2024 COUNCIL REPORT - Workplace Safety

Introduction

The Winnipeg Public Service generates an Annual Report on workplace safety for Council[1]. Performance measures used in the report are Workers Compensation Board (WCB) Statistics and Lost Time Injury (LTI) Rates.

WCB statistics used in this report are provided to the City by the WCB with the exception of costs provided for this report by the City's Finance Department. All Lost Time Injury (LTI) metrics are generated internally using the organization's PeopleSoft System. All LTI metrics include those injuries that result in absence from work and have an accepted or pending WCB claim. These figures do not include time loss associated with long-term disability, or injury claims processed through Manitoba Public Insurance.

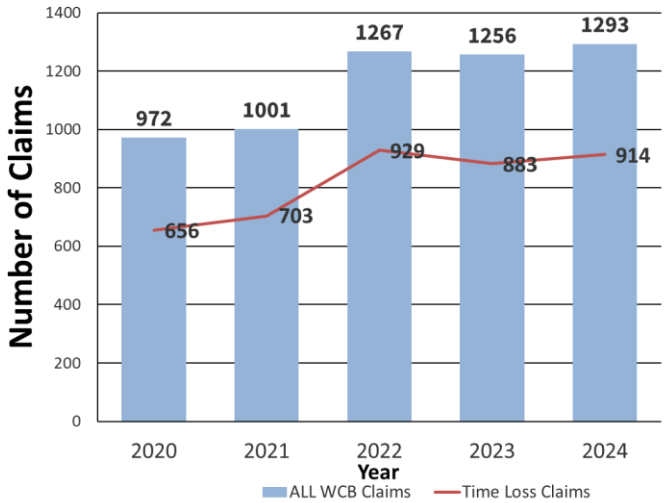
Performance Analysis

WCB CLAIMS

The total number of work-related injury and illness claims accepted by the WCB was 1293 in 2024, an increase of 3% from 2023 (1256).

The number of accepted WCB time loss claims in 2024 was 914, an increase of 4% from 2023 (883).

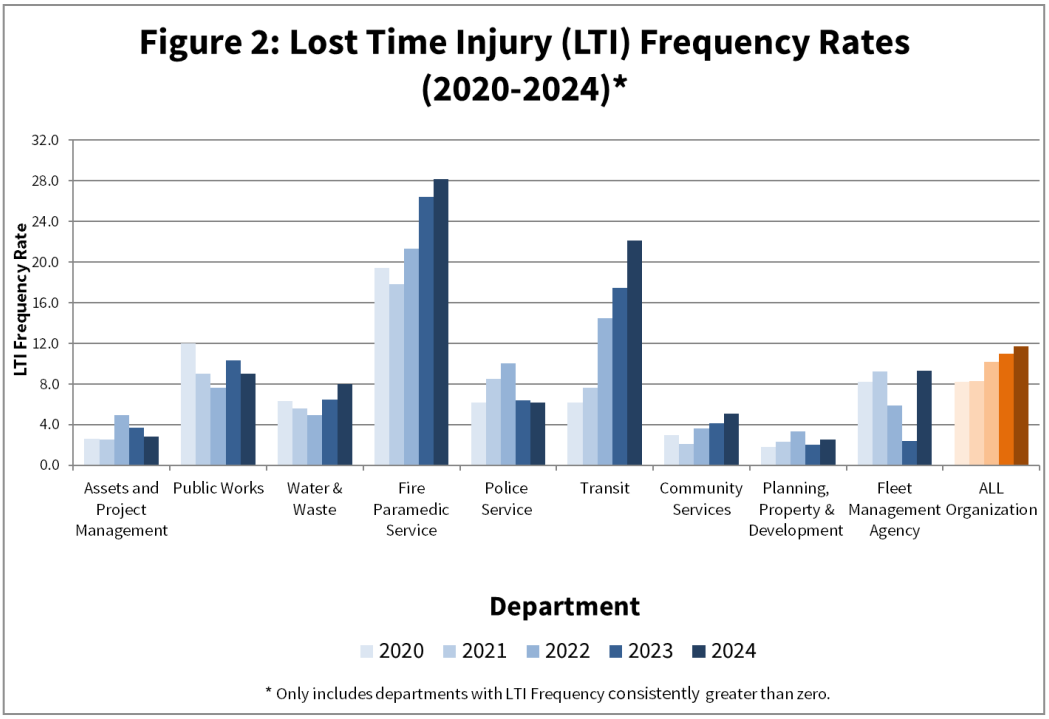
Figure 1: Organizational WCB Claims (2020-2024)



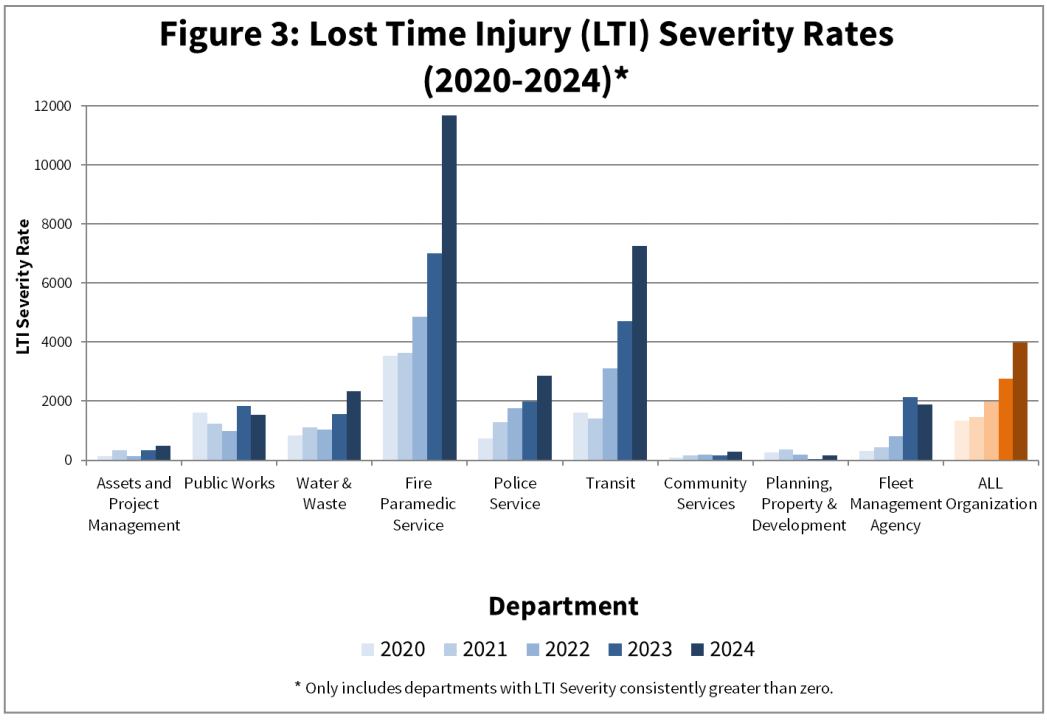
[1] In 2014, City Council received the *Workplace Safety Audit* dated November 2013 and adopted that an Annual Report be submitted to Council within 6 months of the previous year end (Council Minutes – September 24, 2014, Minute No. 752).

LOST TIME INJURY (LTI) RATES

LTI Frequency is the number of lost time injuries per 100 workers per year. The City's LTI Frequency was 11.7 in 2024; higher than year end 2023 (11.0).



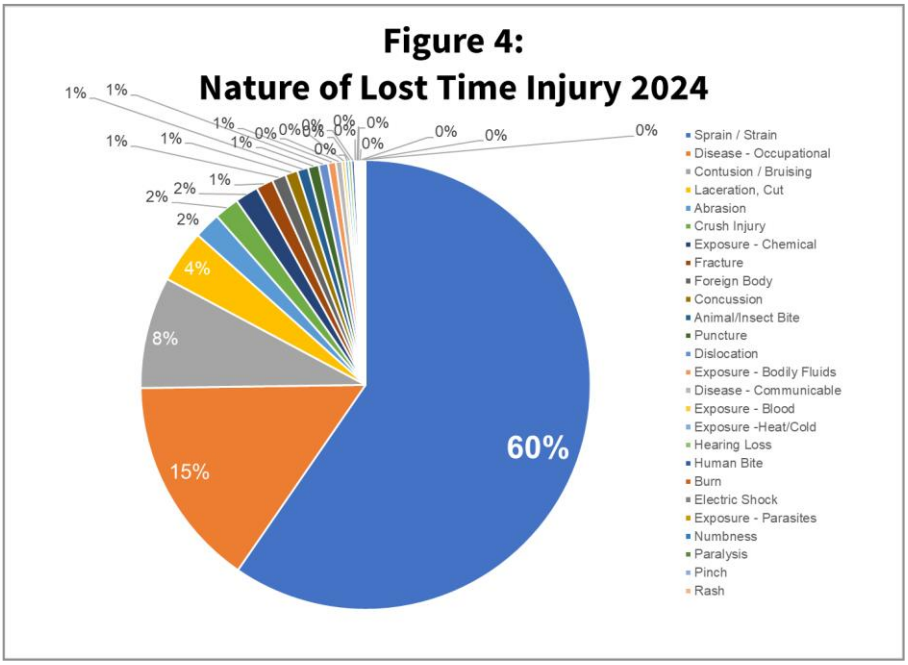
LTI Severity is measured as hours lost due to injury per 100 workers per year. It includes any hours lost in a given year regardless of the year of injury. Organizational LTI Severity was 3986 in 2024; higher than year end 2023 (2771).



NATURE OF LOST TIME INJURY

In addition to the LTI data, both at the organization level and the department level incidents are analyzed by the nature of injury. This information enables the City to focus efforts and monitor trends.

As Figure 4 illustrates the most predominant injury that led to time lost in 2024 was strains and sprains, accounting for 60% of all lost time injuries.

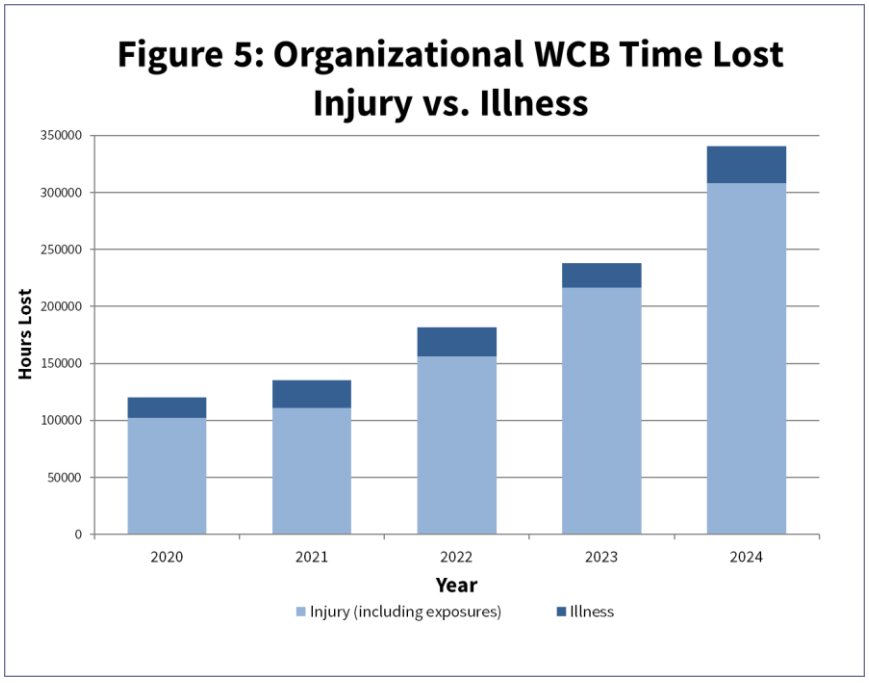


WCB TIME LOST – INJURY VS. ILLNESS

WCB time lost for incidents reported as workplace illness are compared to workplace injury (including exposures) in Figure 5.

WCB claims reported as workplace illness are not included in LTI rates because they did not result in physical injury and/or are chronic in nature.

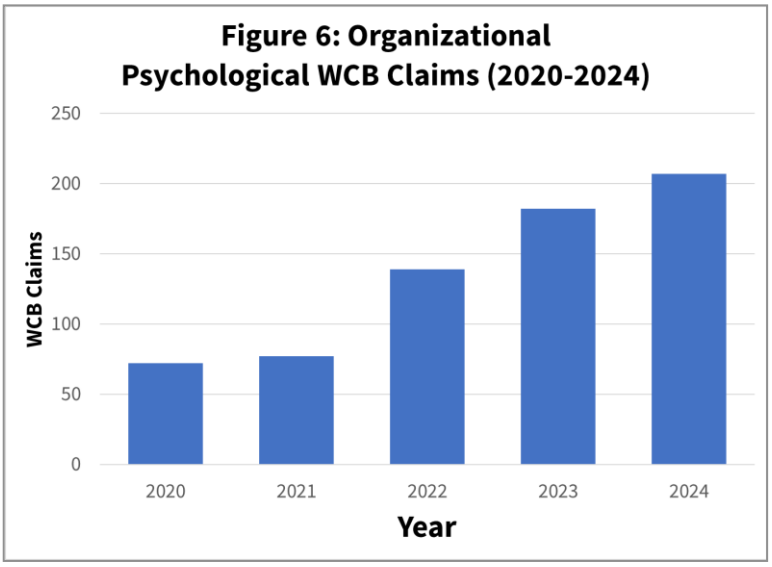
WCB time lost associated claims reported as workplace illness in 2024 was higher compared with previous year.



PSYCHOLOGICAL WCB CLAIMS

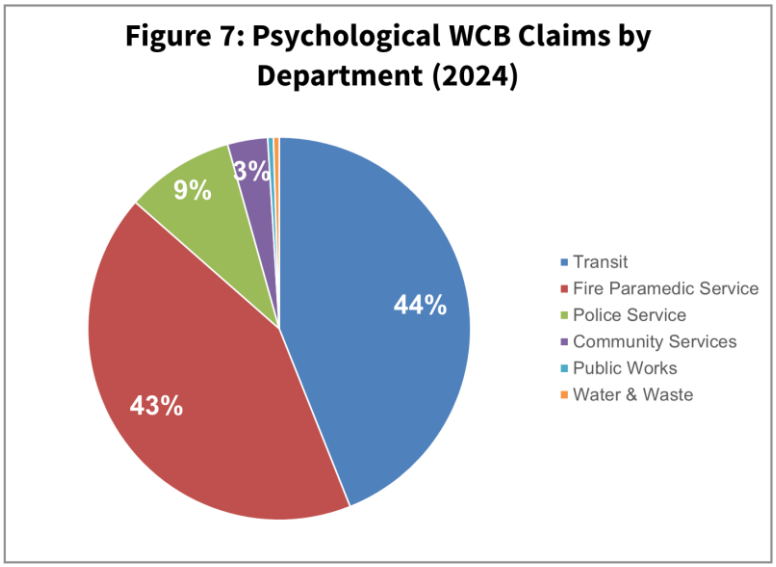
A psychological WCB claim is a claim for a psychological injury caused by a traumatic event occurring at or as a result of work. It can be caused by a chance event, a willful and intentional act by someone other than the worker or an event and/or condition related to the workers work or workplace.

The number of psychological related claims accepted by the WCB in 2024 was 207, an increase of 14% from 2023 (182) (see Figure 6).

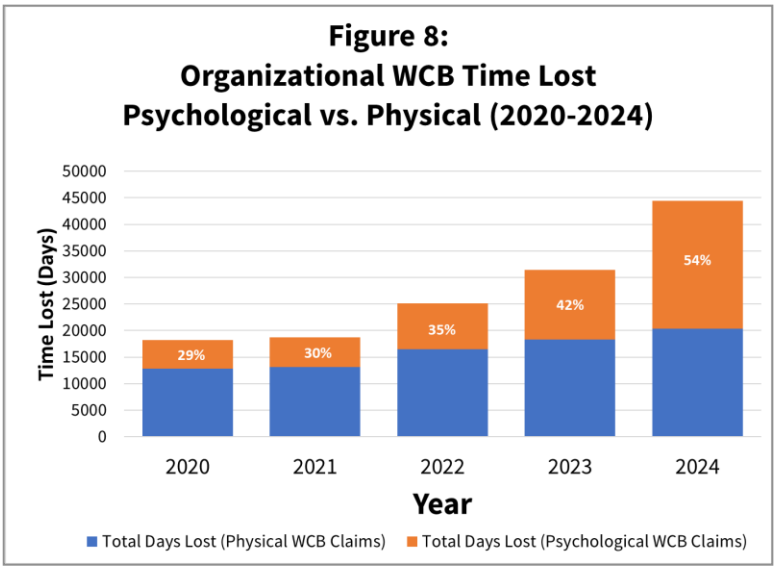


Psychological claims to the WCB can occur based on a number of factors, including exposure to violence, mental stress, burnout, and other critical incidents in the workplace.

In 2024 Winnipeg Transit and Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service experienced the highest number of psychological related WCB claims (see Figure 7).



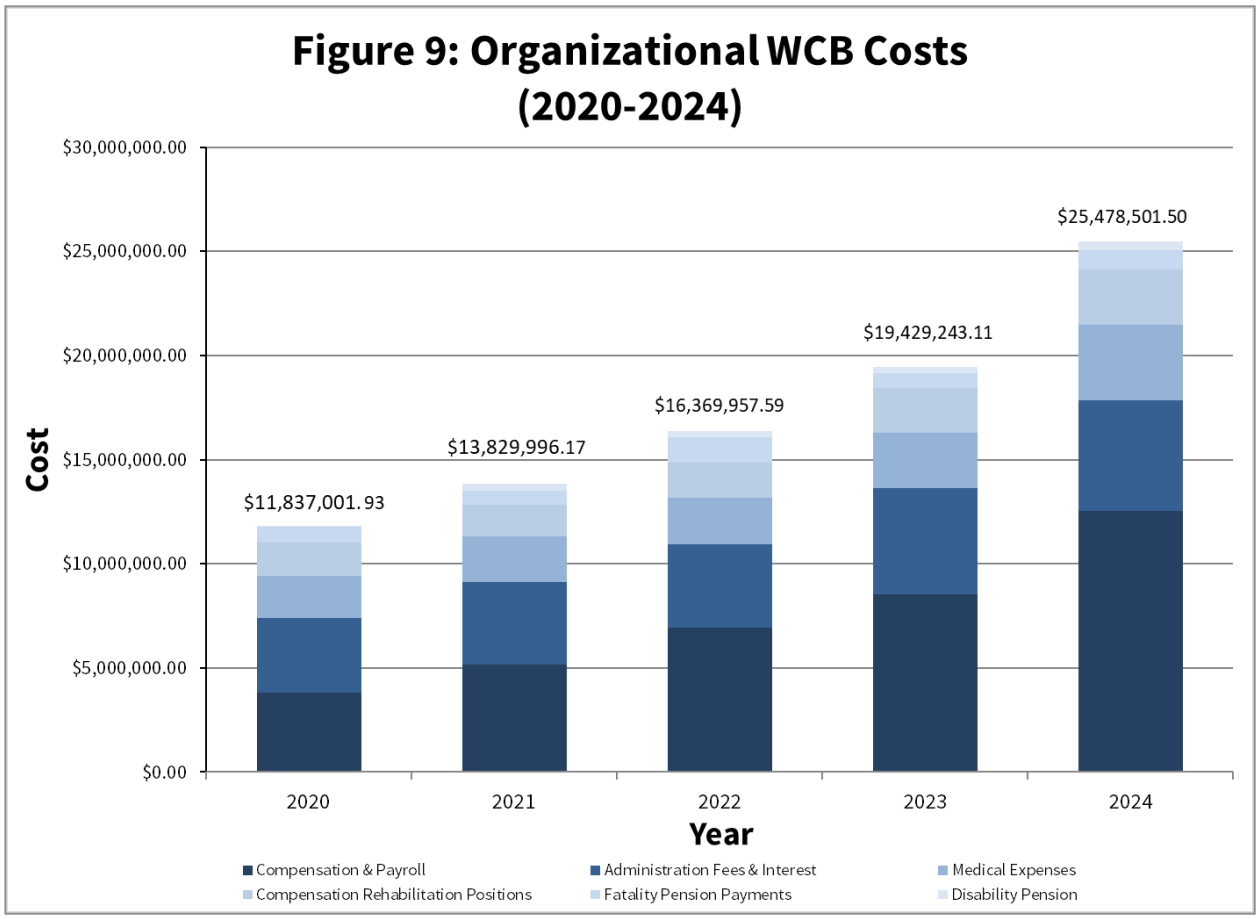
WCB time lost is broken down by psychological and physical related claims in Figure 8. Time lost associated with psychological WCB claims accounted for 54% of all WCB time lost in 2024.



WORKERS COMPENSATION COSTS

Workers Compensation Board (WCB) related costs; compensation for direct hours lost, rehabilitation and WCB claim administration fees are tracked by the Corporate Finance Department.

See Appendix A for definitions of WCB cost categories.



WCB related costs were $25.5 million in 2024; higher than in 2023 ($19.4 million). Over half (58%) of claim costs resulted from prior year claims. Significant portion of costs in 2024 ($2.7 million ~ 11%) attributed to Compensation Rehabilitation Positions which represent hours spent in 'light duties' once employee has returned to work following a claim.

Improving Workplace Safety

The City has implemented a number of initiatives over the last several years to improve safety of workers on the job.

- In 2023, the City achieved full SAFE Work Certification making it the largest organization in Manitoba to be SAFE Work Certified. Certification through the SAFE Work program helps

organizations reduce workplace injuries and illnesses as well as promote a culture of safety.

- In 2024 the City adopted *Administrative Standard HR-021 – Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace* to help protect and promote employee mental health as well as address factors that affect mental health in the workplace. The City has implemented mental health self-serve resources, online learning modules, virtual training courses and a peer support toolkit.

- In January 2025 the City launched *Learn Winnipeg*, a new digital training platform that gives employees access to over 140 different safety, health and wellness courses. It provides thousands of learning hours for leaders, employees and safety and health committee members.

Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service and Winnipeg Transit experienced the highest injury rates in 2024. They also experienced the highest number of psychological related WCB claims. Although work in these departments is different, the nature of work and work environment in both can involve increased risk of exposure to violence, traumatic events and stress not experienced in other workplaces. Psychosocial factors such as societal changes, drug crisis, increases in violent crime and reduced stigma around mental health issues can contribute to WCB claim experience.

The Public Service is collaborating with the Workers Compensation Board (WCB) of Manitoba to review and identify the City of Winnipeg's WCB claims, specifically for Winnipeg Transit and Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service, to determine how claims can be reduced through improving workplace safety or other improvements to ensure healthy employees and control costs. This work began in Winnipeg Transit in June 2024 and results of the review including recommendations for improvement are expected later this year. Winnipeg Fire Paramedic Service plans to begin this work this year with results anticipated by year end.

Conclusions

- The total number of work-related injury and illness claims accepted by the WCB was 1293 in 2024, an increase of 3% from 2023 (1256). The number of accepted WCB time loss claims in 2024 was 914, an increase of 4% from 2023 (883).

- Organizational Lost Time Injury (LTI) Frequency was 11.7 in 2024; higher than year end 2023 (11.0). Organizational LTI Severity was 3986 in 2024; higher than year end 2023 (2771).

- The majority of LTI in 2024 were strains/sprains (60%) most commonly caused by falls/slips/trips and overexertion.

- The number of psychological related claims accepted by the WCB in 2024 was 207, an increase of 14% from 2023 (182). Time lost associated with psychological WCB claims accounted for 54% of all WCB time lost in 2024. Psychological claims to the WCB can occur based on a number of factors, including exposure to violence, mental stress, burnout, and other critical incidents in the workplace.

- WCB related costs were $25.5 million in 2024; higher than in 2023 ($19.4 million). Over half (58%) of claim costs resulted from prior year claims. Significant portion of costs in 2024 ($2.7 million ~ 11%) attributed to Compensation Rehabilitation Positions which represent hours spent in 'light duties' once employee has returned to work following a claim.

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APPENDIX A: DEFINITIONS

INJURY STATISTICS:

Lost Time Injury (LTI) Frequency = (# of lost time injuries / total hours worked) x 200,000

Lost Time Injury (LTI) Severity = (hours lost due to LTI / total hours worked) x 200,000

The factor of 200,000 normalizes results to produce the average frequency or severity per 100 workers per year.

WORKERS COMPENSATION COST CATEGORIES:

Compensation and Payroll Costs – wage loss benefits paid to an injured employee while s/he is unable to work in their pre-injury job in whole or in part.

Administration Fees & Interest – portion of the WCB's operating costs/annual expense budget funded by the City of Winnipeg.

Medical Expenses – benefits for healthcare-related services and products used to aid an injured employee's recovery (e.g., healthcare treatment by attending doctors, chiropractors, physiotherapists, etc.).

Compensation Rehabilitation Positions – wages paid to employees who are being accommodated in rehabilitation positions, generally on a temporary and transitional basis, to support the employee's recovery and return to full, regular duties.

Fatality Pension Payments – Benefits for a surviving spouse or common-law partner and dependents of fatally injured employees.

Disability Pension – Compensation for a degree of permanent loss of function processed as a lump-sum benefit (claims after 1991) or a monthly payment (claims before 1992).