

**Alberta WCB  
Policies &  
Information**

Chapter:

**INJURIES**

Subject:

**AGGRAVATION OF A PRE-EXISTING CONDITION**

Authorization:

**BoD Resolution 96/10/53**

Date:

**November 26, 1996**

**REFERENCE:**

[\*Workers' Compensation Act, RSA 2000, Sections 1\(1\)\(a\), 36, 43, 56, 63, and 89\(1\)\*](#)  
[\*Workers' Compensation Regulation, Section 15\(c\)\*](#)

**POLICY:**

When an accident causes a *pre-existing condition* or disease to deteriorate or become symptomatic to the point where a worker is no longer able to perform all aspects of the job, WCB shall allow *entitlement* on the basis of an *aggravation* factor.

If surgery is required solely for the pre-existing condition a *rehabilitation surgery allowance* may be considered.

This policy is effective February 15, 1997, except when noted otherwise in a specific policy section(s).

**INTERPRETATION**

**1.0 Pre-existing Condition**

A pre-existing condition is any pathological condition which, based on a confirmed diagnosis or medical judgment, pre-dated a work-related injury.

**2.0 Aggravation**

An aggravation is the clinical effect of a compensable accident on a pre-existing condition, resulting in temporary or permanent clinical impairment and/or loss of earning capacity.

**3.0 Entitlement**

*Temporary  
Disability*

WCB will not impose any pre-determined limitation on the payment of benefits, and payment will continue while the worker is disabled because of the aggravation factor.

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**3.0 Entitlement (continued)***Permanent Disability*

When a permanent disability results from a claim allowed under this policy, WCB will establish the portion of the permanent disability directly attributable to the aggravation.

**4.0 Rehabilitation Surgery Allowance**

If, following a claim for aggravation, surgical treatment is indicated solely as a consequence of the non-compensable condition, WCB may consider paying a rehabilitation surgery allowance. This allowance will be considered only when it is probable the surgery will assist the worker in attaining employability and reduce subsequent aggravations during employment.

**Please see Part II for additional information on the following subjects:**

**Application**

- 1 – [Aggravation of a Pre-existing Condition](#)
- 2 – [Rehabilitation Surgery Program](#)

**Previous versions**

- [Policy 0302 Part I - April 2018](#)
- [Policy 0302 Part I - August 2015](#)
- [Policy 0302 Part I - June 2011](#)
- [Policy 0302 Part I - January 2004](#)
- [Policy 0302 Part I - January 2003](#)
- [Policy 0302 Part I - January 2002](#)
- [Policy 0302 Part I \(consolidated manual 1st Issue\) - February 1997](#)