

Workers Compensation

Registration is required if you employ people on a regular, casual, or contract basis, pay hourly or by some other method. Virtually all employers in the province of British Columbia must register and pay assessments. If you are unsure about registering, contact the Employer Service Centre at 604 244-6181 or toll free 1 888 WCB-ASMT (1 888 922-2768).

In an incorporated company, all shareholders or officers who are actively engaged in the company business are regarded as employees of the company, and their position under the Act is the same as that of employees who are not shareholders. Where active shareholders do not draw any salary, a fair evaluation of their services must be included in the "assessable payroll" of the company.

Employers who are not registered at the time of a work-related injury to one of their workers are normally charged with the total compensation costs of that claim in addition to retroactive assessments.

The cost of coverage depends on the type of industry you are engaged in and the amount of your assessable payroll. The current assessment rate per \$100.00 of assessable earnings will be quoted for your type of business.

The industry assessment rate applies to the earnings of all occupations within the industry, including administrative and clerical personnel up to the maximum earnings figure stipulated in the Act. Where an employer is engaged in two or more industries, separate payrolls should be maintained for each industry. The administrative payroll is pro-rated to the different classifications in proportion to the operating payroll in each one.

Once all necessary information is received, you will be assigned an account number and informed of your responsibilities.

The following individuals *are not* covered by compensation unless they apply for voluntary coverage:

- A proprietor and spouse, where the business is not an incorporated company
- Partners, where the business is not an incorporated company
- An independent operator, who is neither an employer nor an employee

These individuals are not automatically covered but may apply for coverage by completing an application. In these cases, coverage is effective the date the correctly completed and signed application is received in the Employer Service Centre. Coverage remains continuously in effect and assessments payable until cancelled in writing by the firm or the WCB.

If you will be using subcontractors, these are some things that you need to consider:

Where a subcontractor is not registered with the WCB and the contract under which he or she is employed is essentially one of labour only, the subcontractor and anyone employed to assist in the performance of the contract are generally considered to be workers of the prime contractor -- you -- and covered under the prime contractor's registration. In those cases, the gross amount of the contract is to be included in the prime contractor's "assessable payroll." Where a subcontractor is registered or required to be registered with the WCB, the person for whom the contract work is done may be liable for any assessments due to the WCB in connection with such work if the subcontractor fails to make a proper remittance when due.

You can avoid a potential liability under the *Act* by obtaining a letter of clearance from the WCB. A clearance letter confirms whether the subcontractor is registered and has satisfied assessment remittance requirements.

Work outside the province of British Columbia

If you conduct operations outside the province, registration with the WCB of B.C. does not remove your responsibility to comply with the workers' compensation laws in other provinces, in the territories, or in other countries.

To register:

Call 1-888-922-2768 or attend the One Stop Business Registration Terminal (located in the Provincial Government Building on Barlow Street)

For More Information:

Call 1-888-608-8882

Internet: <http://www.worksafebc.com/pubs/generalinfo/register.asp>