

MEDICAL PANEL FACT SHEET

About The Medical Panels Office

The Medical Panels Office is a neutral and impartial agency that takes a collaborative, fact-based and focused approach to resolving differences of medical opinion and helping injured workers have more involvement in this aspect of their workers' compensation claim. The Medical Panels Office is independent from the Workers Compensation Board.

The role of the Medical Panels Office is unique in Canada as most jurisdictions provide this service through their respective WCB Offices.

How to Contact Us:

Reception: 825-468-4251

Toll Free: 877-787-0622

Fax: 780-424-6352

Email: mpo@gov.ab.ca

WHAT IS A MEDICAL PANEL

A Medical Panel is a quasi-judicial body appointed by the Medical Panels Commissioner (MPC) to address differences in medical opinion or other medical questions related to an Injured Worker's claim. A Medical Panel occurs when requested by the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB), the Appeals Commission, or the Injured Worker (through the Appeals Commission), when there are areas of medical differences and/or complexity on an injury file that require resolution by an independent body.

What is the Medical Panel Process?

- The MPC will create an Eligibility List of physicians who are skilled in the medical issue or matter to be dealt with by the Medical Panel.
- Prior to the Medical Panel, the Injured Worker, the Employer, and the WCB will each have the opportunity to choose one physician from the Eligibility List. If one of the parties does not make a choice, the MPC will make the selection; and will then choose a Chair from the 3 physicians.
- The Injured Worker is permitted to bring up to 3 representatives to the Medical Panel, for example: their family physician, another allied health professional, a family member, or an Appeals Advisor.
- If the Injured Worker and/or their immediate family member who is travelling with them is required to travel, their travel costs will be paid for by the WCB prior to travel.
- Panel Members are provided with all relevant medical records, and a list of questions to be answered. The Injured Worker is also provided with this information.
- A Medical Panel usually takes 2 to 3 hours.
- Panel Members will interview, and likely examine, the Injured Worker in the Medical Panels Office during the Medical Panel.
- Following the Medical Panel, the Chair writes a report which seeks to answer the questions that have been provided or to resolve the difference of medical opinion that has arisen.
- The MPC reviews the report to ensure the questions have been answered and then forwards the report to the Injured Worker, the Employer, and the WCB or the Appeals Commission.

What may be discussed during the Medical Panel?

- Questions or issues forwarded to the Medical Panel.
- Medical history of the Injured Worker.
- Medical test results.
- The accident resulting in injury.
- Fitness to Work or modified work.
- Any new medical information.
- Medical treatments.
- Injured Worker questions.

The findings of the Medical Panel are final and conclusive, and not open to question or review in any court.