

**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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November 26, 1996**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](#)