



ON-THE-JOB INJURY LAW FAQs

Beginning October 1, 2026, the Public Education Employee Injury Compensation Program will become the exclusive remedy for job-related injuries sustained by covered public education employees. Injury claims will begin to process soon, so please remember these key points. As always, consult with your local counsel for legal advice.

Program Overview



When did the Maryann Leonard Educators' On-the-Job Injury Act take effect?

This Act was signed into law in April 2025; however, the Public Education Employee Injury Compensation Board has set **October 1, 2026**, as the date the injury compensation program itself will begin accepting claims.



What is the Public Education Employee Injury Compensation Program (PEEICP)?

It is a program established to provide compensation and medical benefits to covered public education employees for on-the-job injuries.



What is the Public Education Employee Injury Compensation Board (PEEICB)?

The PEEICB is the entity responsible for administering the injury compensation program.



Which process applies to an employee's on-the-job injury, this new program or the Board of Adjustment?

It depends on when the injury occurred. This program is the sole remedy for on-the-job injuries occurring on or after the implementation date of **October 1, 2026**. The Board of Adjustment retains sole jurisdiction over claims for injuries that occurred before the implementation date.

Coverage & Eligibility



Which employees are covered by the injury compensation program?

Full time employees and adult bus drivers of all public city and county boards of education; all public charter schools; the Board of Trustees of the Alabama Community College System; the Board of Trustees of the Alabama Institute for the Deaf and Blind; the Board of Directors of the Alabama School of Fine Arts; the Board of Trustees of the Alabama High School of Mathematics and Science; the Board of Trustees of the Alabama School of Cyber Technology and Engineering; and the Board of Trustees of the Alabama School of Healthcare Sciences.



Does the injury compensation program cover part-time, seasonal, substitute, contracted, temporary employees, extended day/hourly workers, or volunteers?

No. These individuals, along with visitors, parents, students and vendors, are **excluded** from the Public Education Employee Injury Compensation Program entirely; their injury claims are handled through the Board of Adjustment process instead.



What is an on-the-job injury?

The law defines an “on-the-job injury” as any accident or injury to an employee arising out of and in the course of employment or occurring during the performance of duties. It does not include a mental disorder or mental injury that has neither been produced nor proximately caused by some physical injury to the body.

Reporting Injuries



How soon does an injured employee need to report a job-related injury?

The employee must give written notice to an immediate supervisor or the executive officer of the school system within five (5) working days after an injury has occurred. All injured employees are encouraged to report an on-the-job injury immediately, if possible, to the executive officer or supervisor at their school and/or to the Triage Line. The Triage Line number is 1-800-272-5246.



If the employee is hospitalized, dies, or is physically unable to make the report, may someone else provide notice on the employee's behalf?

Yes, if an employee is deceased or not clinically able to make notification, another individual who is reasonably knowledgeable may make the notification of the injury within ninety (90) days of the date of the injury. All employees or persons with reasonable knowledge are encouraged to report the injury to the 24-hour "Nurse Triage Hotline" as soon as possible. The Nurse Triage Hotline number is 1-800-272-5246.



Should an employee report every injury that occurs on the job?

Yes. The law requires written notice within five (5) working days of any accident or injury arising out of and in the course of employment.



What must the school system do once it receives timely notice of an employee's on-the-job injury?

The school system, through its designated personnel, must fill out the forms provided for notifying the PEEICB of an injury and direct the injured employee to call the Nurse Triage Line immediately to begin the claim reporting and benefit process. If the school system refuses to complete and submit a report after receiving timely notice of an on-the-job injury, it must provide a written statement of its findings of fact supporting that refusal.



Can the employee challenge the school system's refusal to file an injury report?

Yes, an employee can challenge the school system's refusal through the dispute resolution provisions described in the rules adopted by the PEEICB.

NOTE: If a school system refuses a claim, then the school board and its board attorney would presumably then be responsible for defending that refusal if challenged by the employee. AASB's suggested practice is for the school system to instead submit the first report of injury to the third-party claims administrator (TPA), noting on the report its refusal and its own internal findings but still allowing the TPA to conduct its initial investigation.



Are there standard injury reporting forms school employees and employers must use to report injuries?

Yes. The PEEICB has developed and adopted uniform injury reporting forms for use across school systems.



Who is responsible for making sure schools have access to these reporting forms?

The local school board is responsible for providing access to the reporting forms and must distribute the forms to the schools and worksites under its supervision. The forms are available now on [AASB's website](#) and will also be available on the PEEICB's website.



Who fills out the initial injury report, the employee or the school system?

As the employer, the school system (through its designated personnel) prepares the first report of injury. The employee must then review and sign the completed form. Employees should report any injury to the school or its executive officer and/or the Nurse Triage Line so that the first report of injury can be completed. Only one first report of injury needs to be completed and if the Nurse Triage Line is used, the first report of injury will be completed by them.



What happens after the employee signs the completed injury report?

The school system, through its designated personnel, must forward the completed and signed form to the PEEICB's third-party claims administrator (TPA), Millennium Risk Managers (MRM). MRM's email is PEEICB@mrm-llc.com and their fax number is 205-777-6097. If an employee refuses to sign and/or return the injury report, the school system should notify the claims manager and document all outreach attempts.



Can a school system create its own notification procedures for reporting injuries?

Yes, the school system may establish **additional** notification procedures and its own form(s) through its own written policy. However, the forms **required** by the PEEICB must be completed by the school or through the Nurse Triage Line. If additional information or forms are created/utilized or become known by a school, that supplemental information should also be submitted to the PEEICB.



Do the school system's own procedures override the notice requirements set by the PEEICB or the law?

No. The school system's established injury/incident reporting procedures do not supersede the notification forms and procedures required by the PEEICB. The school system's forms and procedures can only supplement those forms set by the PEEICB.

Medical Treatment & Payment



Who pays medical providers for treating an injured employee?

The Public Education Employees' Health Insurance Plan (PEEHIP) makes payments to physicians and other medical providers for services to injured employees who are covered by PEEHIP, in accordance with PEEHIP's schedule of maximum fees.



What if the injured employee has different medical insurance and is not covered by PEEHIP?

For employees who are not covered by PEEHIP, payment for medical services will be made by the PEEICB, through its third-party claims administrator, Millennium Risk Managers, provided the treatment is related to the claimed work-related injury.



Can the PEEICB require an employee to undergo an Independent Medical Examination (IME)?

Yes. The PEEICB has sole discretion to designate and authorize a licensed physician to perform an IME to assess an injured employee's physical or mental condition. However, the PEEICB, not PEEHIP, pays for the IME physician.



Can an employee injured on the job choose any doctor for treatment?

Generally, no. An employee must use an authorized treating physician covered by PEEHIP. If the employee's personal physician meets the program's requirements and is covered by PEEHIP, the employee may be permitted by the PEEICB's third-party claims administrator to receive treatment from that physician. If an employee is not covered by PEEHIP, the authorized treating physician will be designated by the PEEICB's third-party claims administrator, Millennium Risk Managers.



What if an employee disagrees with the treatment they are receiving?

If the employee is covered by PEEHIP but is dissatisfied with the initial treating physician and needs further treatment, the employee may select another PEEHIP physician if allowed by the PEEHIP program. If the employee is not covered by PEEHIP and is dissatisfied with the initial-treating physician and needs further treatment, the employee is entitled to choose a second physician from a PEEICB-selected panel or list of four physicians. Any request for a panel of physicians must be made to the third-party claims administrator, Millennium Risk Managers.



Does the PEEICB reimburse injured employees for copayments and deductibles?

Yes, but reimbursement for copayments and deductibles is only applicable to those employees covered by PEEHIP. The PEEICB will reimburse injured employees for copayments and deductibles not covered by PEEHIP provided it is for an accepted and compensable claim, from an authorized PEEHIP physician and otherwise owed under the Alabama Workers' Compensation Act. Forms for reimbursement are available on the PEEICB's website.



Is the PEEICB obligated to pay for treatment from a physician the employee chose on their own?

No. The PEEICB is only obligated to pay for reasonable and necessary medical expenses incurred from a compensable on-the-job injury and from an authorized treating physician. PEEHIP-covered employees must use an authorized treating physician covered by PEEHIP. Non-PEEHIP employees must use the authorized treating physician selected by the PEEICB.

Pay, Benefits, & Continued Coverage



Do school systems still have to pay health insurance contributions for an injured employee?

Yes, the school system must continue making required health insurance contributions until the employee separates from employment. Some school systems mistakenly believe they can stop paying once a claim is filed; however, health insurance contribution

obligations continue for a school board employer regardless of an employee's workers' compensation/on-the-job injury claim.



Do school employees still receive up to ninety (90) working days of on-the-job injury pay under board policy?

Yes. The right to receive pay up to ninety (90) working days is continued under the Maryann Leonard Act. The right to receive up to ninety (90) working days of paid leave is established by Alabama law, not merely board policy. However, an employee is not automatically entitled to the maximum ninety (90) working days. The amount of leave granted must be consistent with the nature and severity of the work-related injury and the employee's absence from work resulting from that injury. The employer may adopt a written policy to extend the ninety (90) day sick leave period for on-the-job injuries.

Disputes, Hearings, & Appeals



Who resolves disputes between an employee and the school system, or between an employee and a Third-Party Administrator (TPA)?

All disputes must be resolved through the Review Board, a hearing officer, or by agreed-upon mediation. Review Board proceedings are not a prerequisite to a hearing before a hearing officer.



What is the Review Board?

The Review Board is a three-person panel designated by the PEEICB to hear claims from employees who disagree with the employer's (or its agent or service company) determination about their entitlement to compensation and/or medical benefits under this program. Review Board proceedings are not a prerequisite to a hearing before a hearing officer.



What can the Review Board do besides hear disputed claims?

The Review Board can also approve settlements reached by the parties, including lump sum settlements and settlements that close some or all benefits, when permitted by the program.



Can a party request a different decision-maker instead of the Review Board?

Yes. If the employee, employer, or TPA requests a hearing officer, the dispute goes to a hearing officer selected from a panel of neutrals maintained by the Executive Director of the Alabama State Bar. The parties may also enter into voluntary mediation of the issues presented.



How is a hearing officer selected?

The Alabama State Bar maintains a roster of attorneys experienced in workers' compensation disputes. When a hearing officer is requested, the Alabama State Bar's Executive Director randomly selects five names from the roster. The parties may agree on one, or if they cannot agree, they choose through alternating strikes (the employee strikes first, the employer strikes last).



Can a hearing officer's decision be appealed?

Yes, but an appeal of the hearing officer's decision can only be filed in the Circuit Court of Montgomery County, Alabama. The appeal is limited to the existing record (meaning there's no new trial and no new evidence allowed on appeal). A decision will not be reversed unless the decision is found to be in violation of the standards set out in Alabama Code §41-22-20 (Judicial Review of Preliminary Actions).



Who pays for the hearing transcript on appeal?

The appealing party pays initially, but the cost is later taxed against the losing party in circuit court.



How long does an employee have to bring a dispute under the Maryann Leonard Act? How long does the employee have to request review of a dispute regarding benefits?

The statute of limitations for initiation of a dispute under the Maryann Leonard Act is no later than two (2) years of the later of the date of injury, the date of last diagnosis for occupational disease, or the date of the last temporary total disability payment, whichever applies under the employee's circumstances. In the case of an employee's dispute regarding benefits, an employee must notify the program's Executive Director, in writing, of a request for a hearing by the Review Board or a hearing officer within sixty

(60) calendar days from the date the employee was notified of the disputed decision.



Can an employee's attorney be awarded a legal fee from the compensation recovered in a contested case?

Yes, the employee's attorney may receive up to 15% of the compensation awarded in a contested case, but only if the legal fee is requested by the employee's attorney and agreed to by the employee. The fee is deducted from the employee's awarded compensation, under the PEEICB's rules.

Policy & Administrative Guidance



Do school boards need to update their current on-the-job injury policy or adopt a new on-the-job injury policy?

Most likely, yes. School boards are encouraged to contact their local legal counsel to determine what policy changes may need to be made. For subscribed school boards, AASB issued a sample policy in its 2026 Policy Pipeline published earlier this year in July.



Who should the employee contact about the status of a claim or if they have questions?

Once a claim has been filed, questions should be made to the PEEICB's third-party claims administrator, Millennium Risk Managers, which handles the claims administration for the program.



Should school systems have a point of contact for on-the-job injury matters?

Yes. School systems should, at a minimum, designate a person to handle on-the-job injury notices and procedures and that person should be informed on how to process on-the-job injury matters.

To view more resources like this, visit [Legal FAQs](#) on AASB's website.