

Rehabilitation Services are Included as Part of Medical Treatment

Services may include medical, vocational, re-employment and/or treatment by spiritual means to restore a work-injured employee as near as possible to their pre-injury status. Medical restorative services may include but are not limited to medical, surgical, hospital nursing services, attendant care, chiropractic care, physical therapy, occupational therapy, medicines and psychological services, prosthesis and orthosis.

The Robert F. Arrigan Rehabilitation Center

The Arrigan Center is a state agency that provides comprehensive physical therapy, aquatic therapy, case management, work hardening and ergonomic site visits prior to the injured worker returning to his/her job.

In addition, the Arrigan Center offers extensive psychological and vocational services for specific clients in need of such services.

Workers' Compensation Medical Advisory Board

The Workers' Compensation Court appoints an eleven member Medical Advisory Board to address medical disputes and charges of improper or unethical conduct by medical care providers. The Board establishes medical protocols, standards of treatment for work-related injuries and illnesses, medical costs and lengths of employee disability. The Medical Advisory Board can be contacted at (401) 458-3560.

Contact Information

For more information about this or other workers' compensation topics, please contact the Education Unit at:
(401) 462-8100-press 1
Monday through Friday
8:30 AM to 4 PM
Email: dlt.wcedcunit@dlt.ri.gov

Dr. John E. Donley Rehabilitation Center
Phone: (401) 243-1200
Website: www.dlt.ri.gov/Donley

Medical Advisory Board
Phone: (401) 458-3460
Website: www.courts.ri.gov/Courts/workerscompensationcourt/MedicalAdvisoryBoard



Equal Opportunity Employer/Program – Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.
TTY via RI Relay 711 Rev. 10/18



Medical Services and Treatment



*A guide for individuals seeking
services and treatment for a
work-related injury or illness*

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Workers' Compensation - Education Unit
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The Rhode Island Workers' Compensation system is a form of no-fault insurance designed to provide assistance to injured employees for medical expenses and lost wages. It applies to businesses with one or more employees unless otherwise exempt by law.

Rhode Island General Law Section 28-33-8 of the Workers' Compensation Act deals with medical treatment and examinations following a work-related injury or illness. Here are the most commonly asked questions about this section of the law.

What are my responsibilities if I have a work-related injury or illness?

You must report the injury or illness to your employer immediately or as soon as you are aware that your injury or illness may be work-related. You should also get immediate medical care.

Can I go to my own doctor?

You may choose your first medical care provider. Following a reported injury, your employer may offer (and you may accept) treatment at an emergency room or by a doctor suggested by your employer. This may allow you to be treated quickly without waiting to be examined elsewhere. You will still have the right to see a doctor of your choice, initially.



What happens if I go to an emergency room following an injury?

If you first go to an emergency room or see a company doctor (a doctor under contract with your employer or

his/her insurance company), this visit will not count as your first choice. You are then still free to choose another doctor. However, should you return to that facility or doctor for further treatment, that may become your choice.

What if I wanted to change doctors?

Once you choose your first doctor for treatment, if you decide later to switch to another doctor, you may have to get approval first. If your employer or his/her insurer has an approved Preferred Provider Network (PPN) list on file with the Medical Advisory Board, you must choose your next medical care provider from this list. Your employer is required to either give you the PPN list or tell you where the list is available for you to see.

If your choice of doctor is not listed in the network, you must get approval from either the insurer involved or your employer if he/she is self-insured. You must get this approval before seeking treatment from that doctor. If you do not, you may have to pay the bill. (However, if you need the services of a specialty not listed in the PPN, you are then free to choose that medical care provider.)

Can my doctor refer me to another doctor?

Your initial doctor may refer you to any qualified specialist for consultation, assessment, or specific treatment, without prior approval. If an injured employee is treating with an out-of-state medical service provider, the RI Workers' Compensation Court considers that medical service provider to be bound by the provisions of the RI Workers' Compensation Act.

Who is considered a physician?

Under the law, a "physician" means a medical doctor, surgeon, dentist, chiropractor, licensed psychologist, osteopath, podiatrist, and optometrist.

The term "doctor" also means any of these professionals.



What if I need surgery?

Major surgery will not be paid for unless your physician gets permission from your employer or the insurer. If denied, permission must be given by the Workers' Compensation Court.

Are eye glasses or dentures covered?

All medical, optical, dental and surgical appliances required to cure or relieve the employee from the effects of the injury (eye glasses, dentures, braces and supports, artificial limbs, crutches and similar appliances) are covered. Hearing aids or other amplification devices are **not** covered.

Will I have to undergo examinations by the insurance company's doctor?

If requested by the insurance company, or by your employer, if self-insured, you may be scheduled for an examination by a doctor provided and paid for by the insurance company or your employer. You will be sent a full, exact signed copy of the report. The insurer may request that you have these exams at reasonable times during your disability. If the insurer or your employer requests the exam, then they shall pay or reimburse you for reasonable travel costs.

This brochure is not intended to be a full and complete description of law and is not a substitute for legal advice.