

MINNESOTA ASSOCIATION FOR INJURED PEACE OFFICERS

IMPORTANT INFORMATION RELATING TO YOUR FUTURE AND AVOIDING SERIOUS MISTAKES

This information is presented to you with the full understanding that it is a compilation of comments made by officers who have experienced serious injuries or medical problems and have a wealth of knowledge in making decisions in the areas of worker compensation, disability pension, and other issues in the recovery process.

We are not responsible for any decision that must be made by you. This information is only informative in nature and you should consult your attorney before making any decisions.

Initial Steps

1. You need to talk to an “experienced” worker’s compensation attorney immediately before you make statements or sign any paperwork. The attorney’s fees for worker’s compensation are set by the state and are paid out of your final worker’s compensation settlement. Worker’s Compensation is very complicated and you need an “experienced” worker’s compensation attorney to explain your options and what to expect in your individual case. Some officers have hired inexperienced attorneys with disastrous results.

2. Your supervisor files a “first report of injury” form which starts the worker’s compensation process. However, you should talk with your attorney about whether worker’s compensation is the best route for you or if a lawsuit would be more appropriate (if there is a third party involved or other complicated factors).
3. You are entitled to a QRC (Qualified Rehabilitation Consultant). You should consult with your attorney regarding who can best represent you. Some officers have been VERY disappointed when they allowed their employers to appoint the QRC.
4. You should obtain the pamphlet “An employees guide to the Minnesota Worker’s Compensation system” by contacting the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry, Worker’s Compensation Division, 443 Lafayette Road North, St. Paul, MN 55155 (651) 284-5005. Website: www.doli.state.mn.us/workcomp.html. Read it carefully. All questions can be directed to your attorney.
5. Keep you employer informed of your medical conditions and any work restrictions. If you are unable to work while you are recovering from your injury, worker’s compensation will cover a portion of your salary and you can use your sick and vacation time to make up the rest. If you are able to work part-time workers compensation will pay the difference between your new earnings and your old salary (both of these are subject to dollar and time limitations). Also, examine the union/employer agreement or contract injured on duty hours. Always consult your attorney regarding these matters.

WORKER'S COMPENSATION AND OTHER ISSUES

As was stated before the Worker's Compensation process is complicated and you need the help of an experienced worker's compensation attorney. You also need the knowledge and wisdom of officers who have experienced your situation.

Fortunately for you there is a group of current and disability retired officers who can meet with you and give you free advice on the important decisions that you need to make correctly.

It is important for you or your family to meet them now. They will also provide you with written guidelines that you will find very valuable regarding not only worker's compensation but issues such as disability retirement re-training benefits, health insurance and other matters.

Please call us as soon as possible at (651) 717-4154.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jim Crawford, President

Minnesota Association for Injured Peace Officers