

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

SENATE BILL NO. 856

92ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY SENATOR LOUDON.

Pre-filed December 1, 2003, and ordered printed.

TERRY L. SPIELER, Secretary.

3231S.011

AN ACT

To repeal sections 286.020, 287.020, 287.067, 287.120, 287.390, 287.510, 287.610, and 287.800, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof ten new sections relating to workers' compensation law.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Sections 286.020, 287.020, 287.067, 287.120, 287.390, 287.510, 287.610, and 287.800, RSMo, are repealed and ten new sections enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as sections 286.020, 287.020, 287.062, 287.067, 287.120, 287.390, 287.510, 287.610, 287.800, and 287.803, to read as follows:

286.020. The term of office of each member of the commission shall be six years except that when first constituted one member shall be appointed for two years, one for four years and one for six years, and thereafter all vacancies shall be filled as they occur. The terms of office of the first members of the commission shall begin on the date of their appointment which shall be within thirty days after the effective date of this chapter. Any member appointed to fill a vacancy occurring prior to the expiration of the term for which the member's predecessor was appointed, shall be appointed by the governor, by and with the advice and consent of the senate, for the remainder of such term. **Every commission member appointed to serve, either as a permanent, an acting, a temporary, an interim, or as a legislative recess appointment, shall appear for confirmation before the senate within thirty days after the senate next convenes for regular session. Any member appointed or serving the labor and industrial relations commission without senate confirmation after said time period shall immediately resign from the commission, shall not have authority to act, and shall not be reappointed to the same office or position in accordance with section 51 of article IV of the Missouri Constitution.** The governor may remove any member of the

EXPLANATION—Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in this bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

commission, after notice and hearing, for gross inefficiency, mental or physical incapacity, neglect of duties, malfeasance, misfeasance or nonfeasance in office, incompetence or for any offense involving moral turpitude or oppression in office.

287.020. 1. The word "employee" as used in this chapter shall be construed to mean every person in the service of any employer, as defined in this chapter, under any contract of hire, express or implied, oral or written, or under any appointment or election, including executive officers of corporations. Any reference to any employee who has been injured shall, when the employee is dead, also include his dependents, and other persons to whom compensation may be payable. The word "employee" shall also include all minors who work for an employer, whether or not such minors are employed in violation of law, and all such minors are hereby made of full age for all purposes under, in connection with, or arising out of this chapter. The word "employee" shall not include an individual who is the owner and operator of a motor vehicle which is leased or contracted with a driver to a for-hire common or contract motor vehicle carrier operating within a commercial zone as defined in section 390.020 or 390.041, RSMo, or operating under a certificate issued by the motor carrier and railroad safety division of the department of economic development or by the interstate commerce commission.

2. The word "accident" as used in this chapter shall[, unless a different meaning is clearly indicated by the context,] be construed to mean an unexpected [or unforeseen identifiable event or series of events happening suddenly and violently, with or without human fault,] **traumatic event or unusual strain identifiable by time and place of occurrence** and producing at the time objective symptoms of an injury, **caused by a specific event during a single work shift**. [An injury is compensable if it is clearly work related. An injury is clearly work related if work was a substantial factor in the cause of the resulting medical condition or disability. An injury is not compensable merely because work was a triggering or precipitating factor.]

3. (1) In this chapter the term "injury" is hereby defined to be an injury which has arisen out of and in the course of employment. The injury must be incidental to and not independent of the relation of employer and employee. **An injury by accident is compensable only if the accident was the dominant factor in causing the resulting medical condition or disability.** Ordinary, gradual deterioration or progressive degeneration of the body caused by aging **or by the normal activities of day-to-day living** shall not be compensable[, except where the deterioration or degeneration follows as an incident of employment].

(2) An injury shall be deemed to arise out of and in the course of the employment only if:

(a) It is reasonably apparent, upon consideration of all the circumstances, that the [employment] **accident** is [a substantial] **the dominant** factor in causing the injury; and

(b) [It can be seen to have followed as a natural incident of the work; and

(c) It can be fairly traced to the employment as a proximate cause; and

(d)] It does not come from a hazard or risk unrelated to the employment to which workers would have been equally exposed outside of and unrelated to the employment in normal nonemployment life;

(3) This chapter shall not apply to personal health conditions of an employee which manifest themselves in the employment in which the accident is not the dominant factor in the resulting need for medical treatment.

(4) An injury resulting directly or indirectly from idiopathic causes is not compensable.

(5) "Dominant factor" shall mean the accident is the prevailing factor in relation to any other factors contributing to the resulting medical condition or disability.

(6) A cardiovascular, pulmonary, respiratory, or other disease, or cerebrovascular accident or myocardial infarction suffered by a worker is an injury only if the accident is the dominant factor in causing the resulting medical condition or disability.

(7) The employee shall not be entitled to recover for the aggravation of a preexisting condition, except to the extent that the work-related injury causes increased permanent disability. Any award of compensation shall be reduced by the amount of permanent partial disability determined to be a preexisting disease or condition sufficient to cause or prolong the disability or need for treatment. The resultant condition is compensable only to the extent that the compensable injury is and remains the dominant cause of the disability or need for treatment.

(8) The terms "injury" and "personal injuries" shall mean violence to the physical structure of the body and to the personal property which is used to make up the physical structure of the body, such as artificial dentures, artificial limbs, glass eyes, eyeglasses, and other prostheses which are placed in or on the body to replace the physical structure and such disease or infection as naturally results therefrom. These terms shall in no case except as specifically provided in this chapter be construed to include occupational disease in any form, nor shall they be construed to include any contagious or infectious disease contracted during the course of the employment, nor shall they include death due to natural causes occurring while the worker is at work.

[4.] (9) "Death" when mentioned as a basis for the right to compensation means only death resulting from such violence and its resultant effects occurring within three hundred weeks after the accident; except that in cases of occupational disease, the limitation of three hundred weeks shall not be applicable.

[5.] 4. Without otherwise affecting either the meaning or interpretation of the abridged clause, "personal injuries arising out of and in the course of such employment", it is hereby declared not to cover workers except while engaged in or about the premises where their duties are being performed, or where their services require their presence as a part of such service. **Injuries sustained in company owned or subsidized automobiles in accidents that occur while traveling to or from work are not compensable. The "extension of premises" doctrine is overruled to the extent it extends liability for accidents that occur on property not owned or controlled by an employer.**

[6.] 5. A person who is employed by the same employer for more than five and one-half consecutive work days shall for the purpose of this chapter be considered an "employee".

[7.] 6. The term "total disability" as used in this chapter shall mean inability to return to any employment and not merely mean inability to return to the employment in which the employee was engaged at the time of the accident.

[8.] 7. As used in this chapter and all acts amendatory thereof, the term "commission" shall hereafter be construed as meaning and referring exclusively to the labor and industrial relations commission of Missouri, and the term "director" shall hereafter be construed as meaning the director of the department of insurance of the state of Missouri or such agency of government as shall exercise the powers and duties now conferred and imposed upon the department of insurance of the state of Missouri.

[9.] 8. The term "division" as used in this chapter means the division of workers' compensation of the department of labor and industrial relations of the state of Missouri.

[10.] 9. For the purposes of this chapter, the term "minor" means a person who has not attained the age of eighteen years; except that, for the purpose of computing the compensation provided for in this chapter, the provisions of section 287.250 shall control.

10. In applying provisions of this chapter, it is the intent of the legislature to reject and abrogate earlier case law interpretations of cases "arising out of" and "in the course of the employment", to include, but not be limited to, holdings in cases such as *Bennett v. Columbia Health Care and Rehabilitation*, 80 S.W.3d 524 (Mo.App. W.D. 2002); *Kasl v. Bristol Care, Inc.*, 984 S.W.2d 852 (Mo.banc 1999); and *Drewes v. TWA*, 984 S.W.2d 512 (Mo.banc 1999).

287.062. Disease of the lungs or respiratory tract or disease of the heart or cardiovascular system, including carcinoma, may be recognized as occupational diseases for the purposes of this chapter, and is defined to be a disability due to exposure to smoke, gases, or inadequate oxygen, for peace officers certified pursuant to chapter 590, RSMo, if a direct causal relationship pursuant to the standards set forth in 287.020 is met.

287.067. 1. In this chapter the term "occupational disease" is hereby defined to mean,

unless a different meaning is clearly indicated by the context, an identifiable disease arising with or without human fault out of and in the course of the employment. Ordinary diseases of life to which the general public is exposed outside of the employment shall not be compensable, except where the diseases follow as an incident of an occupational disease as defined in this section. The disease need not to have been foreseen or expected but after its contraction it must appear to have had its origin in a risk connected with the employment and to have flowed from that source as a rational consequence.

2. An occupational disease is compensable **only** if [it is clearly work related and meets the requirements of an injury which is compensable as provided in subsections 2 and 3 of section 287.020. An occupational disease is not compensable merely because work was a triggering or precipitating factor] **the occupational exposure was the dominant factor in causing the resulting medical condition or disability. Ordinary, gradual deterioration, or progressive degeneration of the body caused by aging or by the normal activities of day-to-day living shall not be compensable. "Dominant factor" shall mean the occupational exposure is the prevailing factor in relation to any other factors contributing to the resulting medical condition or disability.**

3. "Loss of hearing due to industrial noise" is recognized as an occupational disease for purposes of this chapter and is hereby defined to be a loss of hearing in one or both ears due to prolonged exposure to harmful noise in employment. "Harmful noise" means sound capable of producing occupational deafness.

4. "Radiation disability" is recognized as an occupational disease for purposes of this chapter and is hereby defined to be that disability due to radioactive properties or substances or to Roentgen rays (X rays) or exposure to ionizing radiation caused by any process involving the use of or direct contact with radium or radioactive properties or substances or the use of or direct exposure to Roentgen rays (X rays) or ionizing radiation.

5. Disease of the lungs or respiratory tract, hypotension, hypertension, or disease of the heart or cardiovascular system, including carcinoma, may be recognized as occupational diseases for the purposes of this chapter and are defined to be disability due to exposure to smoke, gases, carcinogens, inadequate oxygen, or psychological stress of firefighters of a paid fire department if a direct causal relationship is established.

6. Any employee who is exposed to and contracts any contagious or communicable disease arising out of and in the course of his or her employment shall be eligible for benefits under this chapter as an occupational disease.

7. With regard to occupational disease due to repetitive motion, if the exposure to the repetitive motion which is found to be the cause of the injury is for a period of less than three months and the evidence demonstrates that the exposure to the repetitive motion with a prior employer was the [substantial contributing] **dominant** factor [to] **in causing** the injury, the prior employer shall be liable for such occupational disease.

287.120. 1. Every employer subject to the provisions of this chapter shall be liable, irrespective of negligence, to furnish compensation [under the provisions of] **pursuant to** this chapter for personal injury or death of the employee by accident arising out of and in the course of [his] **the employee's** employment, and shall be released from all other liability therefor whatsoever, whether to the employee or any other person. The term "accident" as used in this section shall include, but not be limited to, injury or death of the employee caused by the unprovoked violence or assault against the employee by any person.

2. The rights and remedies herein granted to an employee shall exclude all other rights and remedies of the employee, his wife, her husband, parents, personal representatives, dependents, heirs or next kin, at common law or otherwise, on account of such accidental injury or death, except such rights and remedies as are not provided for by this chapter.

3. No compensation shall be allowed [under] **pursuant to** this chapter for the injury or death due to the employee's intentional self-inflicted injury, but the burden of proof of intentional self-inflicted injury shall be on the employer or the person contesting the claim for allowance.

4. Where the injury is caused by the failure of the employer to comply with any statute in this state or any lawful order of the division or the commission, the compensation and death benefit provided [for under] **pursuant to** this chapter shall be increased fifteen percent.

5. Where the injury is caused by the willful failure of the employee to use safety devices where provided by the employer, or from the employee's failure to obey any reasonable rule adopted by the employer for the safety of employees, which rule has been kept posted in a conspicuous place on the employer's premises, the compensation and death benefit provided for herein shall be reduced fifteen percent; provided, that it is shown that the employee had actual knowledge of the rule so adopted by the employer; and provided, further, that the employer had, prior to the injury, made a diligent effort to cause his **or her** employees to use the safety device or devices and to obey or follow the rule so adopted for the safety of the employees.

6. (1) Where the employee fails to obey any rule or policy adopted by the employer relating to **a drug-free workplace or** the use of alcohol or nonprescribed controlled drugs in the workplace, which rule or policy has been kept posted in a conspicuous place on the employer's premises, the compensation and death benefit provided for herein shall be reduced [fifteen] **fifty** percent if the injury was sustained in conjunction with the use of alcohol or nonprescribed controlled drugs; provided[, that it is shown that the employee had actual knowledge of the rules or policy so adopted by the employer and, provided further] that the employer had, prior to the injury, made a diligent effort to inform the employee of the requirement to obey any reasonable rule or policy adopted by the employer.

(2) If, however, the use of alcohol or nonprescribed controlled drugs in violation of the employer's rule or policy which is posted and publicized as set forth in subdivision (1) is the proximate cause of the injury, then the benefits or compensation otherwise payable [under] **pursuant to** this chapter for death or disability shall be forfeited. The forfeiture of benefits or compensation shall not apply when:

(a) The employer has actual knowledge of the employee's use of the alcohol or nonprescribed controlled drugs and in the face thereof fails to take any recuperative or disciplinary action; or

(b) As part of the employee's employment, he **or she** is authorized **or ordered** by the employer to use such alcohol or nonprescribed controlled drugs. **The voluntary use of alcohol to the percentage of blood alcohol sufficient under Missouri law to constitute legal intoxication shall be conclusively presumed to mean the voluntary use of alcohol under such circumstances is the proximate cause of the injury.**

7. Where the employee's participation in a voluntary recreational activity or program is the proximate cause of the injury, benefits or compensation otherwise payable [under] **pursuant to** this chapter for death or disability shall be forfeited regardless that the employer may have promoted, sponsored or supported the recreational activity or program, expressly or impliedly, in whole or in part. The forfeiture of benefits or compensation shall not apply when:

(a) The employee was directly ordered by the employer to participate in such recreational activity or program;

(b) The employee was paid wages or travel expenses while participating in such recreational activity or program; or

(c) The injury from such recreational activity or program occurs on the employer's premises due to an unsafe condition and the employer had actual knowledge of the employee's participation in the recreational activity or program and of the unsafe condition of the premises and failed to either curtail the recreational activity or program or cure the unsafe condition.

8. Mental injury resulting from work related stress does not arise out of and in the course of the employment, unless it is demonstrated that the stress is work related and was extraordinary and unusual. The amount of work stress shall be measured by objective standards and actual events.

9. A mental injury is not considered to arise out of and in the course of the employment if it resulted from any disciplinary action, work evaluation, job transfer, layoff, demotion, termination or any similar action taken in good faith by the employer.

10. The ability of a firefighter to receive benefits for psychological stress [under] **pursuant to** section 287.067 shall not be diminished by the provisions of subsections 8 and 9 of this section.

287.390. 1. [Nothing in this chapter shall be construed as preventing the] Parties to claims hereunder [from entering] **may enter** into voluntary agreements in settlement thereof, but no agreement by an employee or his **or her** dependents to waive his **or her** rights under this chapter shall be valid, nor shall any agreement of settlement or compromise of any dispute or claim for compensation under this chapter be valid until approved by an administrative law judge or the commission, nor shall an administrative law judge or the commission approve any settlement which is not in accordance with the rights of the parties as given in this chapter. No such agreement shall be valid unless made after seven days from the date of the injury or death. **An administrative law judge, associate administrative law judge, legal advisor, or the commission, despite their recommendations to the contrary, shall approve a settlement agreement as valid and enforceable as long as the settlement is not the result of undue influence or fraud, the employee understands his or her rights and benefits, and voluntarily agrees to accept the terms of the agreement.**

2. A compromise settlement approved by an administrative law judge or the commission during the employee's lifetime shall extinguish and bar all claims for compensation for the employee's death if the settlement compromises a dispute on any question or issue other than the extent of disability or the rate of compensation.

3. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 287.190, an employee shall be afforded the option of receiving a compromise settlement as a one-time lump sum payment. A compromise settlement approved by an administrative law judge or the commission shall indicate the manner of payment chosen by the employee.

4. A minor dependent, by parent or conservator, may compromise disputes and may enter into a compromise settlement agreement, and upon approval by an administrative law judge or the commission the settlement agreement shall have the same force and effect as though the minor had been an adult. The payment of compensation by the employer in accordance with the settlement agreement shall discharge the employer from all further obligation.

287.510. In any case a temporary or partial award of compensation may be made, and the same may be modified from time to time to meet the needs of the case, and the same may be kept open until a final award can be made, and if the same be not complied with, the amount [thereof] **equal to the value of compensation ordered and unpaid** may be doubled in the final award, if the final award shall be in accordance with the temporary or partial award.

287.610. 1. The division may appoint such number of administrative law judges as it may find necessary, but not exceeding twenty-five in number beginning January 1, 1999, with one additional appointment authorized as of July 1, 2000, and one additional appointment authorized in each succeeding year thereafter until and including the year 2004,

for a maximum of thirty authorized administrative law judges. Appropriations for any additional appointment shall be based upon necessity, measured by the requirements and needs of each division office. Administrative law judges shall be duly licensed lawyers under the laws of this state. Administrative law judges shall not practice law or do law business and shall devote their whole time to the duties of their office. Any administrative law judge may be discharged or removed only by the governor pursuant to an evaluation and recommendation by the administrative law judge review committee, hereinafter referred to as "the committee", of the judge's conduct, performance and productivity.

2. No administrative law judge shall establish, maintain, or contribute to a committee that is regulated by campaign finance disclosure law in chapter 130, RSMo.

3. The division shall require and perform annual evaluations of an administrative law judge, associate administrative law judge and legal advisor's conduct, performance and productivity based upon written standards established by rule. The division, by rule, shall establish the written standards on or before January 1, 1999.

(1) After an evaluation by the division, any administrative law judge, associate administrative law judge or legal advisor who has received an unsatisfactory evaluation in any of the three categories of conduct, performance or productivity, may appeal the evaluation to the committee.

(2) The division director shall refer an unsatisfactory evaluation of any administrative law judge, associate administrative law judge or legal advisor to the committee.

(3) When a written, signed complaint is made against an administrative law judge, associate administrative law judge or legal advisor, it shall be referred to the director of the division for a determination of merit. When the director finds the complaint has merit, it shall be referred to the committee for investigation and review.

[3.] **4.** The administrative law judge review committee shall be composed of one administrative law judge, who shall act as a peer judge on the committee and shall be domiciled in a division office other than that of the judge being reviewed, one employee representative and one employer representative, neither of whom shall have any direct or indirect employment or financial connection with a workers' compensation insurance company, claims adjustment company, health care provider nor be a practicing workers' compensation attorney. The employee representative and employer representative shall have a working knowledge of workers' compensation. The employee and employer representative shall serve for four-year staggered terms and they shall be appointed by the governor. The initial employee representative shall be appointed for a two-year term. The administrative law judge who acts as a peer judge shall be appointed by the chairman of the labor and industrial relations commission and shall not serve on any two consecutive reviews conducted by the committee. Chairmanship of the committee shall rotate between the employee

representative and the employer representative every other year. Staffing for the administrative review committee shall be provided, as needed, by the director of the department of labor and industrial relations and shall be funded from the workers' compensation fund. The committee shall conduct a hearing as part of any review of a referral or appeal made according to subsection [2] 3 of this section.

[4.] 5. The committee shall determine within thirty days whether an investigation shall be conducted for a referral made pursuant to subdivision (3) of subsection [2] 3 of this section. The committee shall make a final referral to the governor pursuant to subsection 1 of this section within two hundred seventy days of the receipt of a referral or appeal.

[5.] 6. The administrative law judges appointed by the division shall only have jurisdiction to hear and determine claims upon original hearing and shall have no jurisdiction upon any review hearing, either in the way of an appeal from an original hearing or by way of reopening any prior award, except to correct a clerical error in an award or settlement if the correction is made by the administrative law judge within twenty days of the original award or settlement. The labor and industrial relations commission may remand any decision of an administrative law judge for a more complete finding of facts. The commission may also correct a clerical error in awards or settlements within thirty days of its final award. With respect to original hearings, the administrative law judges shall have such jurisdiction and powers as are vested in the division of workers' compensation under other sections of this chapter, and wherever in this chapter the word "commission", "commissioners" or "division" is used in respect to any original hearing, those terms shall mean the administrative law judges appointed under this section. When a hearing is necessary upon any claim, the division shall assign an administrative law judge to such hearing. Any administrative law judge shall have power to approve contracts of settlement, as provided by section 287.390, between the parties to any compensation claim or dispute under this chapter pending before the division of workers' compensation. Any award by an administrative law judge upon an original hearing shall have the same force and effect, shall be enforceable in the same manner as provided elsewhere in this chapter for awards by the labor and industrial relations commission, and shall be subject to review as provided by section 287.480.

[6.] 7. Any of the administrative law judges employed pursuant to this section may be assigned on a temporary basis to the branch offices as necessary in order to ensure the proper administration of this chapter.

[7.] 8. All administrative law judges and legal advisors shall be required to participate in, on a continuing basis, specific training that shall pertain to those elements of knowledge and procedure necessary for the efficient and competent performance of the administrative law judges' and legal advisors' required duties and responsibilities. Such training requirements shall be established by the division subject to appropriations and shall

include training in medical determinations and records, mediation and legal issues pertaining to workers' compensation adjudication. Such training may be credited toward any continuing legal education requirements.

[8.] **9.** No rule or portion of a rule promulgated pursuant to the authority of this section shall become effective unless it has been promulgated pursuant to the provisions of chapter 536, RSMo.

287.800. All of the provisions of this chapter shall be [liberally] **impartially** construed [with a view to the public welfare, and a substantial compliance therewith shall be] sufficient to give effect to rules, regulations, requirements, awards, orders or decisions of the division and the commission[, and they shall not be declared inoperative, illegal or void for any omission of a technical nature in respect thereto]. **The labor and industrial relations commission and division of workers' compensation shall apply an impartial standard of review when weighing evidence and resolving factual conflicts.**

287.803. **1.** An employee may elect to reject the provisions of this chapter because such employee is a member of a religious sect that is adherent of established tenets or teaching whereby members are conscientiously opposed to the acceptance of the benefits of any public or private insurance which makes payments toward the costs of, or provided services for medical bills including benefits of any insurance system established by the Federal Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 301 et. seq. The employee shall submit a written waiver of all benefits pursuant to this chapter and an affidavit that he or she has been a member of said religious sect for at least eighteen years attesting to the rejection of the benefits of public or private insurance.

2. The waiver and affidavit required by subsection 1 of this section shall be made upon a form to be provided by the division of workers' compensation, and said waiver shall include a statement agreeing to a prohibition of future civil action relating to an injury arising during said employment.

3. An exception granted in regards to a specific employee shall continue to be valid until such employee rescinds the prior rejection of coverage or the employee or sect ceases to meet the requirements of subsection 1 of this section.

4. Any rescission shall be prospective in nature and shall entitle the employee only to such benefits that accrue on or after the date the rescission form is received by the insurance company.