

Alberta WCB Policies & Information

Chapter:

WORK-RELATEDNESS

Subject:

ARISES OUT OF AND OCCURS IN THE COURSE
OF EMPLOYMENT

Authorization:

BoD Resolution 2023/03/10

Date:

June 20, 2023

APPLICATION 3: WORK-RELATED TRAVEL

1. *Is a worker covered while travelling?*

A worker may be covered during work-related travel if the accident arises out of and occurs in the course of employment (see Application 2).

For the purposes of this policy, work-related travel is travel that is **under the direction and/or control of the employer** either specifically or as an expected part of the work duties (see Question 2).

In general, a worker is covered throughout their journey except when:

- the worker makes a distinctly personal deviation that removes the worker from the course of employment (see Question 13), or
- the injury is due solely to a personal hazard (see Application 2).

2. *How does WCB determine that travel is work-related (under the direction/control of the employer)?*

To determine whether travel is under the direction and/or control of the employer, WCB looks at the following factors:

- the **purpose** of the travel, and
- whether the travel is part of the **job requirement**, and
- the **degree of the employer's control** over the travel.

Coverage is determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the individual circumstances of each claim.

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3. *Is a worker covered when travelling to begin or end a shift?*

Travel is not considered to be at the direction or control of the employer simply because the worker is expected to be at work. Therefore, a worker is **not covered** during travel to begin and end a shift at a specific worksite or their employer's premises, **unless there are employment obligations or duties associated with the travel itself.**

For example, a worker who travels to one of their employer's premises to start their shift would not be covered. However, a worker would be covered during travel to begin and end a shift when there are employment obligations or duties associated with the travel itself, such as a worker who goes directly from their home to an offsite business meeting. In this case, coverage begins when the worker starts their journey (e.g., enters their vehicle, or boards public transportation) and continues until their work-related journey ends.

For information about employer's premises and specific worksites, see Application 2. For coverage while on call or when responding to an emergency, see Question 12).

4. *Is a worker covered when driving a company vehicle to begin or end a shift?*

A worker is not covered while driving a company vehicle to begin or end a shift unless they are required to for a **work-related purpose** such as to protect the contents or to be available for service calls, etc.

Coverage begins when the worker enters the company vehicle to start the journey and ends when the worker exits the company vehicle to end the journey.

For personal deviation, see Question 13. For travelling to begin/end a shift, see Question 3.

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5. *Is ownership of the vehicle a factor?* Generally, ownership of the vehicle is not a relevant factor. The determination is based on the **purpose of the trip** and the **control or direction** the employer exercises. For example, a worker who uses a vehicle leased by their employer as part of a benefit package is not covered while routinely travelling to and from work.
6. *Is a worker covered while travelling on public transportation?* A worker may be covered while travelling on public transportation provided it is under the direction/control of the employer and there are employment obligations or duties associated with the travel itself (see Questions 1-3).
- For example, a worker leaves their employer's premises for an offsite client meeting. Coverage begins when the worker starts their journey by boarding public transportation and continues until their work-related journey ends.
- If, as part of the work-related travel, the worker also makes a return trip on public transportation, the worker is covered continuously from their first journey (e.g., boards public transportation) until the work-related travel is complete and their return journey ends (e.g., exits public transportation) unless the worker makes a personal deviation (see Question 13).
- For information on breaks during work-related travel, see Question 9.
7. *Is a worker covered when travelling for work-related errands or appointments?* Yes, provided it is an errand or appointment under the direction and/or control of the employer either specifically or as an expected part of the work duties.
- Coverage begins when the worker leaves the employer's premises, specific worksite, or designated workspace to

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Errands and appointments (continued)

start the journey (e.g., enters their vehicle) and extends while the worker is on the work-related errand or appointment, unless the worker makes a personal deviation. Coverage ends when the journey ends (e.g., worker returns to the employer's premises and exits their vehicle), or if the worker makes a personal deviation during the errand or appointment. For personal deviation, see Question 13.

8. *Is a worker covered when travelling from a designated workspace to and from the employer's premises or specific worksite?*

No, a worker is not covered when travelling from a **designated workspace** to and from the **employer's premises or specific worksite** unless there are specific employment duties or obligations associated with the travel itself (see Questions 4, 7, and 12).

The activity that the worker will be performing at the employer's premises or specific worksite (i.e., purpose of the trip) does not matter. Travel is only covered if there are employment duties associated with the travel itself.

For example, a worker is not covered travelling from their designated workspace to the employer's premises to pick up office supplies, to attend a mandatory meeting, or to meet with a client. However, if there is an employment duty associated with the travel itself, such as the worker picking up the client on the way to the employer's premises for a meeting, the worker may be covered.

Unless there are employment duties associated with the travel itself, the worker is **not covered** for travel to or from the employer's premises or specific worksite regardless of the:

- time of the trip (e.g., if a worker decides to work part of the day at the employer's premises, the trip

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*Travel to and from
designated workspace to
employer’s premises or
specific worksite (continued)*

to the employer’s premises, even if it is during working hours, is not covered)

- frequency of the trip (e.g., if a worker who works almost exclusively from home travels to the employer's premises to attend an in-person team meeting, they are not covered)

For travel for work-related errands or appointments, see Question 7. For more information on designated workspaces (a place of work other than the employer’s premises or a specific worksite), see Application 2.

9. *Is a worker covered while taking breaks during work-related travel?*

Apart from the journey itself, a worker is also covered while taking breaks to fulfill basic comfort needs such as rest stops or meals, including any hazard of the food or premises.

For example, a truck driver who stops for a meal or a transit operator who stops to use the washroom is covered during the break provided the stop is along, or reasonably close to, the business route. The worker may be covered if there are no restaurants or rest stops directly along the business route requiring the worker to leave the business route to find a reasonable alternative.

10. *Is a worker covered when the transportation is operated and/or provided by the employer?*

Yes, provided it is under the direction and/or control of the employer. Under the direction and/or control includes transportation operated, provided, or arranged by the employer (e.g., a bus or motorcoach).

Coverage begins from the point the worker enters the employer-operated/provided transportation and ends when the worker exits the transportation.

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*Transportation operated /
provided by the employer
(continued)*

11. *Is a worker covered while travelling on a private road?*

For example, a worker is covered if they commute to work in an employer-provided or operated bus.

For information on workers using employer-owned or leased vehicles, see Question 5.

Yes, provided reasonable and practical access to a worksite requires travel on a private road that the **employer owns, leases, or has permission for workers to use.**

Coverage begins when the worker enters the private road and extends while the worker is on the private road unless the worker makes a personal deviation (see Question 13). Coverage ends when the worker leaves the private road or makes a personal deviation.

12. *Is a worker covered when responding to an emergency or while on call?*

Yes, provided the worker:

- is required to make an unexpected or special journey to respond to an emergency such as fire, flood, or robbery, or
- is performing employment duties while on call

Coverage begins when the worker receives notification they are required to respond to the emergency or on-call situation. A worker is covered continuously until the situation has been dealt with (e.g., exit their vehicle after returning home from the call). The only interruption to the continuous coverage is if the worker makes a personal deviation (see Question 13).

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13. *Is a worker covered during a personal deviation during work-related travel?*

A personal deviation occurs when a worker leaves the course of employment by engaging in an activity that is distinctly personal (e.g., running errands, shopping).

A worker is not covered when they make a distinct personal deviation from the work-related journey (e.g., using a hotel’s recreational facilities, such as a gym or a pool, while staying in overnight accommodations).

Coverage stops upon starting the personal deviation and resumes when the personal deviation ends, bringing them back into the course of employment. For example, if a worker on work-related travel is injured while shopping for personal items, coverage stops upon leaving the business route and resumes when they are back on the business route.

14. *Is a worker covered while on a work-related overnight trip?*

Yes, provided the worker is required to stay overnight during work-related travel (e.g., a worker staying in a hotel to attend a conference in another city). The worker is considered to be under the direction of the employer throughout the trip.

The worker is not under the direction of the employer if:

- they make a distinctly personal deviation (e.g., sightseeing, going to a sporting event, using a hotel’s recreational facilities) (see Question 13), or
- the injury is due solely to a personal hazard (e.g., neck strain due to sleeping in an awkward position) (see Application 2), or
- they are not making reasonable and permitted use of the facilities

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*Work-related overnight trip
(continued)*

Coverage begins when the worker starts the journey (e.g., enters a taxi to go to the airport) and ends when the journey ends (e.g., worker exits the taxi when they arrive home).

Coverage extends to breaks during the journey (e.g., washroom break, or going to a restaurant to have a meal).

Coverage does not extend if the worker is staying at a private residence (e.g., with family) while they are at the private residence (this is a personal deviation).

15. *Is payment for travel a factor?*

Payment for travel may be a factor in determining whether the travel is under the direction of the employer. However, payment is considered in conjunction with all other factors. The primary factor is the purpose of the trip.

For example, if a worker is paid for travel to and from an employer’s premises or specific worksite to start or end a shift, the travel is not covered (see Question 3).

Conversely, a worker travelling from home to an offsite work-related appointment may not be paid for travel, but they are covered as the travel is an expected part of the work duties.

For coverage while responding to an emergency or while on call, see Question 12. For information on driving a company vehicle to begin or end a shift, see Question 4.

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16. *Is a worker covered while performing work-related duties during personal travel?*

A worker is generally not covered during personal travel. The exception is when the worker engages in an activity that is distinctly work-related, bringing them into the course of employment. Coverage begins when the work-related activity starts and continues until its completion, when the worker returns to personal travel.

For example, the manager of a Calgary paper company on vacation in Montreal is covered if they attend a meeting at the company's Montreal head office at the employer's direction. The manager would not be covered for travel to and from Montreal, but would be covered for travel from the hotel to the meeting location and back, as well as the meeting itself.

17. *Are drivers and passengers on personal travel covered while transporting workers on work-related travel or errands?*

If a worker on work-related travel or errands is transported by a driver on personal travel, only the worker is covered. The driver and any other passengers in the vehicle are not covered, unless they are workers in the course of employment. If they are workers, their claim will be adjudicated separately.

18. *Are workers covered while travelling to take up employment at a distant location?*

Coverage is extended to a worker while travelling to take up employment at a distant location when:

- a) the worker has been assigned or has accepted an offer of employment, and
- b) the distance from the worker's home to the job is such that the worker must temporarily reside at the job location, and
- c) the employer has made a commitment to pay for the travel time or expenses.

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Employment at a distant location (continued)

In these cases, the initial trip to begin the job and the return journey at the conclusion of the job are considered to be part of the employment contract and the worker will be covered while travelling directly to and from the distant worksite.

For additional information on travel from outside of the province, refer to Policy 06-01, Part II, Application 5.

Generally, a worker is not covered while making additional trips to and from home or elsewhere for personal reasons such as time off, shift changes, etc. unless:

- these trips are a condition of the acceptance of the assignment, or
- the employer arranges, pays, or provides the travel (see Question 10)

If a worker establishes a temporary residence at the distant work location, that worker does not have coverage while occupying the temporary residence, nor for routinely commuting between the temporary residence and the worksite. This applies regardless of the worker’s choice of a temporary residence (e.g., trailer, motorhome, motel, hotel, or private residence) and even if the worker is paid a living allowance, as the worker is not under the employer’s direction/control while occupying the temporary residence.

For example, a worker living in Red Deer travels to a rig site in Northern Alberta for a three-month stay. For the duration of the project, the worker chooses to temporarily live in a hotel at the job location. The worker is not considered to be under the direction of the employer while staying in the accommodation.

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Employment at a distant location (continued)

This is distinct from the case where a worker is staying in an employer-provided residential facility (e.g., camp). See Application 2.

19. *When is this policy application effective?*

This policy application (Application 3 – Work-related Travel) is effective September 1, 2023, and applies to all accidents on or after that date, except when noted otherwise in a specific policy section(s).

[Document History](#)

Previous versions

- [Policy 0201 Part II - April 2018](#)
- [Policy 0201 Part II - August 2015](#)
- [Policy 0201 Part II - April 2010](#)
- [Policy 0201 Part II - May 2007](#)
- [Policy 0201 Part II - April 2004](#)
- [Policy 0201 Part II - January 2004](#)
- [Policy 0201 Part II - January 2002](#)
- [Policy 0201 Part II \(consolidated manual 1st Issue\) - February 1997](#)