

**Alberta WCB
Policies &
Information**

Chapter:

WORK-RELATEDNESS

Subject:

**ARISES OUT OF AND OCCURS IN THE COURSE
OF EMPLOYMENT**

Authorization:

BoD Resolution 96/10/53

Date:

November 26, 1996

APPLICATION 4: ATHLETIC ACTIVITY

- 1. *Under what circumstances is athletic activity covered?***

Injuries incurred while workers are participating in sporting or athletic activities are not considered compensable except in the following circumstances:

 - the activity is a compulsory, non-competitive sport or activity under the employer’s direction and control, or
 - the activity is a competitive sport expressly pre-authorized by the employer and consistent with the worker’s regular job duties, or
 - the injury occurs while the worker is making reasonable and permitted use of employer-provided facilities in order to reach or maintain a mandated level of physical fitness, or
 - the worker lives in employer-provided premises such as a bunkhouse or campsite, and is injured due to a hazard of the premises while making reasonable and permitted use of employer-provided recreational facilities for a non-competitive sport.

- 2. *What is considered a competitive sport?***

Competitive sports include all sports played against another person or team (such as tennis, basketball, etc.) at any time, and individual sports (such as weightlifting, aerobics, etc.) when the worker is participating in a competitive event.

- 3. *What is included in employer-provided facilities?***

Employer-provided facilities include exercise facilities on the employer premises, and any equipment provided by the employer. Independent health and fitness club facilities for which the employer pays the membership fees are not considered to be extensions of the employer’s premises. Facilities of this nature are only considered part of the employer’s premises when the employer operates the club.

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4. *To what extent does WCB extend coverage for athletic activity?*

The extent of coverage depends on the type of activity, as indicated below.

Compulsory, non-competitive sport or activity under the employer's direction and control

If the non-competitive activity is compulsory, coverage is extended to injuries resulting from the activity itself and any hazards of the premises. For example, if workers are directed to do stretching exercises before starting their shifts, a worker who over-extends and strains a muscle is covered.

Competitive sports pre-authorized by the employer and consistent with the worker's regular job duties

Coverage in these circumstances is the same as coverage for compulsory, non-competitive activities. The competitive sport, however, must be consistent with the worker's regular job duties (for example, a police officer assigned as a school liaison officer who participates in sports to build a relationship with the students).

Worker is making reasonable and permitted use of employer-provided premises in order to maintain a mandated level of physical fitness

When workers are required to maintain a level of personal physical fitness as a specific condition of their employment (for example, the worker is required to pass an annual physical fitness test), WCB will extend coverage while the worker is participating in the fitness program, provided:

- the non-competitive activity is directed by the employer or part of an approved fitness program, or
- the worker is participating in an approved non-competitive physical fitness activity on the employer's premises (or, if running, walking, etc., starting and ending at the employer's premises).

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The worker lives in employer-provided premises and is making reasonable and permitted use of the provided recreational facilities

When workers live in facilities operated by or for the employer which, by their nature, give workers less control over the environment and their activities than is the case in a normal home environment (for example, bunkhouses and campsites), WCB extends coverage to workers while they are making reasonable and permitted use of the employer-provided facilities.

In these circumstances, however, the coverage extends only to injuries resulting from hazards of the premises (for example, loose flooring, equipment failures) while the worker is participating in a non-competitive sport or activity. Workers are not covered while participating in competitive sports or for injuries resulting from the athletic activity itself (for example, a strained muscle).

5. When is this policy application effective?

This policy application (Application 4 – Athletic Activity) is effective February 15, 1997, except when noted otherwise in a specific policy section(s).

Previous versions

- [Policy 0201 Part II - January 2004](#)
- [Policy 0201 Part II - January 2002](#)
- [Policy 0201 Part II \(consolidated manual 1st Issue\) - February 1997](#)