing of a petition to remove, a WCJ may rescind the order in question or take other action to resolve the issue raised. If the WCJ so acts, or if the petition to remove is withdrawn at any time, the petition is deemed automatically dismissed and requires no further action by the Appeals Board.

If the petition to remove has been scanned into Filenet, and the WCJ acts according to the above paragraph, the WCJ shall so notify the Appeals Board in San Francisco by a task to the control unit work queue or an email to [controlunit@dir.ca.gov](mailto:controlunit@dir.ca.gov).

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## 1.80 REPORT OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION JUDGE ON REMOVAL

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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Pursuant to WCAB Rule 10860, a WCJ shall prepare a report and recommendation on removal, which shall be sent to the Appeals Board and served on the parties and any affected lien claimants no later than 15 days following the filing of the petition for removal. Extensions of this time limit may be granted by the Appeals Board for good cause.

If a WCJ exercises either of the options provided under WCAB Rule 10843 (i.e., rescinds order or decision in question or takes other action to resolve issue being raised, within 15 days of the filing of the petition for removal) or if the petition is withdrawn at any time, a report is not required. The WCJ however, should have the order or decision scanned into FileNet and so notify the Appeals Board of the action taken by a task to the control unit work queue or an email to [controlunit@dir.ca.gov](mailto:controlunit@dir.ca.gov). If a WCJ does not exercise either of the aforementioned options or if the petition is not withdrawn, the WCJ must prepare a report in the format set forth below. The report should generally be comprised of four parts: an introduction, a statement of the facts, a discussion and a recommendation.

### I INTRODUCTION

The following information shall be contained in the introduction of the report:

1. The decision, order or other action complained of and date issued, with specific reference to the portion for which removal is requested.
2. The identity of the petitioner and whether the petition is timely filed or is otherwise defective. A discussion on the merits regardless of timeliness or other defect is required.
3. If a further hearing has been scheduled, the date of such hearing.

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II  
FACTS

The report shall contain a brief summary of facts sufficient to enable a proper understanding of the issues raised, which, where appropriate, should note the chronology and context of the order or other action from which removal is sought (e.g., a discovery ruling at a MSC or trial).

Where particular or specific evidence from the record is referenced or set forth in the Report there should be a citation to the Exhibit letter or number, and by the date, page, and line number. If testimony is referenced or set forth there should be a citation to the Summary of Evidence by date, page, and line number. This is necessary to assist the Commissioners in finding and reviewing the evidence in EAMS.

III  
DISCUSSION

1. The discussion portion shall contain the basis for a WCJ's decision, order or other action from which removal is sought and a reply to each and every contention raised in the petition. The report should contain a sufficient discussion of the facts and legal issues raised so as to explain the petitioner's contentions and to support the WCJ's recommendation(s). However, extensive discussion of established legal principles is unnecessary.

2. The discussion shall reflect a professional attitude, and shall contain no contumacious, demeaning, or derogatory comments with respect to any individual or entity, regardless of provocation. It should be noted that such comments in a report and recommendation on removal reflect poorly upon the professionalism and judicial integrity of the WCAB and the WCJ issuing the report and recommendation; furthermore, such comments preclude the WCAB from denying reconsideration and incorporating the report and recommendation as its basis for denial.

3. In order to enable the Appeals Board to deny a petition and adopt and incorporate the WCJ's report as its basis for decision, the report should not incorporate by reference any documents, such as the WCJ's decision or order, any answer to the petition for removal, or any medical report(s). Pertinent parts of the WCJ's decision or order may be quoted or summarized to support the recommendation, but generally should not be incorporated by reference. A WCJ may set forth relevant portions of his or her original decision to the extent that it explains or justifies the decision in light of the contentions raised in the petition. Cf., *Painter v WCAB* (1985), 50 CCC 224.

IV  
RECOMMENDATION

1. Every report must contain a recommendation to dismiss, deny, or grant the petition in whole or in part.
2. A recommendation of dismissal or denial generally requires no further elaboration.

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3. A recommendation to grant should include suggestions for specific actions to be taken by the Appeals Board, such as the following:
  - a) return to WCJ for further proceedings, either at trial or at further conference;
  - b) return to have WCJ admit disputed document, amend prior order, or other specific action (e.g., allow for completion of discovery);
  - c) that a particular order, such as a discovery order, be issued or rescinded.

V  
GENERAL

Reports should be in clear language that employees and employers can easily understand. To this end, reports should be as brief and concise as possible, eliminating unnecessary and immaterial verbiage.

It is essential to the timely disposition of matters that the WCJ submit a timely report and recommendation on each case in which removal is sought. Repeated tardiness or failure of a WCJ to complete and forward reports and recommendations on removal shall be brought to the attention of the chief judge for appropriate action.

## 1.85 REPORT OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION JUDGE ON DISQUALIFICATION

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Effective: October 6, 2003

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The filing of a petition to disqualify a WCJ does not terminate a WCJ's authority to proceed in a case, as does a petition for reconsideration, and does not require the WCJ to continue or cancel a previously scheduled hearing absent direction from the Presiding Judge or an Appeals Board Deputy. The WCJ should first consult with the PJ and, if not resolved, then with a Deputy before either cancelling or proceeding. A significant issue is whether proceeding will be a waste of time if the disqualification is granted or whether canceling is necessary in view of the issues on disqualification.

Pursuant to WCAB Rule 10860, a report and recommendation on a petition for disqualification is required to be prepared by a WCJ and sent to the Appeals Board and served on the parties and any affected lien claimants. The report and recommendation shall be sent to the Appeals Board and served no later than 15 days following the filing of the petition for disqualification. Extensions of this time limit may be granted by the Appeals Board for good cause. The WCJ should prepare a report in the format set forth below. Sending to the Appeals Board means scanning the report into Filenet and electronically transmitting the file.

In responding to the petition to disqualify, the WCJ may consider reviewing the Ethical Standards of Workers' Compensation Administrative Law Judges commencing with Section 9720.1 of the Administrative Director's Rules.

The report should generally be comprised of four parts: an introduction, a statement of the facts, a discussion and a recommendation.

### I INTRODUCTION

The following information shall be contained in the introduction of the report:

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1. Statement of the contentions raised by the petition.
2. Identity of the petitioner, whether the petition is timely filed or legally defective (i.e., any failure by petitioner to comply with the procedures set forth in WCAB Rule 10452 and/or the provisions of Labor Code Section 5311) and whether any witnesses have been sworn.

II  
FACTS

The report shall contain a brief summary of facts sufficient to enable a proper understanding of the alleged basis for disqualification.

Where particular or specific evidence from the record is referenced or set forth in the report, there should be a citation to the Exhibit letter or number, and by the date, page, and line number. If testimony is referenced or set forth, there should be a citation to the Summary of Evidence by date, page, and line number. This is necessary to assist the commissioners in finding and reviewing the evidence in EAMS.

III  
DISCUSSION

1. The discussion portion shall contain a specific response to the allegations being made. The report should contain a sufficient discussion of the facts and legal issues raised so as to explain the petitioner's contentions and to support the WCJ's recommendation. The WCJ should specifically comment on whether he or she is biased as alleged. However, extensive discussion of established legal principles is unnecessary.
2. The discussion shall reflect a professional attitude, and shall contain no contumacious, demeaning, or derogatory comments with respect to any individual or entity, regardless of provocation. It should be noted that such comments in a report and recommendation on reconsideration reflect poorly upon the professionalism and judicial integrity of the WCAB and the WCJ issuing the report and recommendation; furthermore, such comments preclude the Appeals Board from denying reconsideration and incorporating the report and recommendation as the basis for denial.
3. In order to enable the Appeals Board to deny a petition and adopt and incorporate the WCJ's report as the basis for decision, the report should not incorporate by reference any documents, including any answer to the petition.

IV  
RECOMMENDATION

1. Every report must contain a recommendation to dismiss, deny, or grant the petition.
2. A recommendation of dismissal or denial generally requires no further elaboration.



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3. A recommendation to grant should include suggestions for specific actions to be taken by the Appeals Board. If the WCJ is persuaded that disqualification is justified, the basis for disqualification should be clearly and specifically explained.

## 1.90 COMPROMISE AND RELEASE AND STIPULATIONS WITH REQUEST FOR AWARD

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013  
Effective: October 6, 2003

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A WCJ to whom a compromise and release or stipulations with request for award is assigned should initiate appropriate action within fifteen 15 days of its assignment. Pursuant to WCAB Rule 10346(c), if a compromise and release or stipulations with request for award has not been approved, disapproved, or noticed for trial on the issue of adequacy and other disputed issues within 45 days after filing, the file shall be returned to the PWCJ for review.

Appropriate action will generally include one or more of the following:

1. Following a review and determination that a proposed settlement is adequate, issuing an order approving compromise and release, or an award pursuant to stipulations.
2. If necessary to determine adequacy, referral of the case to the Disability Evaluation Unit, and issuing an order suspending action or other appropriate notice to the parties, pending further review after receipt of the requested consultative rating(s). Once the file is returned to the WCJ with the requested rating(s), the WCJ shall have no more than 15 days to take further action (e.g., issue an order approving the settlement, or setting the case on the issue of adequacy).
3. If the settlement cannot be determined to be adequate, the WCJ should: issue an order suspending action that notifies the parties of the inadequacy and allows the parties additional time not to exceed 30 days to modify the agreement such that it is adequate. If the agreement is not so modified, the matter should be set for a conference on adequacy.

An order suspending action on the settlement shall be served on all parties and lien claimants, and their representatives.

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In accordance with WCAB Rules 10870 and 10882, WCJs should carefully review settlements to ensure that they are adequate. Routinely setting hearings on adequacy of compromise and release proposals is not an appropriate alternative to careful review of the materials submitted with the settlement. A WCJ may refuse to approve a compromise and release agreement unless it is amended in a manner suggested by the WCJ; however, the WCJ cannot rewrite the agreement without the parties' consent. (See *Burbank Studios v. WCAB (Yount)* (1982) 47 Cal. Comp. Cases 832, at 836.)

Where the employer has filed a written request under Labor Code Section 3761, the WCJ shall ensure that the proposed compromise and release agreement was or stipulations were served on the employer at least 15 days prior to the date of action on the release or stipulations, and that proof of such service is filed. The WCJ may act on a proposed compromise and release agreement or stipulations without such service or proof of service, but the employer is thereafter entitled to a hearing on the issue of compensability. If the employer prevails on that issue, it is entitled to recover a setoff against costs or reserves effecting premium costs and sanctions. (See Labor Code Section 3761 and WCAB Rule 10875.)

When parties who are present at a hearing indicate they have reached an agreement for settlement by compromise and release or stipulations with request for award, they should be encouraged to prepare and submit a compromise and release agreement or stipulations with request for award at that hearing, rather than to seek to continue the matter or take it off calendar.

## 1.91 SUBMISSION OF SETTLEMENT, DETERMINATION OF ADEQUACY, AND APPROVAL

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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### A. SUBMISSION OF PRO PER SETTLEMENTS

When a Compromise and Release or Stipulations with Request for Award involving an unrepresented employee is submitted to the WCAB for approval, the following documents should be included and clearly marked or indexed:

1. All relevant medical reports of treating physicians and QMEs, filed in chronological order with the most recent report on top;
2. A brief explanation of the basis of settlement;
3. Ratings of all P&S reports, whether by DEU, a private rater, or claims examiner. In cases involving multiple body parts, upper extremities, or non-scheduled ratings, a DEU rating should be included;
4. Basis and calculation of average weekly earnings if less than maximum;
5. Notices sent to the employee pertaining to the settlement (without attachments);
6. Letters advising applicant of the QME process (without attachments);
7. Where benefits have been provided, a current computer printout of all benefits paid;
8. A proof of service of the settlement document and supporting documents, including the medical reports/records filed, showing service on all lien claimants and the injured worker pursuant to WCAB Rule 10886.

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A properly submitted settlement, either by Stipulations with Request for Award or Compromise and Release, shall be approved by a WCJ if the settlement is found to be adequate and meets regulatory requirements. A walk-through settlement involving an unrepresented employee shall be reviewed pursuant to WCAB Rules 10870 and 10882.

Following approval of the settlement, all relevant medical and legal documents shall be scanned into Filenet. (see, WCAB Rule 10750(b))

**B. CONSIDERATION OF ADEQUACY OF ALL SETTLEMENTS**

Stipulations with Request for Award shall be considered adequate and an Award shall issue if the stipulated level of permanent disability is reasonably within the range of evidence based on the medical reports submitted, medical care is awarded where appropriate based upon the medical reports submitted, and any other issues are adequately resolved by the stipulations.

If compensability is not disputed, a Compromise and Release shall be considered adequate and shall be approved where the settlement is properly executed, and the amount of the settlement includes consideration for: (1) permanent and temporary disability that is reasonably within the range of evidence based on the medical reports submitted, (2) medical treatment, where appropriate, based on a reasonable estimate of future medical expenses; (3) any other issues included in the settlement, such as penalties or the right to reopen, in a reasonable amount.

In cases dealing with threshold issues (i.e. injury AOE/COE, employment, jurisdiction or statute of limitations), when assessing the adequacy of a settlement, consideration shall be given to the viability of these issues.

A determination that a settlement is adequate based upon the preceding analysis should be approved; the settlement should not be disapproved nor should the case be set for adequacy based solely on the WCJ's belief that the settlement is less than the optimal amount.

**C. PREREQUISITES FOR SETTING A CASE FOR ADEQUACY**

1. If a WCJ concludes that a settlement submitted by mail or delivered on a walk-through basis may be inadequate, the WCJ must give notice to the parties of the reasons for the apparent inadequacy by serving the parties with an Order Suspending which identifies a substantial issue, as described in number (2) below. The parties shall be given 30 days within which to address the problems identified by the WCJ.
2. A substantial issue regarding the adequacy of a settlement, in light of the documentary evidence provided, may consist of the following:

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- (a) The permanent disability stipulated to, or the amount paid in a Compromise and Release for permanent disability, is not reasonably within the range of the medical evidence provided.
  - (b) The award for medical treatment, or the amount paid in a Compromise and Release for medical treatment, is not reasonably within the range of the medical evidence provided.
  - (c) The period of temporary disability provided for in the settlement is outside of the range of the medical evidence provided, or cannot be verified.
  - (d) A lien claim or lien claims have been left unresolved, and no good faith effort to resolve them has been shown.
  - (e) The medical evidence provided is insufficiently developed on its face making it impossible to define the range of evidence.
  - (f) In pro per cases only: (i) the documentary evidence provided does not demonstrate that the defendant has provided the applicant with required notices, where relevant; and/or (ii) the indemnity rate is less than maximum and either inconsistent with the earnings information provided, or cannot be verified for a lack of earnings information.
  - (g) The settlement document has not been served pursuant to WCAB Rule 10886.
  - (h) Other issue of similar substantiality is identified that requires correction and/or consultation with the parties.
3. If the issues identified in the Order Suspending are not satisfactorily addressed by the parties within the specified time, the WCJ may set the case for a status conference on the issue of adequacy, but must include in that notice the reasons in writing for setting the matter and the specific issues the WCJ expects the parties to address (i.e., issues not satisfactorily addressed.) If the parties satisfactorily addressed the issues after notice of the status conference, but before the conference, the settlement should be approved, the status conference should be cancelled, and no appearances should be required.

If new issues regarding adequacy are identified by the WCJ subsequent to the Order Suspending, the WCJ should follow the procedure outlined in the paragraph immediately above, prior to setting the matter for conference.

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4. Setting a case for adequacy (a) without any substantial issue(s) regarding adequacy, (b) without providing the parties with notice in writing of the reasons for the setting, or (c) without providing the parties with an opportunity to address the identified inadequacies, is an inefficient use of court time and constitutes an abuse of discretion.
5. Where an Order Suspending issues in violation of this section, a party may request that the PWCJ review the order and take appropriate action to redress the violation, if any.

### 1.93 UNINSURED EMPLOYERS, JOINDER AND SETTLEMENT

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013  
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A. If an application is filed by an applicant in pro per and no insurance can be identified by the I&A officer the case may be set for a Status Conference. It is not required to be set on a scheduled UEBTF day. If the employer makes a general appearance it is preferable to have a hearing reporter present. The general appearance shall be noted and the UEBTF shall be ordered joined on the minutes. The minutes showing the general appearance and the joinder order shall be served on the parties and UEBTF. If the employer does not make a general appearance, the Applicant should be referred to Information & Assistance (I & A) for information on serving the Special Notice of Lawsuit.

B. At a hearing, the WCJ should inform the unrepresented applicant of his/her right to counsel and may refer the applicant to I & A, if appropriate.

The WCJ should inform any unrepresented or uninsured employer of the employer's right to counsel and the serious nature of the proceedings, since employers may be facing substantial liability.

C. Prior to approval of a compromise and release involving an uninsured employer, the WCJ shall require that the uninsured employer file the executed compromise and release, together with either a (1) certified check(s), (2) cashier's check(s), or (3) money order(s) made payable to applicant, and any lien claimants or others benefiting from the settlement. No order approving compromise and release shall issue unless all lien claims have been resolved and paid or withdrawn.

The order approving the compromise and release, whether on a pre-printed form or dictated on the record, shall include a caption entitled "Order Approving Compromise and Release and Award," and, in the body of the order, the following language:



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“Award is made in favor of [name of applicant] against [name of uninsured employer] in the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ payable forthwith, together with interest as provided by law.”

## **1.95 PROCEDURE IF PROPOSED SETTLEMENT NOT ACTED ON WITHIN 45 DAYS**

Issued by

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Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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When a settlement has not been acted on within 45 days and the file is transferred to the PWCJ for review pursuant to WCAB Rule 10346(c), the PWCJ may:

1. return the file to the WCJ previously assigned where the PWCJ determines that the WCJ is proceeding appropriately;
2. reassign the file to another WCJ;
3. reassign the file to himself or herself for disposition of the proposed settlement;
4. take any other appropriate action to assure prompt disposition of the proposed settlement.

## **1.97 VENUE FOR CLAIMS OF DWC EMPLOYEES**

Issued by

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Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Amended: February 1, 2013  
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Pursuant to WCAB Rule 10409(b) (Cal. Code Regs. Sec. 10409(b)):

When any current or former DWC employee, or relative of that employee, files a workers' compensation application or case opening document in the same district office where the employee used to work, currently works or has been assigned to work, or where any person who has or has had significant contact or familiarity with a district office and or its employees, files an application in that district office, the application shall be transferred to a different district office within a reasonable geographic distance from the applicant's district office. The case shall be assigned to a WCJ who is unfamiliar with the applicant. The parties may agree on the appropriate venue, other than the district office where the application or case opening document is filed, subject to the approval of the PWCJ.

If the parties are unable to agree on a suitable venue, or for any other good cause shown, the PWCJ shall consult with the Secretary of the Appeals Board to determine the appropriate venue for an applicant's case to be heard, with the Secretary issuing the appropriate order for change of venue. When appropriate, a WCJ from a region other than the employee's region shall be assigned by the Secretary of the Appeals Board.

## **1.100 SIGNING OF STIPULATIONS WITH REQUEST FOR AWARD**

Issued by

**MERLE C. RABINE**

Chairman

Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**RICHARD P. GANNON**

Administrative Director

Division of Workers' Compensation

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Where parties file Stipulations with Request for Award (DWC WCAB Form 3), the stipulations shall be signed by the applicant, applicant's attorney (if any), and the attorney or authorized representative for defendant.

## **1.105 DISPOSITION OF LIEN CLAIMS IN SETTLEMENTS**

Issued by

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Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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Except for settlements involving uninsured employers (see, P&P section 1.93), where a compromise and release agreement or stipulations with request for award is filed with lien claims that remain unresolved after good-faith attempts to resolve them, the WCJ reviewing the settlement should approve the settlement, if it is otherwise adequate. It is inappropriate for a WCJ to refuse to consider the adequacy of a settlement until all lien claims have been resolved.

## **1.110 SERVICE OF SETTLEMENTS ON LIEN CLAIMANTS**

Issued by

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Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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When a settlement document is filed personally or by mail, all lien claimants whose liens have not been resolved or withdrawn shall be served with the document no later than concurrently with filing (see also WCAB Rule 10886).

When a settlement document is drafted and filed at a conference or trial, the WCJ shall order service of the document on all lien claimants whose liens have not been resolved or withdrawn.

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## 1.120 APPEARANCE BY NON-ATTORNEY REPRESENTATIVES

Issued by

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**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
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Division of Workers' Compensation

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### A. APPEARANCES

In each case in which a law firm representing an injured worker appears by an employee not holding current active membership in the State Bar of California, pursuant to Rule 10773, the employee shall file at the time of his or her first appearance at the WCAB an original document that:

1. discloses to the board and to the applicant that he or she is not licensed to practice law in the State of California;
2. states the name of the attorney directly responsible for supervising the employee;
3. specifically states that the employee is authorized by the supervising attorney to sign settlement documents; and
4. is signed by the supervising attorney and the client.

In each case in which a law firm representing a defendant appears by an employee not holding current active membership in the State Bar of California, the employee shall file at the time of his or her first appearance at the WCAB a document that complies with the paragraph above, except that it need not be signed by the client.

### B. SETTLEMENT DOCUMENTS

Where a settlement signed by a non-attorney law firm employee is submitted to a WCJ for approval, the settlement need not be signed or specifically authorized by the supervising attorney if the attorney has previously signed and filed a specific authorization for the employee to sign settlement documents in the case or cases being settled.

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Pursuant to Labor Code Section 4903, no fee for legal services shall be awarded to any representative who is not an attorney.

C. DISBARRED ATTORNEYS

An attorney who has been disbarred, suspended, declared involuntarily inactive by The State Bar, or who has resigned with charges pending before The State Bar, is not allowed to appear in any manner before the WCAB. (Rule 10779; *In Re Roman Pellicer* (2008), WCAB en banc, 73 Cal. Comp. Cases 1065.)



## 1.125 FRAUD REPORTING BY WCJS

Issued by

**MERLE C. RABINE**

Chairman

Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**RICHARD P. GANNON**

Administrative Director

Division of Workers' Compensation

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If, in the course of adjudicating a claim for workers' compensation benefits, a WCJ discovers conduct that appears to constitute workers' compensation fraud, AD Rule 9721.32 provides that:

“When circumstances warrant, a referee [WCJ] shall take or initiate appropriate disciplinary measures against a referee [WCJ], lawyer, party, witness, or other person who participates in the workers' compensation process for unprofessional, fraudulent or other improper conduct of which the referee becomes aware. “

If a WCJ becomes aware of possible workers' compensation fraud during proceedings, the WCJ should be sensitive to his or her obligations under the Code of Judicial Ethics as the case progresses.

The obligation imposed by AD Rule 9721.32 to report misconduct and fraud must be balanced against a recognition that the Code of Judicial Ethics, out of concern that a judge's actions not diminish the appearance of fairness and objectivity in judicial proceedings, places limits on a judge's communications involving pending cases.

Under Canon 3A(7), a judge is prohibited from discussing a pending or impending case outside the presence of the parties.

Canon 3A(9) prevents a judge from making a nonpublic comment that “might substantially interfere with a fair trial or hearing.”

If a WCJ determines that he or she is aware of reportable misconduct, the WCJ may report that misconduct to the appropriate authorities once the case in which that misconduct occurred is no longer pending before the WCJ.

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In view of the ethical demands required of WCJs by the Code of Judicial Ethics, the Division would prefer that WCJs not directly refer cases involving suspected fraud to outside authorities.

A WCJ who desires to report misconduct should refer the matter, with as much specificity and documentary evidence as is available to them, to the chief judge. This course of action would be consistent with Canon 3B(7)(b), which allows judges to consult with court personnel whose function it is to advise the judge in carrying out the judge's responsibilities.

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**1.130 SELF-INSURED EMPLOYERS, CERTIFICATE OF CONSENT**

Issued by

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Administrative Director

Division of Workers' Compensation

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If it is necessary to determine whether a given employer was self-insured as of a specified date, that information may be obtained by contacting the manager of Self-Insurance Plans. The contact information for SIP is as follows:

web site: <http://www.dir.ca.gov/SIP>  
email: [sip@dir.ca.gov](mailto:sip@dir.ca.gov)

## 1.135 TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS

Issued by

**MERLE C. RABINE**

Chairman

Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**RICHARD P. GANNON**

Administrative Director

Division of Workers' Compensation

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Requests for transcripts are to be referred to the PWCJ or his or her designee, to make sure the request is proper and to determine the relative priority of the request (see below). The PWCJ may contact the requesting party to determine whether the request is necessary in lieu of a summary of testimony, and whether a partial transcript, instead of an entire transcript, would be sufficient. The PWCJ shall then refer the request to one of the reporters in his or her district office who is designated as the transcript clerk.

Requests for transcripts shall be granted when the request is determined to be proper, and the request is properly completed and accompanied by the appropriate fee (AD Rules 9990 through 9994 and WCAB Rule 10740). The request should clearly and legibly provide the following information:

- a. the name, mailing address and daytime phone number of the requestor;
- b. the name of the applicant, date of hearing and case number;
- c. a brief explanation of the basis for the request;
- d. the portion of the transcript requested;
- e. the date the transcript is needed.

The transcript request must include a deposit in the form of a check or money order made payable to the Division of Workers' Compensation in the amount of the estimated transcript fee. The requestor should be advised of the transcript cost per page and that the estimated number of pages of the entire transcript is located on the lower left-hand corner of the cover sheet of the minutes of hearing and summary of evidence. The name and phone number of the transcript clerk shall be provided to the requestor to address any questions concerning the request and the fee.

A request for a transcript does not obviate the WCJ's duty to timely prepare a summary of evidence following each hearing [see Section 1.45], except where the PWCJ permits, for good cause, a transcript to be prepared in lieu of a summary of evidence. Requests for transcripts made

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by the Appeals Board and/or appellate courts must comply with specified due dates unless an extension is granted. Requests for approval for complete or partial transcripts, ordered by a WCJ, shall be made in writing to the PWCJ and supported by reasons for such request. A commissioner or deputy commissioner acting for the Appeals Board may also order a transcript of proceedings. All parties shall be notified of a transcript request unless the requesting party has already done so.

Each transcript invoice must include the case number, case title, date of hearing, names of the WCJ and reporter, and the number of pages of the transcript and any copies. The deposit fee shall be collected in advance of preparing a transcript, based on an estimate of the number of pages to be provided. Fees collected in excess of the deposit shall be returned to the requesting party. Any fee balance remaining shall be paid prior to issuing the transcript. The transcript clerk shall be responsible for collecting the fee and preparing the invoice.

The following is a recommended priority system:

- a. Court of Appeal transcript requirements;
- b. Minutes of Hearing and Summary of Evidence;
- c. Appeals Board-required transcripts;
- d. requests by law enforcement authorities or district attorneys;
- e. party-requested transcripts;
- f. non-party requested transcripts other than in (d) above; and
- g. requests made before the record in a case is concluded, other than in (d) above.

## **1.140 ATTORNEY'S FEES, LIEN FOR**

Issued by

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Chairman

Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**RICHARD P. GANNON**

Administrative Director

Division of Workers' Compensation

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The Labor Code imposes an obligation on WCJs to determine what is a reasonable attorney's fee in cases submitted to them for decision.

The WCAB recognizes the valuable service rendered to applicants by competent attorneys. The WCAB recognizes, too, that reasonable fees must be sufficient to encourage such competent attorneys to participate in this field of practice. The WCAB has seen instances where fees appear to be unreasonably low or high. The WCAB has seen, too, instances where attorneys accept sizeable fees for services which are largely unnecessary because there is little dispute and little time, effort or skill involved.

The WCAB also recognizes that because of the lack of any increase in permanent disability benefits since April 1, 1972 in many cases a fee based solely on a percentage of permanent indemnity may be inadequate to compensate an attorney for his services.

To encourage attorneys to render a more balanced service and to increase opportunity for attorneys to be more adequately compensated (particularly in view of increased statutory temporary disability) the following is promulgated as a guideline for the use of the WCJs.

1. In cases of average complexity, the WCAB believes that a reasonable fee will be in the range of 9 percent to 12 percent of the permanent disability indemnity, death benefit or compromise and release awarded. In addition thereto, a fee equivalent to 9 percent to 12 percent of the temporary disability indemnity and out-of-pocket medical benefits to the extent that they are obtained or awarded as a result of applicant's attorney's services may be allowed.
2. In cases of above average complexity, a fee in excess of the normal upper limit of 12 percent applicable to all benefits described in Paragraph 1 hereof is warranted. Such cases may include, but are not limited to:

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- a. cases establishing a new or obscure theory of injury or law;
  - b. cases involving highly disputed factual issues, where detailed investigation, interrogation of prospective witnesses, and participation in lengthy hearings are involved;
  - c. cases involving highly disputed medical issues;
  - d. cases involving multiple defendants.
3. In cases of below average complexity, the fee applicable to all benefits described in Paragraph 1 hereof may range downward from the 9 percent – 12 percent range to as low as 1 percent. Such cases may include, but are not limited to:
- a. the uncontested death cases where normal proof of dependency is all that is required of counsel;
  - b. the undisputed statutory 100% permanent disability case or other undisputed presumption cases;
  - c. other essentially undisputed cases.

A \$750 fee in a \$75,000 death benefit award provides ample compensation for the time and skill involvement of applicant's attorney where counsel is required to do no more than provide a marriage certificate and birth certificate. The WCAB emphatically rejects the theory that the applicant in such a case should pay a higher fee to provide an offset for the cases which counsel handles at a loss. There is no reason for the deserving widow, the blind, the paraplegic or other employee with a major disability to underwrite the case of the employee with a minor or questionable claim.

4. In considering the value of counsel's services, the criteria set forth in Bentley v. IAC, 11 CCC 204, and Rose, Klein & Marias v. WCAB, 39 CCC 771, are to be given full consideration. It should be realized that the time involvement of a recognized specialist, who has demonstrated his skill in the field, is to be valued much more highly on an hourly basis than the time involvement of a person less knowledgeable and skilled in the field of workers' compensation law.
5. If the record does not establish, to the satisfaction of the WCJ, a sufficient basis for determining the value of counsel's services, the WCJ should request counsel to supply the desired information. This need not be done orally on the record or by written communication, but the WCJ should be satisfied that there is an adequate basis for justifying the fee determination if it should be made an issue."

**1.145 DEATH CASES**  
**FINDINGS AND AWARD WHERE NO DEPENDENTS EXIST**

Issued by

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Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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Labor Code Section 4706.5, as amended, provides in part that where a deceased employee leaves no person entitled to a dependency death benefit, a death benefit equal to the total dependency death benefit that would be payable to a surviving spouse with no minor children is to be paid to the State of California, Department of Industrial Relations.

In all death cases where there are no surviving dependents, the following paragraphs shall be included in the judge's decision:

**AWARD**

"Award is made in favor of the State of California against (employer/carrier) of (\$\_\_\_\_\_) payable at the statutory maximum temporary disability rate commencing (the day after the date of death) and continue weekly until the total amount thereof shall have been paid."

**ORDER**

"It is ordered that all accrued payments together with the unpaid balance commuted as of the date of this award pursuant to Labor Code Section 5101(b) shall be paid forthwith to the Director of the Department of Industrial Relations."

A copy of the Findings and Award is to be forwarded to the Director of the Department of Industrial Relations (Fiscal Officer) when issued.



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**1.150 SUBSEQUENT INJURIES BENEFITS TRUST FUND**

Issued by

**MERLE C. RABINE**

Chairman

Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**RICHARD P. GANNON**

Administrative Director

Division of Workers' Compensation

Effective: April 1, 2004

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A specific finding with respect to potential credit under Labor Code Section 4753 should be made in each award against the Subsequent Injuries Benefits Trust Fund as follows:

"The amount awarded against the Subsequent Injuries Benefits Trust Fund shall be reduced to the extent of any monetary payments received by the employee, for or on account of preexisting disability or impairment, as provided by Labor Code Section 4753, with jurisdiction reserved."

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## 1.155 COURT DECORUM

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Effective: February 1, 2013

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Pursuant to CCP Section 128(a),

“Every court shall have the power to do all of the following:

- “(1) To preserve and enforce order in its immediate presence.
- “(2) To enforce order in the proceedings before it, or before a person or persons empowered to conduct a judicial investigation under its authority.
- “(3) To provide for the orderly conduct of proceedings before it, or its officers ...”

To that end, the WCJ has the authority to require that all parties appearing in the courtroom be dressed appropriately and conduct themselves properly for a courtroom setting. All attorney and non-attorney representatives shall be held to the same professional standard. (See Labor Code Section 4907).

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## **1.160 ACCOMMODATIONS**

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Effective: February 1, 2013

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The WCAB acknowledges that those appearing before it may need certain physical accommodations to allow them to appear at a district office. The public disability accommodations regulations may be found in the Administrative Director's Rules, Sections 9708.1 through 9708.6. All requests for such accommodations shall be referred to the on-site district office disability accommodation coordinator. The parties may determine the coordinator for each district office by referring to the following link at the DIR website:

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dwc/disacomm.htm>

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## 1.165 MONETARY SANCTIONS

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

Effective: February 1, 2013

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Pursuant to WCAB Rule 10561 and Labor Code Section 5813 the WCJ may impose sanctions by ordering any case participant, party, attorney, lien claimant or hearing representative to pay reasonable expenses, including attorney's fees and costs incurred by another as a result of bad-faith actions or tactics that are frivolous or solely intended to cause unnecessary delay, and may order additional sanctions up to \$2500 to be transmitted to the General Fund. In so doing, the WCJ shall comply to the extent possible with the following:

1. At the time of issuance of any order to pay any sanctions, fees, and/or costs under Labor Code Section 5813 and WCAB Rule 10561, a copy of the order must be faxed or e-mailed to the Appeals Board, Office of the Commissioners, to the attention of the Secretary's Administrative Assistant (currently Annette Gabrielli) or mailed to:

**Secretary and Deputy Commissioner**  
**WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS BOARD**  
**P. O. Box 429459**  
**San Francisco, CA 94142-9459**

2. Orders to pay sanctions for transmittal to the General Fund must indicate that checks are payable within 20 days to the **WORKERS' COMPENSATION APPEALS BOARD**, and that they are to be mailed to the address set forth in Paragraph 1 above.
3. Orders to pay sanctions, fees, and/or costs must be made against a named individual or entity, not just "applicant's attorney" or "defendant." The order should provide the full legal name, not a uniform assigned name from EAMS. A named person is preferable who may be made jointly and severally liable with an entity.

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4. The person, party or entity ordered to pay sanctions for transmittal to the General Fund should be directed to include the case name and case number on the memo portion of the check. This will enable the Appeals Board to associate payments with the proper WCJ order and case. The person, party, or entity should also be directed to notify the WCJ when payment is made.
5. The Appeals Board tax ID No. is 94-3160882. Upon receipt, the Appeals Board will transmit the check to the General Fund.
6. Subsequent orders vacating or modifying the original sanction, fees and/or costs, orders must be faxed or e-mailed ([controlunit@dir.ca.gov](mailto:controlunit@dir.ca.gov)) to the Appeals Board, Attn: Secretary's Administrative Assistant, or mailed to the Secretary and Deputy Commissioner, as set forth in Item 1 above.
7. Pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 6086.7, orders to pay sanctions, fees and/or costs of \$1000.00 or more against an attorney must be reported to the State Bar of California. The Appeals Board will notify the State Bar. Orders of \$1000.00 or more against the insurance carrier, claims adjuster, or non-attorney representative are not reported to the State Bar.

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## 1.175 CARVE OUT PROCEDURES

Issued by

**RONNIE G. CAPLANE**  
Chairwoman  
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board

**DESTIE OVERPECK**  
Acting Administrative Director  
Division of Workers' Compensation

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### I

Where a collective bargaining agreement contains an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) system approved by the Administrative Director to resolve workers' compensation claims under Labor Code sections 3201.5 and 3201.7 (commonly called a "carve out agreement"), an Application for Adjudication of Claim shall not be filed with any district office. If one is on file, it is subject to dismissal if the defendant establishes an approved carve out exists covering the claim in question. The injured worker's claim is to be resolved only through the approved ADR system.

### II

If an application in a carve out case is filed, or if for some reason an application is already on file and a declaration of readiness is filed, defendant may object to the application, object to the declaration, and/or petition to dismiss the application. Defendant needs to establish that there is an ADR system approved by the Administrative Director either by enclosing the documents which establish that fact or by a link to the DWC website which lists and identifies approved ADR agreements. (<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dwc/carveout>)

Applicant must be given the opportunity to respond. The WCJ may choose to issue a notice of intention to grant the petition to dismiss based on the documentation or may set the matter for conference, or take other appropriate action to complete a record that supports a decision on the issue. The WCAB has jurisdiction and the WCJ has authority to dismiss if justified. (*Kaiser v. California Electric* (1998) 63 Cal. Comp. Cases 1391, significant panel decision; *Becerra v. Eastside Reservoir Project* (1997) 62 Cal. Comp. Cases 937, significant panel decision.)

### III

If reconsideration is sought from a final ADR decision, under Rule 10865 the petition and answer shall be filed only with the Appeals Board, Office of the Commissioners, in San Francisco, and shall not be accepted in any district office. The district office should recognize a petition in a carve out case because it most likely will not have an ADJ or WCAB number.

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If a carve out petition is submitted to a district office in violation of Rule 10865, it shall be returned to the petitioner with a letter referencing the rule, noting that the petition was improperly submitted and has not been accepted for filing, and indicating the petitioner should file with the Appeals Board, Office of the Commissioners, in San Francisco. An answer should be similarly handled. This may create timeliness issues.

If a petition in a carve out case is electronically filed either with a previously assigned ADJ or WCAB case number, or with an Application creating the adjudication file, and it is tasked to a WCJ, the WCJ shall notify the Control Unit either by email to [controlunit@dir.ca.gov](mailto:controlunit@dir.ca.gov) or by a task to the Control Unit work queue.

Upon filing of the petition with the Appeals Board, Office of the Commissioners, an adjudication file will be created and an adjudication case number will be established by the Appeal Board's Control Unit.