

**WAC 192-570-010 Conference and conciliation.** (1)(a) The department will engage employers in conference and conciliation when the employer fails to make all required:

- (i) Premium payments;
- (ii) Payments on penalties assessed by the department for the failure to submit required reports; or
- (iii) Payments on penalties assessed by the department for violations related to voluntary plans.

(b) "Conference and conciliation" for the purpose of this chapter means to encourage an amicable resolution of disputes between the employer and the department prior to the issuance of a warning letter.

(2) The department will promptly attempt to contact the employer to engage in conference and conciliation when appropriate under subsection (1) of this section. If the department does not receive a response from the employer by the deadline given, the department will attempt the contact again, for a total of two attempts. A warning letter will be sent to the employer if no contact can be made.

(3)(a) Through conference and conciliation employers will be given an opportunity to provide information and to explain their reasons for failing to meet the department's requirements in subsection (1) of this section. The department will not issue a warning letter if:

- (i) The employer provides good cause;
- (ii) The department determines the good cause provided prevented compliance; and
- (iii) The parties agree to an approved payment schedule.

(b) "Good cause" for the purpose of this section means:

- (i) Death or serious illness of one or more persons directly responsible for discharging the employer's duties under Title 50A RCW;
- (ii) Destruction of the employer's place of business or business records not caused by, or at the direction of, the employer; or
- (iii) Fraud or theft against the employer.

(4) The burden of proof is on the employer to provide all pertinent facts and evidence or documentation for the department to determine good cause.

(5) Conference and conciliation is only available to employers in the circumstances described in subsection (1)(a) of this section.

(6) If an employer is eligible for conference and conciliation, the department will issue a warning letter when:

- (a) The employer does not comply with the approved repayment schedule; or
- (b) A resolution is not reached through conference and conciliation.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 50A.04.215. WSR 19-23-090, § 192-570-010, filed 11/19/19, effective 12/20/19; WSR 18-22-080, § 192-570-010, filed 11/2/18, effective 12/3/18.]