

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 5205

C 152 L 01
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Requiring self-insurers and the department to provide information for independent medical examinations.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions (originally sponsored by Senators Prentice, Winsley, Fairley and T. Sheldon).

Senate Committee on Labor, Commerce & Financial Institutions
House Committee on Commerce & Labor

Background: The Department of Labor and Industries or a self-insurer can require an injured worker who is seeking workers' compensation benefits to have a medical examination. These examinations are sometimes referred to as Independent Medical Examinations (IMEs). The department or a self-insurer typically requires an IME if additional medical evidence is needed to make a claim determination. The department or self-insurer contracts with health providers who perform these IMEs, and assigns a health provider to examine an injured worker.

Self-insurers are currently required to provide a worker with a copy of his or her entire claim file upon request. If a self-insurer fails to comply with this requirement, the self-insurer can be fined up to \$500.

There is concern that some self-insurers do not provide a worker's entire claim file to health providers performing IMEs.

Summary: Self-insurers and the department must provide all relevant medical records in a worker's claim file to health providers performing independent medical examinations. If a self-insurer fails to comply with this requirement, the self-insurer can be fined up to \$500. Self-insurers are only required to submit this information if the department is also required to submit it.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	49	0
House	93	0

Effective: July 22, 2001