WAC 296-23-347 What are the independent medical examination (IME) provider's responsibilities in an examination? (1) The IME provider's responsibilities prior to the examination are to:

(a) Be familiar with the contents of the medical examiner's handbook;

(b) Review all claim documents provided by the department or self-insurer;

(c) Contact the worker prior to the examination to confirm the appointment date, time and location; and

(d) Review the purpose of the examination and the questions to be answered in the examination report.

(2) The IME provider's responsibilities during the examination are to:

(a) Introduce themselves to the worker;

(b) Verify the identity of the worker;

(c) Let the worker know that the claim documents from the department or self-insurer have been reviewed;

(d) Explain the examination process and answer the worker's questions about the examination process;

(e) Advise the worker that they should not perform any activities beyond their physical capabilities;

(f) Allow the worker to remain fully dressed while taking the history;

(g) Ensure adequate draping and privacy if the worker needs to remove clothing for the examination;

(h) Refrain from expressing personal opinions about the worker, the employer, the attending provider, or the care the worker has received;

(i) Conduct an examination that is unbiased, sound and sufficient to achieve the purpose and reason the examination was requested;

(j) Conduct the examination with dignity and respect for the worker;

(k) Ask if there is any further information the worker would like to provide; and

(l) Close the examination by telling the worker that the examination is over.

(3) The IME provider's responsibilities following the examination are to:

(a) Send a complete IME report to the department or self-insurer within 14 calendar days of the examination date, or within 14 calendar days of receipt of the results of any special tests or studies requested as a part of the examination. Reports received after 14 calendar days may be paid at a lower rate per the fee schedule. The report must meet the requirements of WAC 296-23-382; and

(b) The claim file information received from the department or self-insurer should be disposed of in a manner used for similar health records containing private information after completion of the IME or any follow-up test results are received. IME reports should be retained per WAC 296-20-02005.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 51.04.020, 51.04.030, and 51.36.010. WSR 25-11-071, s 296-23-347, filed 5/20/25, effective 7/1/25. Statutory Authority: RCW 51.32.055, 51.32.112, 51.32.114, 51.36.060, and 51.36.070. WSR 04-04-029, § 296-23-347, filed 1/27/04, effective 3/1/04.]