

Agency Purpose

The Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals (WCCA) was established by the legislature as the exclusive statewide authority to decide all questions of law and fact in workers' compensation disputes within the court's appellate jurisdiction as provided by M.S. 175A and 176.

Core Functions

The court consists of five judges appointed by the governor and confirmed by the state senate. The governor designates one of the five as chief judge, who has responsibility for the administration of the court. The court performs an appellate function, reviewing decisions of the Workers' Compensation Division of the Department of Labor and Industry (DOLI), and the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH). This includes:

- ◆ reviewing the evidentiary record created by the initial decision making body;
- ◆ presiding over oral arguments;
- ◆ conducting necessary legal research;
- ◆ deciding the issues; and
- ◆ issuing appropriate written orders, decisions, and memoranda.

Decisions are written to inform the court's clientele of the basis of the decisions and to create a body of law pertaining to workers' compensation issues. Decisions of this court are appealable directly to the Minnesota Supreme Court.

Operations

- ◆ To deliver services as expeditiously as possible while maintaining the integrity of the decision-making function.
- ◆ To produce high quality and consistent decisions on a timely basis in order to provide the quick and efficient delivery of indemnity and medical benefits to qualified injured workers at a reasonable cost to employers.
- ◆ To provide economic stability for injured workers and their families in financial crises due to work-related illnesses and injuries.
- ◆ To provide for timely cure and treatment of work-related illnesses and injuries.
- ◆ To help provide a competitive business climate for Minnesota employers.
- ◆ To provide direction and motivation for employers to create safe and healthy work environments for employees.

Key Goals

To enhance the expeditious delivery of services through improved technology.

Key Measures

- ◆ The Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals issues its decisions an average of 50 days after oral argument before the court or assignment of the cases to the judges.
- ◆ The Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals maintains a website that provides information, rules and a searchable text of decisions of the court.

Budget

The budget for FY 2008-09 totals \$3.4 million. The WCCA is funded by a direct appropriation from the workers' compensation special fund. The court currently has the equivalent of 13.65 full-time employees.

At A Glance

- ◆ Budget of approximately \$1.7 million annually
- ◆ Five judges
- ◆ Approximately 14 FTE

The court has attempted to produce decisions which are consistent and which bring predictability to the resolution of workers' compensation disputes. We believe that this goal has been achieved to a large extent and has been a factor in reducing the amount of litigation in the workers' compensation system.

The primary factors influencing operations of the court continue to be the number of work-related injuries sustained and the extent of litigation over benefit entitlement. Other factors include workplace safety, new legislation, insurance costs, medical costs, and economic conditions.

Contact

Workers' Compensation Court of Appeals
Minnesota Judicial Center
25 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55155-1500

WCCA Web Home Page: <http://www.workerscomp.state.mn.us>. Information available includes: WCCA Decisions 1999 to the Present and Rules of Practice.

General Information:

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<i>Dollars in Thousands</i>					
	Current		Forecast Base		Biennium
	FY2008	FY2009	FY2010	FY2011	2010-11
<u>Direct Appropriations by Fund</u>					
Workers Compensation					
Current Appropriation	1,660	1,703	1,703	1,703	3,406
Forecast Base	1,660	1,703	1,703	1,703	3,406
Change		0	0	0	0
% Biennial Change from 2008-09					1.3%
 <u>Expenditures by Fund</u>					
Direct Appropriations					
Workers Compensation	1,556	1,807	1,703	1,703	3,406
Total	1,556	1,807	1,703	1,703	3,406
 <u>Expenditures by Category</u>					
Total Compensation	1,353	1,376	1,388	1,402	2,790
Other Operating Expenses	203	431	315	301	616
Total	1,556	1,807	1,703	1,703	3,406
 <u>Expenditures by Program</u>					
Workers Comp Ct Of Appeals	1,556	1,807	1,703	1,703	3,406
Total	1,556	1,807	1,703	1,703	3,406
 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)	 13.5	 13.5	 13.5	 13.5	

WORKERS COMP COURT OF APPEALS

Agency Revenue Summary

Dollars in Thousands

	Actual FY2008	Budgeted FY2009	Current Law		Biennium 2010-11
			FY2010	FY2011	
<u>Non Dedicated Revenue:</u>					
Other Revenues:					
General	3	0	0	0	0
Total Non-Dedicated Receipts	3	0	0	0	0
<u>Dedicated Receipts:</u>					
Total Dedicated Receipts	0	0	0	0	0
Agency Total Revenue					
	3	0	0	0	0