

Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Research Agenda Workers' Compensation Research and Evaluation Group

Introduction

Texas Labor Code §405.0026 requires the commissioner of workers' compensation to adopt a research agenda each year for the Workers' Compensation Research and Evaluation Group (REG) at the Texas Department of Insurance (TDI).

Labor Code §405.0025 requires the REG to conduct professional studies and research related to the operational effectiveness of the workers' compensation system.

Labor Code §405.0026 requires the REG to prepare a research agenda each year for the commissioner to review, approve, and publish in the *Texas Register*.

Texas Insurance Code §1305.502 requires the REG to develop and issue an informational report card each year that identifies and compares, on an objective basis, certified health care networks with each other and with claims not in the network.

Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Research Agenda

The REG proposes the following research projects:

- complete and publish the 2021 Workers' Compensation Health Care Network Report Card (required under Insurance Code §1305.502 and Labor Code §405.0025);
- analyze the preliminary impact of COVID-19 on the Texas workers' compensation system, including claim frequency, claim costs, disputes, and return-to-work outcomes; and
- study the use of telemedicine in the Texas workers' compensation system, including trends regarding the types and cost of services being performed, the types of health care providers providing these services, and the demographic trends of injured employees receiving telemedicine services.

The REG will consider expanding the scope of the research projects or conducting more projects to accommodate stakeholder suggestions, subject to the resources and data available.

Request for Comments or Public Hearing

You may submit comments on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2021 Research Agenda or request a public hearing in writing no later than 5 p.m., Central Time, on September 21, 2020. A hearing request must be on a separate page from any written comments.

Send your comments or hearing request by email to RuleComments@tdi.texas.gov or mail them to: Cynthia Guillen, DWC Legal Services, MS-4D, Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation, 7551 Metro Center Drive, Suite 100, Austin, Texas 78744-1645.

Copies of the proposed research agenda are on the [TDI website](#). Please email any questions about this agenda to Amy Lee at wcresearch@tdi.texas.gov.