



District of Columbia Workers' Compensation Claims for Housestaff Physicians

Housestaff physicians who test positive for COVID-19 after exposure to the illness in the workplace are eligible for compensation under the D.C. Workers' Compensation (DCWC) Program. DCWC provides compensation for medical care and lost wages. Payment for lost wages is available to you if you miss more than three days of work due to your illness and will replace roughly 66% of your average weekly wage (Claimants should also seek reinstatement of any vacation/sick time they are required to use while absent from work for a workplace illness). Payment for medical care covers all treatment related to your illness, such as the cost of doctors' visits, hospital bills, and prescriptions. You are entitled to choose your treating physician.

A housestaff physician may be asymptomatic or feel that their symptoms are minor today; however, we do not yet know the long-term effects of COVID-19 infection. In light of that we are recommending that all housestaff physicians, whether or not they test positive, document the following:

- All dates of work and locations (unit such as ICU, etc...) where there was exposure to COVID-19 positive patients or patients that have not been tested but show symptoms of the virus.
- If you were forced to work without adequate PPE, the appropriate details should be documented, such as the types of PPE that were not provided or which were inadequate.

In order to ensure eligibility for DCWC benefits, housestaff physicians that test positive for COVID-19 should take the following steps:

- Notify your direct supervisor and human resources office both orally and in writing. Any forms required by the hospital should be filled out and provided to any supervisor or the HR office.
- Report your illness to the D.C. Office of Workers' Compensation by filing a DCWC Form 7. This form must be filed within **thirty (30) days** of becoming ill. If you test positive for COVID-19 prior to showing symptoms, you should treat the 30 days as beginning to run from the date that you receive positive test results.
- After reporting your illness, file a claim application using DCWC Form 7A within **one year** of becoming ill.

DCWC Forms 7 and 7A forms can be obtained from your employer or directly from the Office of Workers' Compensation. They may also be accessed and submitted online at <https://does.dc.gov/page/workers-compensation-does>. You should retain copies of all forms that you file in connection with your illness and ensure that they are kept in a safe place.

This COVID-19 Workers' Compensation advisory is intended for CIR Members only. This guidance is intended to be informational only and should not be construed as legal advice.