

An Important Reminder “Covid-19” Covered

Kudos to Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara for alerting insurance companies that all workers who are impacted by COVID-19 while on the job are entitled to workers’ compensation benefits regardless of their immigration status.

Commissioner Lara sent a press release and accompanying notice last Monday, April 6, reminding carriers that workers on the frontlines such as those in health care, food production, emergency services and others are entitled to prompt and effective care under our state’s workers’ compensation laws and that California law requires payment of said benefits regardless of immigration status.

“Workers’ compensation injuries caused by COVID-19 that arise out of and occur in the course of employment are compensable to the same extent as any other compensable injury or disease,” the notice states. “This Notice is a reminder that such claims may not be denied on the basis of the injured worker’s citizenship or immigration status.”

“This unprecedented pandemic has sparked questions and concerns among essential workers in the immigrant community who are showing up for work every day, bringing us vital goods and services,” Commissioner Lara said in the press release. “Hard-working Californians who are exposed to COVID-19 are entitled to workers’ compensation benefits if they fall ill, regardless of their immigration status.”

CAAA fully supports this notion, and as we reported two weeks ago, worked with a coalition of labor groups to draft language for an executive order to enact a conclusive presumption for essential workers who contract COVID-19 as a result of their working conditions, cutting through red tape and ensuring they get fast and effective health care through no expense of their own.

The coalition has presented the language to Governor Newsom hoping he will enact the order as soon as possible to guarantee workers are protected. We applaud Commissioner Lara for sending this important reminder that all California workers are entitled to workers’ compensation should they contract COVID-19 on the job and hope to get further protections in place as soon as possible for our heroes on the frontlines.

To view the press release, <http://www.insurance.ca.gov/0400-news/0100-press-releases/2020/release036-2020.cfm>

To view the notice, <http://www.insurance.ca.gov/0400-news/0100-press-releases/2020/upload/nr036NoticeWorkCompCOVID04062020.pdf>