



Workers Compensation Lawyer Coalition Reviews Hospital Injury Claims

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Healthcare and social assistance workers sustain more work-related injuries than employees in any other industry sector in the United States, according to Bureau of Labor Statistics data from its annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses. That data indicates registered nurses, nursing assistants, and orderlies face injury rates substantially higher than the national average for all occupations. Workers' Compensation Lawyer Coalition has released an analysis of the workers' compensation challenges facing hospital employees across the Atlanta metropolitan area, where major health systems including Grady Memorial Hospital, Piedmont Atlanta, Emory University Hospital, and Northside Hospital collectively employ tens of thousands of workers in patient-care roles.

The analysis examines three injury categories that commonly arise in hospital settings. Patient handling, including lifting, repositioning, and transferring patients, is frequently cited by federal occupational-safety researchers as a leading cause of musculoskeletal injury among healthcare workers. Back injuries from patient handling can result in permanent impairment ratings that influence long-term settlement values under Georgia's rating schedule. Needle-stick injuries expose hospital workers to bloodborne pathogens including HIV, hepatitis B, and hepatitis C. Because the timeline from exposure to diagnosis can extend weeks or

months, some workers do not identify their exposure as a compensable workplace injury until well after the incident. Workplace violence, including physical assaults in behavioral health units, emergency departments, and psychiatric wards, generates claims for physical injuries and post-traumatic stress, although standalone psychological claims without a physical component face significant barriers under the framework administered by the State Board of Workers' Compensation.

The Coalition's review also addresses the structure of workers' compensation administration at large hospital systems. Some major Georgia hospital systems operate self-insured workers' compensation programs or participate in hospital group self-insurance funds, meaning the employer, rather than a third-party insurer, administers and funds claims. Under such an arrangement, an injured worker directed to a hospital's own occupational health department may be treated by a physician employed by the same institution that funds the claim. The Coalition notes that specific insurance arrangements vary by system and are subject to change, and that workers can confirm the administrator of a given claim through claim documentation.

"When a nurse files a workers' compensation claim at a self-insured hospital, the treating physician assigned by the occupational health department may be employed by the same institution whose fund pays the claim, which raises a structural question about impartiality," said a spokesperson for Workers' Compensation Lawyer Coalition. "Georgia law gives injured hospital workers the right to request an independent medical examination to challenge an employer-directed physician's opinion, but many workers are not aware this right exists."

Georgia's rating schedule ties settlement value to the assigned permanent impairment rating, the worker's average weekly wage, and statutory benefit limits, meaning outcomes vary considerably from case to case. An impairment rating that a worker believes understates functional loss can be challenged through the independent medical examination process. Workers' Compensation Lawyer Coalition assists injured healthcare employees in requesting such examinations, contesting physician-assigned impairment ratings, and filing needle-stick and workplace-violence claims within applicable reporting windows. Additional information is available through the WCL ATL Atlanta hospital workplace injury lawyer resource page.

Workers' Compensation Lawyer Coalition is a network of workers' compensation law firms representing injured healthcare workers, hospital employees, construction workers, and other injury clients throughout Atlanta, Fulton County, and statewide Georgia. As an Atlanta hospital workplace injury lawyer network, the coalition handles hospital workplace injuries, patient handling claims, needle-stick occupational disease, workplace violence compensation, maximum-medical-improvement disputes, and panel-of-physicians

challenges on a contingency fee basis.

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Workers Compensation Lawyer Coalition

Workers' Compensation Lawyers in Atlanta: Expert advocates dedicated to championing the rights of injured workers, providing comprehensive legal support and maximizing compensation claims in Georgia.

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