



## TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

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# memo

To: Texas Workers' Compensation System Participants

From: Emily McCoy, Associate General Counsel, Office of General Counsel

Date: September 6, 2017

RE: Finalized Amendments to Plain Language Notices

The Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI-DWC) has finalized revisions to plain language notices PLN-1, PLN-2, and PLN-4 through PLN-12, as well as new PLN-3a, PLN-3b, and PLN-3c.

TDI-DWC's goal is to improve the notices insurance carriers use to communicate with injured employees. Generally, the purpose of the finalized plain language notices is to provide consistency in language and formatting and to provide an emphasis on plain language. The revisions apply to both the English and Spanish versions of the forms. In addition, the PLN-3, which has historically been used to report up to five different benefit scenarios, has been divided into three different notices. After review, TDI-DWC determined that the separation of different benefit scenarios helps ensure only necessary information is being relayed to the injured employee in a simple and easy to understand manner. Therefore, new PLN-3a, PLN-3b and PLN-3c are also finalized.

Informal drafts of the plain language notices were posted on the TDI-DWC website on April 12, 2017, with an informal comment period ending on May 12, 2017. Based upon comments, TDI-DWC made a number of changes to the notices as posted, including clarifying whether a copy of the notice must be sent to TDI-DWC; removing the "date carrier received notice of injury"/"notice of injury date" field on most of the notices; changing the numbering of the PLN-3, PLN-13, and PLN-14 to the PLN-3a, PLN-3b, and PLN-3c in order to group the PLNs relating to impairment income benefits together into one series, as well as changing the title of each of the notices to differentiate between their purposes; and, generally reviewing and amending the carrier instructions for consistency and clarity.

The finalized notices are available on the TDI-DWC website at [www.tdi.texas.gov/forms/form20plain.html](http://www.tdi.texas.gov/forms/form20plain.html), and are effective March 1, 2018. Insurance carriers may choose to continue using the existing plain language notices or to begin using the revised notices until the effective date. On or after March 1, 2018, insurance carriers must use the revised plain language notices.