
HOUSE BILL 2653

State of Washington

55th Legislature

1998 Regular Session

By Representatives Romero, Backlund, Conway, Clements, Wood, Butler, Dickerson, Smith, Gardner and Thompson

Read first time 01/16/98. Referred to Committee on Commerce & Labor.

1 AN ACT Relating to an injured worker's choice of physician; and
2 adding a new section to chapter 51.36 RCW.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** A new section is added to chapter 51.36 RCW
5 to read as follows:

6 (1) The department shall adopt rules governing the transfer of an
7 injured worker from the care of one attending physician to another.
8 The rules must recognize the injured worker's right to an attending
9 physician of his or her choice and may not deny a reasonable request
10 for a transfer. A rule that permits the department or self-insurer to
11 deny a transfer request and require the worker to select another
12 attending physician must include at least the following:

13 (a) If a transfer request raises a concern about the effect of
14 travel on the worker's medical condition, the request may be denied
15 only if there is an alternative qualified provider requiring less
16 travel that meets the preference desired by the worker, including a
17 religious or gender preference; or

18 (b) If a transfer request raises a concern about the cost of travel
19 and a more conveniently located alternative qualified provider is

1 available that meets the preference desired by the worker, including a
2 religious or gender preference, then the claimant must be allowed to
3 choose between transferring to the more conveniently located provider
4 or paying for the cost of travel.

5 (2) A department order denying a worker's request to transfer from
6 one attending physician to another must specify the reason for the
7 denial. If denial involves subsection (1)(a) or (b) of this section,
8 the order must state the provider or providers that the department has
9 determined to be appropriate alternatives. A worker requesting
10 reconsideration of a denial order may also request a review by the
11 medical director to obtain a recommendation to the supervisor of
12 industrial insurance regarding the care option, under all the
13 circumstances, most likely to result in the best quality care for the
14 worker.

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