

North Carolina Workers' Comp Update

Practices

Workers' Compensation

August 21, 2026

New North Carolina Industrial Commission Site Launches

On August 7th, the Commission launched their redesigned website, you can access it at the same URL – ic.nc.gov

Online Access to North Carolina Industrial Commission Files

Soon, Attorneys will have online access to North Carolina Industrial Commission files via the Electronic Document Filing Portal (EDFP).

Updated Process for NC Industrial Commissioner Appointments

Going forward, two Full Commissioners will be appointed by the Commissioner of Labor, two by the Governor, and two directly by the General Assembly. The four that are appointed by the Commissioner of Labor and Governor are still subject to General Assembly approval. Commissioners will continue to serve six-year terms.

New Industrial Commission Chairman

Commissioner of Labor Luke Farley has designated Commissioner Tyler Younts to serve as the Chairman of the Industrial Commission effective August 6, 2026.

North Carolina Law Increases Minimum Weekly Compensation Rate & Maximum Compensation Rate for Some Permanent Impairments

House Bill 315 was signed into law by Governor Stein in July, amending North Carolina's Workers' Compensation Act. The new law increases both the weekly minimum compensation rate established under N.C. Gen. Stat. §97-29 and the payment amounts for certain permanent impairment benefits under N.C. Gen. Stat. §97-31. Summary of the key provisions:

- N.C. Gen. Stat. §97-29 is amended to increase the minimum weekly compensation rate from \$30.00 to \$50.00.
- N.C. Gen. Stat. §97-31(21) is amended to increase the maximum payment for serious facial or head disfigurement from \$20,000.00 to \$40,000.00.
- N.C. Gen. Stat. §97-31(22) is amended to increase the payment for serious bodily disfigurement from \$10,000.00 to \$20,000.00. The statute has also been amended to tie payment for serious bodily disfigurement to a rational connection to employability or earning capacity. This added language suggests that injured workers seeking benefits for disfigurement or scarring on a part of the body other than the face or head will need to demonstrate an impact on employability to

qualify.

- N.C. Gen. Stat. §97-31(24) is amended to increase the payment for loss of, or permanent injury to, any important external or internal organ from \$20,000.00 to \$40,000.00.

NOTE: These amendments take effect July 1, 2027, and apply to claims arising on or after that date.

Please contact your Hedrick Gardner attorney with any questions about this alert.