

Workers' Compensation Act PTSD Presumption Stakeholder Consultation

This year the Government of Yukon will amend the Workers' Compensation Act to include a presumption clause for emergency response workers who are diagnosed with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Additionally, the government is considering making amendments to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* that will foster mental health and wellness at work.

On behalf of the government, Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board is conducting this consultation to explore the public's view on the above two issues.

The government will consider your responses in its approach to the proposed amendments. The deadline for receiving responses is **Friday, June 30, 2017 at 5:00 pm**.

[What does a presumption clause for PTSD mean?](#)

PTSD is a mental health condition that can result from exposure to serious trauma, ranging from a single experience to prolonged, ongoing exposure. PTSD can occur soon after the triggering event or it can be delayed by days, months or even years. PTSD must be diagnosed by a qualified professional.

Mental injuries, including PTSD, are already compensable under the *Workers' Compensation Act* for any worker. However, as emergency response workers are exposed to trauma as a regular part of their job, they have a higher risk of developing PTSD.

A presumption clause in the *Workers' Compensation Act* means that if an emergency response worker is diagnosed with PTSD, the injury would be presumed to be work-related unless otherwise shown. This may result in a faster decision on the claim.

[Preventing psychological injuries in the workplace](#)

Preventing PTSD and other mental injuries at work is important. Currently, the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* does not address workplace mental health and wellness.

The government is considering making amendments to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* that would allow for the development of regulations aimed at preventing mental injuries at work.

Regulations would be developed in consultation with employer and worker stakeholder groups.

Questions

1. The *Workers' Compensation Act* will be amended to provide a PTSD presumption for emergency response workers which will apply to firefighters, paramedics and police officers. Are there other occupations you think should be considered in the future and why?
2. Would you support amendments to the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* to promote the development of regulations aimed at preventing mental injuries at work? What are the benefits and disadvantages of this approach?

How to Submit Your Response

In your submission, please identify if you are a worker, an employer, or another type of individual or organization. If you're submitting a response on behalf of an organization, please identify the organization you represent.

Printed responses can be mailed to or dropped off at the following address:

Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board
Attn: PTSD Consultation
401 Strickland Street
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 5N8

To submit a response electronically, email it to YWCHSB-PTSD-Consultation@gov.yk.ca.

All responses – whether delivered by post, dropped off, or sent electronically – must be received by our office no later than Friday, June 30, 2017 at 5:00 pm.

If you are unable to submit comments in writing, please contact Sheila Vanderbyl, Manager of Policy and Appeals, at 867-667-8020, or toll-free at 1-800-661-0443, ext. 8020.

Disclaimer: All submissions will become public documents. Please do not include names of individuals, private information or personally-identifiable details in your responses.