
Policy lifecycle



Opportunity identification

We define opportunities to improve policy using internal and external resources

Staff and external parties identify opportunities to improve policy, which could require reviewing existing policies or developing new ones. Policy review and/or development may be necessary to:

- address results of a judicial review or Appeals Commission decisions
- ensure compliance with new or amended legislation
- fill any gaps in existing policy

Research and analysis

We review research and conduct jurisdictional comparisons

Once we identify a policy item for review, we begin the research and analysis phase. Depending on the complexity, research might include:

- comparison with other workers' compensation boards
- literature reviews
- asking expert consultants for information and advice
- consultation with impacted groups

Based on the research results, we determine the appropriate action.

Policy development

We draft evidence-based policy aligned with legislation that fosters understanding, consistent application, and successful implementation

We ensure any new or modified policies:

- comply with the legislative requirements of the *Workers' Compensation Act* and any other relevant legislation
- consider the interests of workers and employers
- address feedback raised from consultation with impacted groups (see research and analysis section above) and incorporate internal and external feedback, as appropriate (see consultation and engagement below)
- use clear and concise plain language and standard formatting
- consider how it will be applied and implemented
- apply lenses like accessibility and equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

Consultation and engagement

We gather internal, external and expert feedback, and incorporate it into policy as appropriate

Consultation normally includes public consultation but may include (or consist only of) expert consultation. Depending on the item under review, we may post a policy concept document or a policy draft on the website to allow for input on the proposed approach.

We will not undertake consultation for policy changes that are:

- **Non-substantive**, meaning the policy amendments do not affect the rights or responsibilities of either injured workers or employers.
- **Legal imperatives**, in which the Legislature or justice system has directed that a change or amendment to a policy is necessary.

The [Policy Consultation Advisory Group \(PCAG\)](#) is made up of employer and organized labour representatives. In their advisory capacity, members are expected to help identify emerging policy issues for consideration on the Policy Project Plan and actively promote participation in policy consultation within their respective communities.

WCB's Board of Directors' Policy Committee determine the need for, nature, and length of policy consultation.

Following consultation, we may redraft policies to incorporate relevant consultation feedback. Feedback that is not directly related to the consultation or not supported by legislation is not considered. All other feedback is considered when redrafting policies following consultation; however, not all feedback may be incorporated into final policies.

We evaluate feedback by considering whether the feedback would result in a policy change that:

- is sustainable, affordable and fair, benefitting workers and employers now and in the future.
- reflects the [Principles of Alberta Workers' Compensation](#).
- has legal and/or administrative and financial implications.

We share verbatim comments with the Board of Directors' Policy Committee when we send redrafted policies for approval.

Approval and implementation

We get approval from the Board of Directors and implement changes

Substantive changes: The Board of Directors determines WCB-Alberta policy and approves all new policies and substantive policy changes that affect the rights or responsibilities of either injured workers or employers.

Non-substantive changes: The Board of Directors has delegated authority to WCB-Alberta's Strategic Management Council (SMC) for approval of non-substantive amendments that do not affect the rights or responsibilities of either injured workers or employers. Once approved by SMC, we send non-substantive changes to the Board of Directors and their Policy Committee for information.

Notification: When we publish a new or updated policy, we post it on WCB's [What's new in Policy](#) page. In addition, we email notifications to subscribers to share when we've updated a policy or posted new material for consultation.

Change implementation: As a result of a policy review or revision, there may be corresponding process or procedural changes or clarifications. A policy review does not always result in a policy change; however, it may result in process or procedures updates that resolve issues identified in the policy review. Process and procedure changes are approved and implemented by WCB-Alberta management.

Monitoring and evaluation

We review and revise to ensure policies remain current and relevant

Ongoing monitoring and evaluation support accountability and ensure policies remain current and relevant.

Monitoring may include:

- Tracking policy performance and identifying areas for improvement
- Identifying compliance issues or unintended effects
- Tracking Appeals Commission decisions to identify themes
- Conducting ad hoc reviews in response to new information or changes
- Ensuring alignment with legislation and operational needs

We will evaluate all new policies and policies that have had a substantive change within two years of implementation or update. If a policy change was required to comply with a mandated legislative change, evaluation within the two-year timeframe may not be required.

We evaluate policies based on:

- **Relevance and validity:** Is the policy still relevant, valid and compliant with legislation? Are there new legal factors affecting the policy or new situations the policy does not cover?
- **Effectiveness:** Is the policy effective? Have we achieved policy objectives? Have we addressed any issues identified in the policy review? Has the policy resulted in any unanticipated outcomes? Is there anything we could do to further improve the policy?
- **Efficiency:** Is the policy efficient, economic, and applied as intended? Do procedures support the policy and the legislation? Is the policy applied consistently? Is the policy economic and cost-effective while meeting the policy objective?