



Texas Department of Insurance

Division of Workers' Compensation

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September 23, 2005

COMMISSIONER'S BULLETIN NO. B-0056-05

TO: ALL INSURANCE COMPANIES, CORPORATIONS, EXCHANGES, MUTUALS, RECIPROCALLS, ASSOCIATIONS, LLOYDS, OR OTHER INSURERS WRITING WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY INSURANCE IN THE STATE OF TEXAS AND TO AGENTS AND REPRESENTATIVES AND THE PUBLIC GENERALLY

AND

TO: ALL WORKERS' COMPENSATION SYSTEM PARTICIPANTS

RE: Hurricane Rita - An Extraordinary Event

Workers' Compensation Issues Concerning Hurricane Victims or Evacuees.

On September 20, 2005, Governor Rick Perry issued a proclamation declaring a disaster due to the effects of Hurricane Rita, certifying that Hurricane Rita poses a threat of imminent disaster along the Texas Coast beginning September 20, 2005, and directing that all necessary measures both public and private as authorized under Section 418.015 of the Texas Government Code be implemented to meet that threat. The proclamation also states that, as provided in Section 418.016 of the Texas Government Code, all rules and regulations that may inhibit or prevent prompt response to this threat are suspended for the duration of the incident.

With the potential for devastation resulting from Hurricane Rita and the possible relocation of hurricane victims and other personal hardships sustained by residents of the Gulf Coast, the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation encourages carriers to provide displaced injured workers with methods for reporting a change of address and to use all available means to provide to displaced injured workers prompt and immediate relief, including but not limited to processing and delivery of benefit checks and necessary medical care, services, and supplies, including physical therapy, pharmacy, or medical equipment.

Additionally, please refer to Bulletin Numbers B-0047-05, 0049-05, 0050-05, 0051-05, 0054-05, and 0055-05, issued by Commissioner of Insurance, Mike Geeslin, regarding prescription medication coverage, extension of claim filing deadlines, suspension of premium payments, prompt claims adjusting, waiver of restrictions such as preauthorization, and access to medical equipment supplies and services. These Bulletins are also applicable to workers' compensation insurance and claims.

Questions regarding this bulletin may be directed to the Central Claims Management and Customer Service Program, at (512) 804-4636. Injured workers may call toll-free at 1-800-372-7713.