

California Workers' Comp COVID-19 Claim Count Tops 50,000

PUBLISHED BY **SHARLIE REYNOLDS** ON **NOVEMBER 9, 2020**

Below is a quick COVID update from workerscompensation.com regarding COVID claims in California. Let's hope this downward trend continues!

Oakland, CA (WorkersCompensation.com) – The California workers' compensation COVID-19 monthly claim count may have peaked in July, but the latest tally by the California Workers' Compensation Institute (CWCI) shows that as of November 2, there have been 50,592 COVID-19 claims reported to the state Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) so far this year – including 282 death claims. That translates to 1 out of every 9 California job injury claims reported for accident year (AY) 2020.

The latest figures show that after climbing rapidly over the first 7 months of this year and hitting a record 14,453 claims in July, the number of COVID-19 workers' compensation claims reported to the DWC began to dwindle. The updated count shows 6,710 claims with August injury dates, 3,779 claims with September injury dates, and 2,016 claims with October injury dates. A significant number of claims from September and October could still be reported, but the initial claim counts from both these months were well below the early counts from June and July, so even accounting for the reporting lag associated with COVID-19 claims, those figures suggest a significant downtrend. Using claim development factors based on historical claim development from 2019 and the fluctuating development pattern for 2020 COVID-19 claims, CWCI now projects that there could ultimately be 15,786 COVID-19 claims with July injury dates, 6,910 claims with August injury dates, 4,535 claims with September injury dates, and 5,242 claims with October injury dates, which puts the projected number of COVID-19 claims for the first 10 months of AY 2020 at 57,833. Notably, denial rates for COVID-19 claims have stabilized within a narrow range, holding between 28.7 percent and 31.3 percent from April through August, while denial data on September and October claims is still too green for analysis as many of those claims remain under investigation. The distribution by industry shows that COVID-19 claims remain heavily concentrated among a small number of industry sectors, with more than three quarters of the claims from the first 10 months of this year involving workers in health care (37.1 percent); public safety/government (15.0 percent); manufacturing (8.3 percent); retail (7.9 percent); transportation (5.1 percent), and food service (4.4 percent).



The data on claims reported through October is included in the latest update to CWCI's COVID-19 and Non-COVID-19 Interactive Claim Application, an online tool that integrates data from CWCI, the DWC, and the Bureau of Labor and Statistics to provide detailed information on California workers' comp claims from comparable periods of 2019 and 2020. The new version features data on 1,047,448 claims from the first 10 months of AY 2019 and AY 2020, including the 50,592 COVID-19 claims reported for AY 2020. As of November 2, the DWC had received reports on 458,941 workers' compensation claims with January through October 2020 injury dates, which even with the COVID-19 claims, was 22 percent less than the total reported for the corresponding period of 2019, or 12.5 percent less after factoring in the projected claim development for AY 2020. The decline in the overall claim count reflects the economic slowdown and declining employment, as well as the millions of Californians who continue to work from home.

CWCI updates its COVID-19/Non-COVID 19 data app with new data every two weeks and plans to expand its features as more data on claim type and systemwide costs become available. The application is available to the public [here](#).