

State Law Protects Those Injured on the Job

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Thousands of workers in Illinois are injured on the job each year. If it should happen to you, state law mandates that you receive benefits covering the cost of medical treatment and lost time from work, no matter who was at fault.

The medical coverage begins from the moment you have your work-related injury, according to Antonio M. Romanucci, a partner in Romanucci & Blandin, LLC, whose firm has represented thousands of victims in workers' compensation cases.

"Your employer is responsible for providing benefits, paying them directly to you or through an insurance company that administers the program," he states. "Absolutely no part of the workers' compensation insurance premium or benefits can be charged to you."

He offers the following advice to those who sustain an injury on the job.

- Immediately report the accident to your employer or supervisor and a union steward, if there is one.
- Before leaving the scene, try to gather the names and addresses of any witnesses, obtain photos and secure evidence.
- A detailed description of the accident, including all injuries and complaints, should be given to the doctor or hospital that treats the injury.

Sometimes, an injury may not be obvious, says Romanucci. Therefore, the law allows employees up to 45 days to notify their employer about an occurrence. For an occupational disease or repetitive trauma claim, a person must give notice as soon as he or she becomes aware of the condition, but there are important limitation dates to be aware of, so it is strongly recommended the person consult with an attorney.

Benefits not only cover emergency medical services, but when necessary, physical, mental or vocational rehabilitation. The injured person is also eligible to receive weekly payments until returning to work. If the injury or

disease results in permanent disability, other benefits may be available. Should the injury or disease result in death, certain family members may be entitled to benefits.

Romanucci & Blandin, LLC, offers general information concerning the rights of injured workers in a free, 12-page booklet called "The Injured Employee's Guide to Recovery Under the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act." Among issues it addresses are how disability is determined, who is entitled to survivors' benefits, and how workers' compensation claims are handled.

A copy of the booklet can be obtained by writing to Romanucci & Blandin, LLC, 33 N. LaSalle Street, 20th Floor, Chicago, IL 60602, or by calling (312) 458-1000 or [sending an e-mail request](#).

In addition to workers' compensation cases, Romanucci & Blandin, LLC, provides representation to victims of catastrophic personal injury and wrongful death. The firm has won nearly three dozen settlements and verdicts of \$1 million and above for its clients. In 2007, they were named as one of the top 12 Illinois injury firms with the largest settlements and verdicts.