

Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Findings and Decision

General Information

Requestor Name

Joe Huggins, D.C.

Respondent Name

Liberty Mutual Insurance Co.

MFDR Tracking Number

M4-23-0271-01

Carrier's Austin Representative

Box Number 01

DWC Date Received

September 22, 2022

Summary of Findings

Dates of Service	Disputed Services	Amount in Dispute	Amount Due
February 16, 2022	Designated Doctor Examination 99456-WP-W5	\$350.00	\$350.00
	Designated Doctor Examination 99456-WP-W5	\$300.00	\$300.00
	Designated Doctor Examination 99456-W8-RE	\$500.00	\$500.00
Total		\$1,150.00	\$1,150.00

Requestor's Position

The enclosed Designated Doctor Exam report and billing was originally submitted for payment on 02-19-2022 ... To date no response or returned calls have been received.

Amount in Dispute: \$1,150.00

Respondent's Position

The Austin carrier representative for Liberty Mutual Insurance Co. is J. T. Parker & Associates. The representative was notified of this medical fee dispute on October 4, 2022.

Per 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.307 (d)(1), if the DWC does not receive the response within 14 calendar days of the dispute notification, then the DWC may base its decision on the

available information.

As of today, no response has been received from the insurance carrier or its representative. We will base this decision on the information available.

Findings and Decision

Authority

This medical fee dispute is decided according to Texas Labor Code §413.031 and applicable rules of the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC).

Statutes and Rules

1. 28 Texas Administrative Code §133.240 sets out the procedures for payment or denial of a medical bill.
2. 28 TAC §133.307 sets out the procedures for resolving medical fee disputes.
3. 28 TAC §134.325 sets out the fee guidelines for examinations to determine ability to return to work.
4. 28 TAC §134.325 sets out the fee guidelines for examinations to determine maximum medical improvement and impairment rating.

Denial Reasons

Neither party submitted an explanation of benefits with reasons for the denial of payment for the disputed services.

Issues

1. Did Liberty Mutual Insurance Co. take final action on the bill for the disputed service before medical fee dispute resolution was requested?
2. Is Joe Huggins, D.C. entitled to additional reimbursement?

Findings

1. Dr. Huggins is seeking reimbursement for a designated doctor examination to determine maximum medical improvement, impairment rating, and ability to return to work. Dr. Huggins argued that he had not received payment or an explanation of denial for medical bills submitted for the examination in question.

Per 28 TAC §133.240 (a), the insurance carrier is required to take final action by paying, reducing, or denying the service in question not later than 45 days after receiving the medical bill. This deadline is not extended by a request for additional information.

The greater weight of evidence presented to DWC supports that a complete bill for the

services in question was received by the insurance carrier or its agent. No evidence was provided to support that the insurance carrier took final action on the bill for the service in question.

2. Because the insurance carrier failed to provide any defense for non-payment of the examination in question, Dr. Huggins is entitled to reimbursement.

The submitted documentation supports that Dr. Huggins performed an evaluation of maximum medical improvement as ordered by DWC. 28 TAC §134.250 (3)(C) states that the maximum allowable reimbursement (MAR) for this examination is \$350.00.

Review of the submitted documentation finds that Dr. Huggins performed impairment rating evaluations of the right elbow with range of motion testing. The rule at 28 TAC §134.250 (4)(C)(ii) defines the fees for the calculation of an impairment rating for musculoskeletal body areas. The MAR for the evaluation of the first musculoskeletal body area performed with range of motion is \$300.00.

The submitted documentation indicates that Dr. Huggins performed an examination to determine the injured employee's ability to return to work. According to 28 TAC §134.235, the MAR for this examination is \$500.00.

The total allowable reimbursement for the examination in question is \$1,150.00. This amount is recommended.

Conclusion

The outcome of this medical fee dispute is based on the evidence presented by the requestor and the respondent at the time of adjudication. Though all evidence may not have been discussed, it was considered.

DWC finds the requester has established that additional reimbursement of \$1,150.00 is due.

Order

Under Texas Labor Code §§413.031 and 413.019, DWC has determined the requestor is entitled to additional reimbursement for the disputed services. It is ordered that Liberty Mutual Insurance Co. must remit to Joe Huggins, D.C. \$1,150.00 plus applicable accrued interest within 30 days of receiving this order in accordance with 28 TAC §134.130.

Authorized Signature

Signature

Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Officer

January 27, 2023

Date

Your Right to Appeal

Either party to this medical fee dispute has a right to seek review of this decision under 28 TAC §133.307, which applies to disputes filed on or after **June 1, 2012**.

A party seeking review must submit DWC Form-045M, *Request to Schedule, Reschedule, or Cancel a Benefit Review Conference to Appeal a Medical Fee Dispute Decision (BRC-MFD)* and follow the instructions on the form. You can find the form at www.tdi.texas.gov/forms/form20numeric.html. DWC must receive the request within **20 days** of when you receive this decision. You may fax, mail, or personally deliver your request to DWC using the contact information on the form or the field office handling the claim. If you have questions about DWC Form-045M, please call CompConnection at 1-800-252-7031, option 3 or email CompConnection@tdi.texas.gov.

The party seeking review of the MFDR decision must deliver a copy of the request to all other parties involved in the dispute at the same time the request is filed with DWC. **Please include a copy of the *Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Findings and Decision*** with any other required information listed in 28 TAC §141.1(d).

Si prefiere hablar con una persona en español acerca de ésta correspondencia, favor de llamar a 1-800-252-7031, opción 3 o correo electrónico CompConnection@tdi.texas.gov.