

**HOUSE BILL No. 2307**

By Committee on Judiciary

2-10

1 AN ACT concerning workers compensation; relating to the definition of  
2 personal injury; including certain mental injuries arising from physical  
3 injury, emotional shock or a series of work-related events; amending  
4 K.S.A. 2020 Supp. 44-508 and repealing the existing section.  
5

6 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:*

7 Section 1. K.S.A. 2020 Supp. 44-508 is hereby amended to read as  
8 follows: 44-508. As used in the workers compensation act:

9 (a) "Employer" includes: (1) Any person or body of persons,  
10 corporate or unincorporated, and the legal representative of a deceased  
11 employer or the receiver or trustee of a person, corporation, association or  
12 partnership; (2) the state or any department, agency or authority of the  
13 state, any city, county, school district or other political subdivision or  
14 municipality or public corporation and any instrumentality thereof; and (3)  
15 for the purposes of community service work, the entity for which the  
16 community service work is being performed and the governmental agency  
17 that assigned the community service work, if any, if either such entity or  
18 such governmental agency has filed a written statement of election with  
19 the director to accept the provisions under the workers compensation act  
20 for persons performing community service work and in such case such  
21 entity and such governmental agency shall be deemed to be the joint  
22 employer of the person performing the community service work and both  
23 shall have the rights, liabilities and immunities provided under the workers  
24 compensation act for an employer with regard to the community service  
25 work, except that the liability for providing benefits shall be imposed only  
26 on the party that filed such election with the director or on both if both  
27 parties have filed such election with the director; for purposes of  
28 community service work, "governmental agency" shall not include any  
29 court or any officer or employee thereof and any case where there is  
30 deemed to be a "joint employer" shall not be construed to be a case of dual  
31 or multiple employment.

32 (b) "Workman" or "employee" or "worker" means any person who  
33 has entered into the employment of or works under any contract of service  
34 or apprenticeship with an employer. Such terms shall include, but not be  
35 limited to: Executive officers of corporations; professional athletes;  
36 persons serving on a volunteer basis as duly authorized law enforcement

1 officers, emergency medical service providers, as defined in K.S.A. 65-  
2 6112, and amendments thereto, firefighters, but only to the extent and  
3 during such periods as they are so serving in such capacities; persons  
4 employed by educational, religious and charitable organizations, but only  
5 to the extent and during the periods that they are paid wages by such  
6 organizations; persons in the service of the state or any department, agency  
7 or authority of the state, any city, school district or other political  
8 subdivision or municipality or public corporation and any instrumentality  
9 thereof, under any contract of service, express or implied, and every  
10 official or officer thereof, whether elected or appointed, while performing  
11 official duties; persons in the service of the state as volunteer members of  
12 the Kansas department of civil air patrol, but only to the extent and during  
13 such periods as they are officially engaged in the performance of functions  
14 specified in K.S.A. 48-3302, and amendments thereto; volunteers in any  
15 employment, if the employer has filed an election to extend coverage to  
16 such volunteers; minors, whether such minors are legally or illegally  
17 employed; and persons performing community service work, but only to  
18 the extent and during such periods as they are performing community  
19 service work and if an election has been filed an election to extend  
20 coverage to such persons. Any reference to an employee who has been  
21 injured shall, where the employee is dead, include a reference to the  
22 employee's dependents, to the employee's legal representatives or, if the  
23 employee is a minor or an incapacitated person, to the employee's guardian  
24 or conservator. Unless there is a valid election in effect that has been filed  
25 as provided in K.S.A. 44-542a, and amendments thereto, such terms shall  
26 not include individual employers, limited liability company members,  
27 partners or self-employed persons.

28 (c) (1) "Dependents" means such members of the employee's family  
29 as were wholly or in part dependent upon the employee at the time of the  
30 accident or injury.

31 (2) "Members of a family" means only surviving legal spouse and  
32 children; or if no surviving legal spouse or children, then parents or  
33 grandparents; or if no parents or grandparents, then grandchildren; or if no  
34 grandchildren, then brothers and sisters. In the meaning of this section,  
35 parents include stepparents, children include stepchildren, grandchildren  
36 include stepgrandchildren, brothers and sisters include stepbrothers and  
37 stepsisters, and children and parents include that relation by legal  
38 adoption. In the meaning of this section, a surviving spouse shall not be  
39 regarded as a dependent of a deceased employee or as a member of the  
40 family, if the surviving spouse shall have for more than six months  
41 willfully or voluntarily deserted or abandoned the employee prior to the  
42 date of the employee's death.

43 (3) "Wholly dependent child or children" means:

1 (A) A birth child or adopted child of the employee except such a child  
2 whose relationship to the employee has been severed by adoption;

3 (B) a stepchild of the employee who lives in the employee's  
4 household;

5 (C) any other child who is actually dependent in whole or in part on  
6 the employee and who is related to the employee by marriage or  
7 consanguinity; or

8 (D) any child as defined in subsection (c)(3)(A), (3)(B) or (3)(C) who  
9 is less than 23 years of age and who is not physically or mentally capable  
10 of earning wages in any type of substantial and gainful employment or  
11 who is a full-time student attending an accredited institution of higher  
12 education or vocational education.

13 (d) "Accident" means an undesigned, sudden and unexpected  
14 traumatic event, usually of an afflictive or unfortunate nature and often,  
15 but not necessarily, accompanied by a manifestation of force. An accident  
16 shall be identifiable by time and place of occurrence, produce at the time  
17 symptoms of an injury and occur during a single work shift. The accident  
18 must be the prevailing factor in causing the injury. "Accident" shall in no  
19 case be construed to include repetitive trauma in any form.

20 (e) "Repetitive trauma" ~~refers to~~ *means* cases where an injury occurs  
21 as a result of repetitive use, cumulative traumas or microtraumas. The  
22 repetitive nature of the injury must be demonstrated by diagnostic or  
23 clinical tests. The repetitive trauma must be the prevailing factor in  
24 causing the injury. "Repetitive trauma" ~~shall in no case be construed to~~  
25 *does not* include occupational disease, as defined in K.S.A. 44-5a01, and  
26 amendments thereto.

27 In the case of injury by repetitive trauma, the date of injury shall be the  
28 earliest of:

29 (1) The date the employee, while employed for the employer against  
30 whom benefits are sought, is taken off work by a physician due to the  
31 diagnosed repetitive trauma;

32 (2) the date the employee, while employed for the employer against  
33 whom benefits are sought, is placed on modified or restricted duty by a  
34 physician due to the diagnosed repetitive trauma;

35 (3) the date the employee, while employed for the employer against  
36 whom benefits are sought, is advised by a physician that the condition is  
37 work-related; or

38 (4) the last day worked, if the employee no longer works for the  
39 employer against whom benefits are sought.

40 In no case shall the date of accident be later than the last date worked.

41 (f) (1) "Personal injury" and "injury" mean any lesion or change in  
42 the physical structure of the body, causing damage or harm thereto.  
43 Personal injury or injury may occur only by accident, repetitive trauma or

1 occupational disease as those terms are defined *or as provided by*  
2 *paragraph (2).*

3 (2) "Personal injury" and "injury" include a mental injury, which  
4 means a mental or behavioral disorder or a loss of mental faculties. A  
5 mental injury may arise out of:

6 (A) A compensable physical injury;

7 (B) a sudden, severe emotional shock traceable to a specific work-  
8 related event; or

9 (C) a series of work-related events after which the employee develops  
10 a psychological injury.

11 ~~(2)~~(3) An injury is compensable only if it arises out of and in the  
12 course of employment. An injury is not compensable because work was a  
13 triggering or precipitating factor. An injury is not compensable solely  
14 because it aggravates, accelerates or exacerbates a preexisting condition or  
15 renders a preexisting condition symptomatic.

16 (A) An injury by repetitive trauma shall be deemed to arise out of  
17 employment only if:

18 (i) The employment exposed the worker to an increased risk or  
19 hazard to which the worker would not have been exposed in normal non-  
20 employment life;

21 (ii) the increased risk or hazard to which the employment exposed the  
22 worker is the prevailing factor in causing the repetitive trauma; and

23 (iii) the repetitive trauma is the prevailing factor in causing both the  
24 medical condition and resulting disability or impairment.

25 (B) An injury by accident shall be deemed to arise out of employment  
26 only if:

27 (i) There is a causal connection between the conditions under which  
28 the work is required to be performed and the resulting accident; and

29 (ii) the accident is the prevailing factor causing the injury, medical  
30 condition and resulting disability or impairment.

31 ~~(3)~~(4) (A) The words "arising out of and in the course of  
32 employment" as used in the workers compensation act shall not be  
33 construed to include:

34 (i) Injury that occurred as a result of the natural aging process or by  
35 the normal activities of day-to-day living;

36 (ii) accident or injury that arose out of a neutral risk with no  
37 particular employment or personal character;

38 (iii) accident or injury that arose out of a risk personal to the worker;  
39 or

40 (iv) accident or injury that arose either directly or indirectly from  
41 idiopathic causes.

42 (B) The words "arising out of and in the course of employment" as  
43 used in the workers compensation act shall not be construed to include

1 injuries to the employee occurring while the employee is on the way to  
2 assume the duties of employment or after leaving such duties, the  
3 proximate cause of which injury is not the employer's negligence. An  
4 employee shall not be construed as being on the way to assume the duties  
5 of employment or having left such duties at a time when the worker is on  
6 the premises owned or under the exclusive control of the employer or on  
7 the only available route to or from work that is a route involving a special  
8 risk or hazard connected with the nature of the employment, that is not a  
9 risk or hazard to which the general public is exposed and that is a route not  
10 used by the public except in dealings with the employer. An employee  
11 shall not be construed as being on the way to assume the duties of  
12 employment, if the employee is a provider of emergency services  
13 responding to an emergency.

14 (C) The words, "arising out of and in the course of employment" as  
15 used in the workers compensation act shall not be construed to include  
16 injuries to employees while engaged in recreational or social events under  
17 circumstances where the employee was under no duty to attend and where  
18 the injury did not result from the performance of tasks related to the  
19 employee's normal job duties or as specifically instructed to be performed  
20 by the employer.

21 (D) *An injury that is a mental injury is not considered to arise out of*  
22 *and in the course of employment if it solely resulted from any disciplinary*  
23 *action, work evaluation, job transfer, layoff, demotion, termination or any*  
24 *similar action taken in good faith by the employer.*

25 (g) "Prevailing" as it relates to the term "factor" means the primary  
26 factor, in relation to any other factor. In determining what constitutes the  
27 "prevailing factor" in a given case, the administrative law judge shall  
28 consider all relevant evidence submitted by the parties.

29 (h) "Burden of proof" means the burden of a party to persuade the  
30 trier of facts by a preponderance of the credible evidence that such party's  
31 position on an issue is more probably true than not true on the basis of the  
32 whole record unless a higher burden of proof is specifically required by  
33 this act.

34 (i) "Director" means the director of workers compensation as  
35 provided for in K.S.A. 75-5708, and amendments thereto.

36 (j) "Healthcare provider" means any person licensed, by the proper  
37 licensing authority of this state, another state or the District of Columbia,  
38 to practice medicine and surgery, osteopathy, chiropractic, dentistry,  
39 optometry, podiatry, audiology or psychology.

40 (k) "Secretary" means the secretary of labor.

41 (l) "Construction design professional" means any person who is an  
42 architect, professional engineer, landscape architect or land surveyor who  
43 has been issued a license by the state board of technical professions to

1 practice such technical profession in Kansas or any corporation organized  
2 to render professional services through the practice of one or more of such  
3 technical professions in Kansas under the professional corporation law of  
4 Kansas or any corporation issued a certificate of authorization under  
5 K.S.A. 74-7036, and amendments thereto, to practice one or more of such  
6 technical professions in Kansas.

7 (m) "Community service work" means: (1) Public or community  
8 service performed as a result of a contract of diversion or of assignment to  
9 a community corrections program or conservation camp or suspension of  
10 sentence or as a condition of probation or in lieu of a fine imposed by  
11 court order; or (2) public or community service or other work performed  
12 as a requirement for receipt of any kind of public assistance in accordance  
13 with any program administered by the secretary for children and families.

14 (n) "Utilization review" means the initial evaluation of  
15 appropriateness in terms of both the level and the quality of healthcare and  
16 health services provided to a patient, based on accepted standards of the  
17 healthcare profession involved. Such evaluation is accomplished by means  
18 of a system that identifies the utilization of healthcare services above the  
19 usual range of utilization for such services, that is based on accepted  
20 standards of the healthcare profession involved and that refers instances of  
21 possible inappropriate utilization to the director for referral to a peer  
22 review committee.

23 (o) "Peer review" means an evaluation by a peer review committee of  
24 the appropriateness, quality and cost of healthcare and health services  
25 provided a patient that is based on accepted standards of the healthcare  
26 profession involved and that is conducted in conjunction with utilization  
27 review.

28 (p) "Peer review committee" means a committee composed of  
29 healthcare providers licensed to practice the same healthcare profession as  
30 the healthcare provider who rendered the healthcare services being  
31 reviewed.

32 (q) "Group-funded self-insurance plan" includes each group-funded  
33 workers compensation pool that is authorized to operate in this state under  
34 K.S.A. 44-581 through 44-592, and amendments thereto, each municipal  
35 group-funded pool under the Kansas municipal group-funded pool act that  
36 is covering liabilities under the workers compensation act and any other  
37 similar group-funded or pooled plan or arrangement that provides  
38 coverage for employer liabilities under the workers compensation act and  
39 is authorized by law.

40 ~~On and after the effective date of this act,~~ "Workers compensation  
41 board" or "board" means the workers compensation appeals board  
42 established under K.S.A. 44-555c, and amendments thereto.

43 (s) "Usual charge" means the amount most commonly charged by

1 healthcare providers for the same or similar services.

2 (t) "Customary charge" means the usual rates or range of fees charged  
3 by healthcare providers in a given locale or area.

4 (u) "Functional impairment" means the extent, expressed as a  
5 percentage, of the loss of a portion of the total physiological capabilities of  
6 the human body as established by competent medical evidence and based  
7 on the fourth edition of the American medical association guides to the  
8 evaluation of impairment, if the impairment is contained therein.

9 (v) "Authorized treating physician" means a licensed physician or  
10 other healthcare provider authorized by the employer or insurance carrier,  
11 or both, or appointed pursuant to court-order to provide those medical  
12 services deemed necessary to diagnose and treat an injury arising out of  
13 and in the course of employment.

14 (w) "Mail" means the use of the United States postal service or other  
15 land based delivery service or transmission by electronic means, including  
16 delivery by fax, e-mail or other electronic delivery method designated by  
17 the director of workers compensation.

18 Sec. 2. K.S.A. 2020 Supp. 44-508 is hereby repealed.

19 Sec. 3. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after its  
20 publication in the statute book.