Californians for Fair Workers' Compensation Coalition

FIX CA WORKERS' COMP NOW

United for Change

Alarmed by system abuse, rising costs and inefficiencies in the workers' compensation system, a broad coalition of local governments, small businesses, nonprofits and employers across California has come together to advance commonsense reforms to stop abuse, close legal loopholes and ensure the workers' compensation system continues to deliver benefits to injured workers.

Growth in Workers' Compensation Claims

Workers' compensation claims costs have grown significantly over the past decade.

In looking at the causes of these upward trends, a pattern started to emerge: **a small share of cases—often involving attorneys—are driving a disproportionate share of system costs.**

32%
Medical cost increase

27%
Disability payment increase

40%
Filed post-employment

The Problem: Cumulative Trauma Claims are the Leading Driver of Increased Costs

In California, cumulative trauma (CT) claims are soaring, reaching nearly 24% of all indemnity claims, the highest percentage on record and twice as high as 15 years ago.

CT claims in California also tend to have higher costs associated with managing, investigating and/or settling a claim, and are often reported later and stay open longer, according to published reports. While sharp increases in CT claims have occurred recently throughout California, there are significant regional variations, with the LA Basin and San Diego having a larger share of CT claims – 20% and 16% respectively.

Cumulative trauma (CT) refers to injuries that develop gradually from repetitive stress, either mental or physical, over a period of time. It can also refer to related mental injuries, like PTSD for first responders.

Employers may be liable for CT claims even if as little as 1% of the cause was work-related.

Public self-insured employers reported more than $594 million in workers' compensation losses in a single year, with total liabilities approaching $1.8 billion, placing growing pressure on taxpayer-funded budgets.

Uniting for a Solution: A Movement for Reform

Californians for Fair Workers' Compensation is a broad coalition of local governments and public agencies, small businesses, nonprofits and employers across California working to advance commonsense reforms to stop abuse, close legal loopholes and ensure the workers' compensation system continues to deliver benefits to injured workers.

Proposed solutions include:

- Strengthening standards to ensure cumulative trauma claims have a clear and meaningful connection to employment.
- Establishing reasonable guardrails around when cumulative trauma claims can be filed.
- Ensuring appropriate employment thresholds before cumulative trauma claims may be brought.
- Improving documentation and verification requirements to support claims.

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To get in contact with the coalition, scan the QR code.