

March 17, 2020

**CLIENT ALERT -
WORKERS COMPENSATION UPDATES ON COVID 19**

Dear Clients and Friends:

Hinman, Howard and Kattell is fully up and running during this time and will do what we can to continue to help our clients. We will be available for telephone meetings and always have access to communicate through email, but we are trying to limit in-person meetings as much as possible at this time.

The Workers Compensation Board has issued a number of changes that are taking effect immediately. Please see the board's website for a complete list of procedural changes. <http://www.wcb.ny.gov>

ALL HEARINGS WILL BE BY REMOTE ATTENDANCE

Until further notice, claimants will not be permitted to attend their hearings in person. Claimants can appear by telephone or virtually. If you would like to appear by telephone you can contact our office or call the Board's Customer Service at (844) 337-6301 the day of their hearing. If you have access to a computer and want to appear virtually, visit wcb.ny.gov/virtual-hearings for more information.

If you have a hearing scheduled, you will be contacted by a staff member with instructions on whether you should attend virtually/by telephone or whether your appearance is not necessary due to the issues being raised. If you have any questions or have not been contacted about an upcoming hearing, call our office for more information.

90-DAY REQUIREMENT FOR MEDICAL EVIDENCE

A claimant who has not been classified with a permanent disability has an obligation to submit up-to-date medical evidence of an ongoing disability every 90 days. If there is a lapse in the 90 days directly attributed to the coronavirus outbreak (i.e. claimant is quarantined or the physician is unavailable) the board will take this into account. If you suspect that your will not have up-to-date medical evidence, contact our office immediately and notify us as to the reason.

TELEMEDICINE

The Chair adopted emergency measures allowing telemedicine in some circumstances to promote social distancing due to the outbreak of COVID-19. This was an emergency rulemaking decision and is effective for 90 days starting March 16, 2020. If you are under quarantine, unable to schedule a traditional office visit, or if your doctor has advised against you coming into the office, you should contact your doctor immediately to see whether they are capable of providing Telemedicine services. We will try to keep our clients updated with this new program as more information becomes available.

FAILURE TO ATTEND AN IME

If you are scheduled for an IME and you cannot attend because of the coronavirus outbreak, please let our office know. Benefits will not be suspended if a claimant has a reasonable excuse for failing to attend the IME.

Contact

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As always, if we can be of assistance during this difficult time, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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