

As McDonough's Logistics Sector Expands, Workers' Compensation Lawyers Coalition Reminds Injured Workers of Their Rights

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Following Governor Brian Kemp's July 2026 announcement that Highline Warren will invest \$170 million to open a 1.1-million-square-foot logistics and operations center in McDonough, Workers' Compensation Lawyers Coalition is reminding Henry County workers of their rights under Georgia's workers' compensation laws as the local labor force continues to grow.

The new Highline Warren facility, an American vertically integrated distributor of automotive aftermarket and cleaning products, will be located at 830 Highway 42 South, the site of the former Zinus building. The company, which has 1,700 employees nationwide, expects the McDonough facility to create 160 new jobs and begin operations later this year. In announcing the investment, Governor Kemp cited Georgia's "reliable logistics infrastructure" and "highly-skilled workforce" as key factors in the company's decision to locate in Henry County.

Highline Warren's arrival is part of a broader wave of industrial and logistics growth reshaping Henry County's job market. Continued hiring is underway at Home Depot's distribution operations, S&S Activewear, Carter's, and Georgia Crown Distributing, all of which rely heavily on warehouse associates, forklift operators, and material handlers. Nearby in Locust Grove, Renewal by Andersen is ramping up a 900-job manufacturing expansion, one of the largest single hiring events in the county's history. Meanwhile, Piedmont Henry Hospital's \$215 million tower expansion is driving parallel growth in healthcare employment, bringing its own distinct set of on-the-job injury risks for nurses, technicians, and support staff.

"Every new distribution center and warehouse means more workers doing physically demanding jobs, lifting, operating machinery, working around forklifts and conveyor systems, often on tight schedules," said a spokesperson for Workers' Compensation Lawyers Coalition. "As McDonough's job market grows, so does the need for workers to understand what happens if they're hurt on the job."

The timing is notable. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, private industry employers nationwide reported approximately 2.5 million nonfatal workplace injuries and illnesses in 2024, a 3.1 percent decrease from 2023, bringing the total recordable case rate down to 2.3 cases per 100 full-time workers, the lowest rate recorded since the agency began tracking this data in 2003.

While that decline sounds like unambiguous good news, a closer look at the numbers tells a more complicated story. Much of the overall drop was driven by fewer reported illness cases, particularly respiratory illnesses, rather than a dramatic reduction in traumatic injuries. Overexertion and repetitive motion, the kinds of injuries most associated with lifting, pushing, and repeated physical tasks common in warehouse and logistics work, remain among the leading causes of missed work nationally, with a median of 24 days away from work per case, longer than almost any other injury category.

Transportation incidents, slips, trips, falls, and exposure to harmful substances also remain among the leading causes of workplace injury in Georgia specifically. These are exactly the categories of risk most closely associated with the kind of high-volume distribution and logistics work that Highline Warren, Home Depot, and similar operations are expanding in Henry County.

"Fewer reported incidents doesn't necessarily mean the underlying hazards have gone away," the spokesperson added. "For a county adding hundreds of warehouse and manufacturing jobs in a single year, it's worth workers knowing their rights before an injury happens, not after."

Georgia's workers' compensation system is designed to provide injured employees with medical treatment and wage replacement benefits regardless of who was at fault for the accident, but it comes with strict deadlines and procedural requirements that can catch injured workers off guard.

Under Georgia law, an injured worker must notify their employer of a workplace injury within 30 days of the incident to preserve their right to benefits. From there, the employee should seek treatment from a physician approved under the employer's workers' compensation panel, when one exists, and formally document the injury and treatment. To pursue a disputed claim, an injured worker or their attorney generally files a WC-14 form with the Georgia State Board of Workers' Compensation, after which the employer's insurance carrier reviews the claim and issues a decision on covered benefits.

Workers' compensation generally covers a wide range of injuries and conditions, including physical trauma from falls, machinery accidents, or being struck by objects; repetitive stress injuries, such as carpal tunnel syndrome, common in warehouse and assembly-line settings; occupational illnesses caused by exposure to hazardous substances; and mental health conditions arising from a traumatic workplace incident.

Injured workers generally have up to two years from the date of injury to formally pursue a claim with the

Georgia State Board of Workers' Compensation, though prompt reporting and documentation are critical well before that deadline arrives. Waiting to report an injury, or failing to seek timely medical treatment, can give an employer's insurance carrier grounds to dispute or delay a claim.

Workers' Compensation Lawyers Coalition notes that periods of rapid hiring, like the one now underway in Henry County, often bring an influx of newer employees who may be less familiar with a facility's specific safety procedures, equipment, and hazards. New hires in physically demanding roles, particularly in warehouse, logistics, and light manufacturing settings, statistically face elevated injury risk during their first months on the job as they adjust to unfamiliar equipment and workflows.

The firm encourages employees at expanding facilities, and their employers, to treat safety training and injury reporting procedures as a priority alongside hiring and production targets. For workers who are injured despite these precautions, understanding the reporting timeline and claims process from the outset can make a meaningful difference in the outcome of a claim.

This concern extends beyond any single employer. As Henry County adds new facilities across logistics, manufacturing, and healthcare simultaneously, the county's overall workforce is shifting quickly toward roles with higher physical injury exposure. Workers moving into warehouse or production positions from less physically demanding jobs, including many workers relocating to the area specifically for these new roles, may be encountering unfamiliar equipment, repetitive lifting requirements, or shift-based fatigue for the first time. Workers' Compensation Lawyers Coalition emphasizes that these workers are entitled to the same protections as longtime employees from their very first day on the job.

Workers' Compensation Lawyers Coalition recommends that any employee injured on the job seek medical attention immediately, even if the injury initially seems minor, since some symptoms do not appear for days. Employees should report the injury to a supervisor or employer in writing, keeping a personal copy of that report, and follow all recommended treatment and attend follow-up appointments as scheduled. The firm also advises injured workers to avoid giving a recorded statement to an insurance adjuster before understanding their rights, and to consult a workers' compensation attorney promptly if a claim is delayed, disputed, or denied.

Workers' Compensation Lawyers Coalition represents injured workers throughout the greater Atlanta metropolitan area, including McDonough and Henry County, helping clients pursue medical benefits, wage replacement, and other compensation available under Georgia workers' compensation law. The firm represents clients on a contingency-fee basis, meaning clients pay nothing unless compensation is recovered, and offers free consultations 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Workers' Compensation Lawyers Coalition has represented employees across a wide range of industries,

including warehouse and logistics, manufacturing, construction, healthcare, and retail, and works to help injured workers navigate the reporting, documentation, and appeals process when a claim is delayed or denied.

Workers injured on the job in McDonough or elsewhere in Henry County are encouraged not to delay in protecting their claim. Workers' Compensation Lawyers Coalition offers free, 24/7 consultations, and clients pay nothing unless the firm recovers compensation.

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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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