

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & INDUSTRIES

Financial Assistance Programs and Employment Standards

- L&I administers one major program that pays benefits or otherwise provides financial assistance directly to individuals.

The worker's compensation program provides partial wage replacement for workers who are unable to work due to a work-related injury. The program also pays medical costs related to the claim. L&I is responsible for administering benefits, collecting premiums from employers (unless self-insured) and managing the Workers' Compensation Fund.

Benefit-related activities include determining benefit eligibility and calculating benefit amounts. L&I determined a worker's eligibility based upon whether the worker suffered a work-related injury or occupational illness. L&I calculates time-loss payments (wage replacement benefits), permanent partial disability and pension awards. L&I also determines a worker's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation benefits.

Premium-related activities include assigning employers to one or more risk classifications based upon the employer's type of business. L&I also assigns to employers an experience factor rating which tells employers what premium rate they will pay per worker-hour/unit for each risk classification assigned to the employer's business.

- L&I administers and enforces two employment standards relevant to leave from employment.

The state Family Leave Law makes eligible employees entitled to take up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave in a 12-month period for specified family and medical reasons, and to be reinstated to their original jobs or equivalent jobs. The state law generally conforms to the federal Family and Medical Leave Act and related regulations, with certain exceptions.

The state Family Care Law provides that, if employees are entitled to sick leave or other paid time off, employers must allow employees to use their choice of that leave to care for children with health conditions that require treatment or supervision, or spouses, parents, parents-in-law, or grandparents who have serious health conditions or emergency conditions.

L&I also administers and enforces wage and hour requirements (e.g. minimum wage and overtime compensation, prevailing wage, and meal and rest breaks), and child labor laws.

Other Programs

- The Specialty Compliance Services Division administers and enforces the Contractor Registration Act and the electrical, plumbing, elevator, and boiler codes. The Division also helps the Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council oversee apprenticeship programs.
- The Division of Occupational Safety and Health administers and enforces the Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act.

*Prepared For: Joint Legislative Task Force on Family Leave Insurance
Work Session on August 22, 2007*

Prepared By: Jennifer Strus, Senate Committee Services