

Rural Area Impact Statement:

- 1. Types and numbers of rural areas:** The rule updates notification requirements for temporary payments of medical treatment and care without establishing liability. All rural employers and payers will need to comply with this regulation, and rural injured workers will also benefit from this expanded regulation conforming with the changes to Workers' Compensation Law (WCL) § 21-a.
- 2. Reporting, recordkeeping and other compliance requirements; and professional services:** The same compliance requirements apply to rural areas as metropolitan ones. The proposed amendments do not generate any new forms or paperwork requirements, but existing forms will be updated so that payers can provide notice as required. These forms must already be filed when a payer opts in to the current temporary payment options under WCL § 21-a. Rural employers should not need any new professional services to comply with this rule. It is economically and technologically feasible for rural businesses to comply with the proposed amendments.
- 3. Costs:** Compliance with the proposed regulations should generally not impose increased compliance costs on rural employers. Compliance with the proposed regulations may have an impact on cost for rural self-insured employers, who may elect to make temporary payments when unsure of the extent of liability for a claim of compensation. For insured employers, the insurance carrier may make such an election. The payer may

weigh the potential costs and benefits, and it is the payer's choice on whether to opt in to temporary payments.

4. **Minimizing adverse impact:** The proposed amendments are not anticipated to have an adverse impact on rural areas. Parties are already required to file notification of temporary payment of indemnity benefits and/or prescribed medicine.

5. **Rural area participation:**

The Workers' Compensation Board (Board) does not have a rural area database but has sent an electronic communication describing the proposal to all insurer, self-insured employer, third party administrators, health care providers, and attorneys and licensed representative subscribers for Board updates.

The Board will duly consider all public comments received from rural areas during the public comment period.