

**Alberta WCB
Policies &
Information**

Chapter:

INJURIES

Subject:

AGGRAVATION OF A PRE-EXISTING CONDITION

Authorization:

BoD Resolution 96/10/53

Date:

November 26, 1996

APPLICATION 2: REHABILITATION SURGERY PROGRAM

1. *Why does WCB pay an allowance when the surgery is for non-compensable conditions?*

Rehabilitation surgery assistance is a cost-effective means of reducing future claims costs by making it possible for the worker to undergo surgery for a non-compensable pre-existing condition that would otherwise continue to be aggravated by employment.

WCB provides the worker with financial support for the period of treatment and convalescence.

2. *What criteria does WCB consider in determining whether to grant an allowance?*

WCB will consider granting a rehabilitation surgery allowance if all the following conditions are met:

- the worker has an established claim for aggravation of a non-compensable pre-existing condition,
- surgery is required solely for the pre-existing condition, at the same site as the aggravation,
- it is probable the surgery will return the worker to employability and minimize future aggravational claims, and
- the worker is not entitled to comparable benefits from some other source.

3. *What limitations are there?*

Rehabilitation surgery allowances are subject to the following limitations:

- WCB does not normally provide rehabilitation surgery assistance to workers living outside Alberta
- when WCB makes an offer of rehabilitation surgery assistance, the worker must accept the offer, in writing, within 12 months from the date the offer was made
- WCB does not accept responsibility for any disability or condition which results from the treatment or surgery

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4. *What benefits does WCB pay?*

The rehabilitation surgery allowance is equal in value to the worker's calculated rate of compensation immediately prior to treatment. This allowance is paid for the period of temporary disability, usually beginning on the day of hospital admission. WCB may, on a discretionary basis, pay the allowance for a reasonable period prior to hospital admission.

Following rehabilitation surgery, WCB may provide vocational and rehabilitation services.

Medical aid is limited to expenses not paid by the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan or other plan under which the worker may be eligible.

5. *When is this policy application effective?*

This policy application (Application 2 – Rehabilitation Surgery Program) is effective February 15, 1997, except when noted otherwise in a specific policy section(s).

Previous versions

- [Policy 0302 Part II - August 2015](#)
- [Policy 0302 Part II - January 2004](#)
- [Policy 0302 Part II \(consolidated manual 1st Issue\) - February 1997](#)