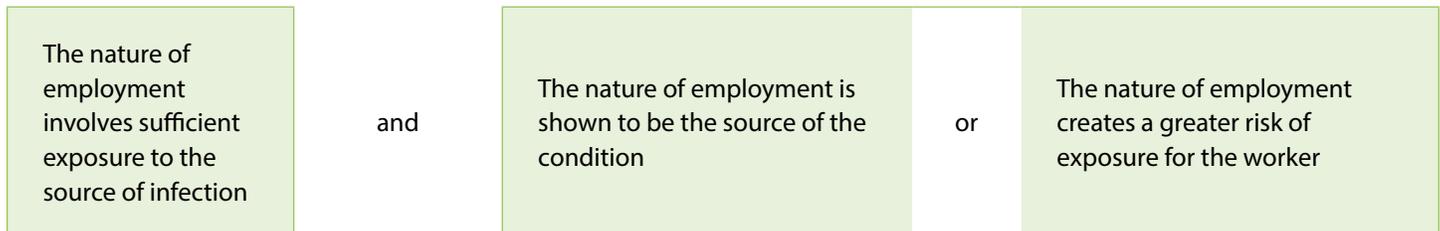


Infectious diseases

An infectious disease may be considered work related when a worker contracts an infectious disease as a direct result of their employment.

Your worker may be entitled to compensation if the following conditions are met:



The following examples illustrate how occupational disease adjudicators review cases for workers' compensation coverage.

Acceptable claims

Acute care hospital worker

The worker works **directly with patients** coming in for treatment of H1N1, or SARS/COVID-19. Thus, **they are at a greater risk than the general public of contracting the disease.**

Continuing care worker

The worker works in a continuing care facility which requires them to care for residents. There is an outbreak of an infectious disease, which has been declared an outbreak by the health authority. Their work puts them at a greater risk than the general public.

Not acceptable claims

A cafeteria worker at a hospital

A worker does not work directly with infected patients even if they sometimes come into contact with them. This is considered casual contact.

Grocery store clerk

A worker is in contact with many people but **not specifically with infected shoppers.** This is considered casual contact.

Office contact

A worker has confirmed they have tested positive for an infectious disease. They share a common washroom at work with others. Now a co-worker has a confirmed positive test. **This is considered casual contact.**

Possibly acceptable claim

Captive worker in a camp setting

A worker's employment requires them to reside within a camp setting and an outbreak of Norwalk virus, H1N1 or SARS/COVID-19 is confirmed within the camp. **Your worker's captive employment may put them at a greater risk than the general public and is the source of the condition.**

Reference: Policy 03-01: Part II – Occupational Disease

In every case, WCB-Alberta will adjudicate work relatedness and benefit entitlement based on the specific and unique circumstances of each claim.

Questions & answers

What happens when an infectious disease claim is submitted?

Like any other claim, WCB will determine if the exposure to the disease arose out of employment and was caused by an employment hazard (in this case, workplace exposure to an infectious disease).

We have a team of people who specialize in the adjudication of infectious disease claims and can appropriately apply policy and legislation.

If the illness meets the conditions for coverage, WCB will cover medical aid costs and any time lost because of the condition.

How does WCB determine time loss for an endemic infectious disease?

WCB will consider public health guidelines, employer guidelines and symptomatology to confirm periods of disability.

If a worker, as a result of contracting a compensable infectious disease, is forced by the terms of the Public Health Act to lose time from work, the time loss is compensable, whether or not the worker is disabled (Policy 03-01: Part II – Occupational Disease, Q4).

