

Sixty-fifth  
Legislative Assembly  
of North Dakota

**HOUSE BILL NO. 1156**

Introduced by

Representative Keiser

Senator Klein

1 A BILL for an Act to amend and reenact section 65-01-02, subsection 8 of section 65-05-07, and  
2 section 65-05-08 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the definition of medical  
3 marijuana and prohibiting the payment of workers' compensation benefits for medical  
4 marijuana; and to provide for application.

5 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

6 **SECTION 1. AMENDMENT.** Section 65-01-02 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
7 amended and reenacted as follows:

8 **65-01-02. Definitions.**

9 In this title:

- 10 1. "Acute care" means a short course of intensive diagnostic and therapeutic services  
11 provided immediately following a work injury with a rapid onset of pronounced  
12 symptoms.
- 13 2. "Adopted" or "adoption" refers only to a legal adoption effected prior to the time of the  
14 injury.
- 15 3. "Artificial members" includes a device that is a substitute for a natural part, organ,  
16 limb, or other part of the body. The term includes a prescriptive device that is an aid for  
17 a natural part, organ, limb, or other part of the body if the damage to the prescriptive  
18 device is accompanied by an injury to the body. A prescriptive device includes  
19 prescription eyeglasses, contact lenses, dental braces, and orthopedic braces.
- 20 4. "Artificial replacements" means mechanical aids, including braces, belts, casts, or  
21 crutches as may be reasonable and necessary due to compensable injury.
- 22 5. "Average weekly wage" means the weekly wages the employee was receiving from all  
23 employments for which coverage is required or otherwise secured at the date of first  
24 disability. The average weekly wage determined under this subsection must be

rounded to the nearest dollar. If the employee's wages are not fixed by the week, they must be determined by using the first applicable formula from the schedule below:

- a. For seasonal employment, during the first consecutive days of disability up to twenty-eight days the average weekly wage is calculated pursuant to the first applicable formula in subdivisions b through g, and after that are calculated as one-fiftieth of the total wages from all occupations during the twelve months preceding the date of first disability or during the tax year preceding the date of first disability, or an average of the three tax years preceding the date of first disability, whichever is highest and for which accurate, reliable, and complete records are readily available.
  - b. The "average weekly wage" of a self-employed employer is determined by the following formula: one fifty-second of the average annual net self-employed earnings reported the three preceding tax years or preceding fifty-two weeks whichever is higher if accurate, reliable, and complete records for those fifty-two weeks are readily available.
  - c. Hourly or daily rate multiplied by number of hours or days worked per seven-day week.
  - d. Monthly rate multiplied by twelve months and divided by fifty-two weeks.
  - e. Biweekly rate divided by two.
  - f. The usual wage paid other employees engaged in similar occupations.
  - g. A wage reasonably and fairly approximating the weekly wage lost by the claimant during the period of disability.
6. "Average weekly wage in the state" means the determination made of the average weekly wage in the state by job service North Dakota on or before July first of each year, computed to the next highest dollar.
  7. "Board" means the workforce safety and insurance board of directors.
  8. "Brother" and "sister" include a stepbrother and a stepsister, a half brother and a half sister, and a brother and sister by adoption. The terms do not include a married brother or sister unless that person actually is dependent.
  9. "Child", for determining eligibility for benefits under chapter 65-05, means a legitimate child, a stepchild, adopted child, posthumous child, foster child, and acknowledged

1 illegitimate child who is under eighteen years of age and resides with the employee; or  
2 is under eighteen years of age and does not reside with the employee but a duty of  
3 support is substantiated by an appropriate court order; or is between eighteen and  
4 twenty-two years of age and enrolled as a full-time student in any accredited  
5 educational institution and dependent upon the employee for support; or is eighteen  
6 years of age or over and is physically or mentally incapable of self-support and is  
7 actually dependent upon the employee for support. A child does not include a married  
8 child unless actually dependent on the employee as shown on the preceding year's  
9 income tax returns.

10 10. "Compensable injury" means an injury by accident arising out of and in the course of  
11 hazardous employment which must be established by medical evidence supported by  
12 objective medical findings.

13 a. The term includes:

14 (1) Disease caused by a hazard to which an employee is subjected in the  
15 course of employment. The disease must be incidental to the character of  
16 the business and not independent of the relation of employer and employee.  
17 Disease includes effects from radiation.

18 (2) An injury to artificial members.

19 (3) Injuries due to heart attack or other heart-related disease, stroke, and  
20 physical injury caused by mental stimulus, but only when caused by the  
21 employee's employment with reasonable medical certainty, and only when it  
22 is determined with reasonable medical certainty that unusual stress is at  
23 least fifty percent of the cause of the injury or disease as compared with all  
24 other contributing causes combined. Unusual stress means stress greater  
25 than the highest level of stress normally experienced or anticipated in that  
26 position or line of work.

27 (4) Injuries arising out of employer-required or supplied travel to and from a  
28 remote jobsite or activities performed at the direction or under the control of  
29 the employer.

30 (5) An injury caused by the willful act of a third person directed against an  
31 employee because of the employee's employment.

(6) A mental or psychological condition caused by a physical injury, but only when the physical injury is determined with reasonable medical certainty to be at least fifty percent of the cause of the condition as compared with all other contributing causes combined, and only when the condition did not pre-exist the work injury.

b. The term does not include:

- (1) Ordinary diseases of life to which the general public outside of employment is exposed or preventive treatment for communicable diseases, except that the organization may pay for preventive treatment for a health care provider as defined in section 23-07.5-01, firefighter, peace officer, correctional officer, court officer, law enforcement officer, emergency medical technician, or an individual trained and authorized by law or rule to render emergency medical assistance or treatment who is exposed to a bloodborne pathogen as defined in section 23-07.5-01 occurring in the course of employment and for exposure to rabies occurring in the course of employment.
- (2) A willfully self-inflicted injury, including suicide or attempted suicide, or an injury caused by the employee's willful intention to injure or kill another.
- (3) Any injury caused by the use of intoxicants or the illegal use of controlled substances.
- (4) An injury that arises out of an altercation in which the injured employee is an aggressor. This paragraph does not apply to public safety employees, including law enforcement officers or private security personnel who are required to engage in altercations as part of their job duties if the altercation arises out of the performance of those job duties.
- (5) An injury that arises out of an illegal act committed by the injured employee.
- (6) An injury that arises out of an employee's voluntary nonpaid participation in any recreational activity, including athletic events, parties, and picnics, even though the employer pays some or all of the cost of the activity.
- (7) Injuries attributable to a pre-existing injury, disease, or other condition, including when the employment acts as a trigger to produce symptoms in the pre-existing injury, disease, or other condition unless the employment

substantially accelerates its progression or substantially worsens its severity. Pain is a symptom and may be considered in determining whether there is a substantial acceleration or substantial worsening of a pre-existing injury, disease, or other condition, but pain alone is not a substantial acceleration or a substantial worsening.

(8) A nonemployment injury that, although acting upon a prior compensable injury, is an independent intervening cause of injury.

(9) A latent or asymptomatic degenerative condition, caused in substantial part by employment duties, which is triggered or made active by a subsequent injury.

(10) A mental injury arising from mental stimulus.

11. "Date of first disability" means the first date the employee was unable to work because of a compensable injury.

12. "Date of maximum medical improvement" or "date of maximum medical recovery" means the date after which further recovery from, or lasting improvement to, an injury or disease can no longer reasonably be anticipated based upon reasonable medical probability.

13. "Director" means the director of the organization.

14. "Disability" means loss of earnings capacity and may be permanent total, temporary total, or partial.

15. "Doctor" means doctor of medicine or osteopathy, chiropractor, dentist, optometrist, podiatrist, or psychologist acting within the scope of the doctor's license.

16. "Employee" means a person who performs hazardous employment for another for remuneration unless the person is an independent contractor under the common-law test.

a. The term includes:

(1) All elective and appointed officials of this state and its political subdivisions, including municipal corporations and including the members of the legislative assembly, all elective officials of the several counties of this state, and all elective peace officers of any city.

(2) Aliens.

1           (3) County general assistance workers, except those who are engaged in  
2           repaying to counties moneys that the counties have been compelled by  
3           statute to expend for county general assistance.

4           (4) Minors, whether lawfully or unlawfully employed; a minor is deemed sui juris  
5           for the purposes of this title, and no other person has any claim for relief or  
6           right to claim workforce safety and insurance benefits for any injury to a  
7           minor worker, but in the event of the award of a lump sum of benefits to a  
8           minor employee, the lump sum may be paid only to the legally appointed  
9           guardian of the minor.

10          b. The term does not include:

11           (1) Any person whose employment is both casual and not in the course of the  
12           trade, business, profession, or occupation of that person's employer.

13           (2) Any person who is engaged in an illegal enterprise or occupation.

14           (3) The spouse of an employer or a child under the age of twenty-two of an  
15           employer. For purposes of this paragraph and section 65-07-01, "child"  
16           means any legitimate child, stepchild, adopted child, foster child, or  
17           acknowledged illegitimate child.

18           (4) Any real estate broker or real estate salesperson, provided the person  
19           meets the following three requirements:

20           (a) The salesperson or broker must be a licensed real estate agent under  
21           section 43-23-05.

22           (b) Substantially all of the salesperson's or broker's remuneration for the  
23           services performed as a real estate agent must be directly related to  
24           sales or other efforts rather than to the number of hours worked.

25           (c) A written agreement must exist between the salesperson or broker  
26           and the person or firm for whom the salesperson or broker works,  
27           which agreement must provide that the salesperson or broker will not  
28           be treated as an employee but rather as an independent contractor.

29           (5) The members of the board of directors of a business corporation who are  
30           not employed in any capacity by the corporation other than as members of  
31           the board of directors.

(6) Any individual delivering newspapers or shopping news, if substantially all of the individual's remuneration is directly related to sales or other efforts rather than to the number of hours worked and a written agreement exists between the individual and the publisher of the newspaper or shopping news which states that the individual is an independent contractor.

(7) An employer.

c. Persons employed by a subcontractor, or by an independent contractor operating under an agreement with the general contractor, for the purpose of this chapter are deemed to be employees of the general contractor who is liable and responsible for the payments of premium for the coverage of these employees until the subcontractor or independent contractor has secured the necessary coverage and paid the premium for the coverage. This subdivision does not impose any liability upon a general contractor other than liability to the organization for the payment of premiums which are not paid by a subcontractor or independent contractor.

17. "Employer" means a person who engages or received the services of another for remuneration unless the person performing the services is an independent contractor under the common-law test. The term includes:

- a. The state and all political subdivisions thereof.
- b. All public and quasi-public corporations in this state.
- c. Every person, partnership, limited liability company, association, and private corporation, including a public service corporation.
- d. The legal representative of any deceased employer.
- e. The receiver or trustee of any person, partnership, limited liability company, association, or corporation having one or more employees as herein defined.
- f. The president, vice presidents, secretary, or treasurer of a business corporation, but not members of the board of directors of a business corporation who are not also officers of the corporation.
- g. The managers of a limited liability company.

- 1           h.    The president, vice presidents, secretary, treasurer, or board of directors of an  
2                association or cooperative organized under chapter 6-06, 10-12, 10-13, 10-15,  
3                36-08, or 49-21.
- 4           i.    The clerk, assessor, treasurer, or any member of the board of supervisors of an  
5                organized township, if the person is not employed by the township in any other  
6                capacity.
- 7           j.    A multidistrict special education unit.
- 8           k.    An area career and technology center.
- 9           l.    A regional education association.
- 10       18.   "Fee schedule" means the payment formulas established in the organization  
11               publication entitled "Medical and Hospital Fees".
- 12       19.   "Fund" means the workforce safety and insurance fund.
- 13       20.   "Hazardous employment" means any employment in which one or more employees  
14               are employed regularly in the same business or in or about the establishment except:  
15               a.   Agricultural or domestic service.  
16               b.   Any employment of a common carrier by railroad.  
17               c.   Any employment for the transportation of property or persons by nonresidents,  
18               where, in such transportation, the highways are not traveled more than seven  
19               miles [11.27 kilometers] and return over the same route within the state of North  
20               Dakota.
- 21           d.   All members of the clergy and employees of religious organizations engaged in  
22               the operation, maintenance, and conduct of the place of worship.
- 23       21.   "Health care provider" includes a doctor, qualified nurse, pharmacist, audiologist,  
24               speech language pathologist, or naturopath or any recognized practitioner providing  
25               skilled services pursuant to the prescription of, or under the supervision or direction of  
26               any of these individuals.
- 27       22.   "Medical marijuana" means the use of cannabis or marijuana, including constituents of  
28               cannabis, tetrahydrocannabinol, and other cannabinoids, as a  
29               physician-recommended form of medicine or herbal therapy.
- 30       ~~22-23.~~ "Organization" means workforce safety and insurance, or the director, or any  
31               department head, assistant, or employee of workforce safety and insurance



designated by the director, to act within the course and scope of that person's employment in administering the policies, powers, and duties of this title.

~~23-24.~~ "Parent" includes a stepparent and a parent by adoption.

~~24-25.~~ "Permanent impairment" means the loss of or loss of use of a member of the body existing after the date of maximum medical improvement and includes disfigurement resulting from an injury.

~~25-26.~~ "Permanent total disability" means disability that is the direct result of a compensable injury that prevents an employee from performing any work and results from any one of the following conditions:

- a. Total and permanent loss of sight of both eyes;
- b. Loss of both legs or loss of both feet at or above the ankle;
- c. Loss of both arms or loss of both hands at or above the wrist;
- d. Loss of any two of the members or faculties in subdivision a, b, or c;
- e. Permanent and complete paralysis of both legs or both arms or of one leg and one arm;
- f. Third-degree burns that cover at least forty percent of the body and require grafting;
- g. A medically documented brain injury affecting cognitive and mental functioning which renders an employee unable to provide self-care and requires supervision or assistance with a majority of the activities of daily living; or
- h. A compensable injury that results in a permanent partial impairment rating of the whole body of at least twenty-five percent pursuant to section 65-05-12.2.

If the employee has not reached maximum medical improvement within one hundred four weeks, the employee may receive a permanent partial impairment rating if a rating will assist the organization in assessing the employee's capabilities. Entitlement to a rating is solely within the discretion of the organization.

~~26-27.~~ "Rehabilitation services" means nonmedical services reasonably necessary to restore a disabled employee to substantial gainful employment as defined by section 65-05.1-01 as near as possible. The term may include vocational evaluation, counseling, education, workplace modification, vocational retraining including training for alternative employment with the same employer, and job placement assistance.

- 1    ~~27-28.~~    "Seasonal employment" includes occupations that are not permanent or that do not  
2                    customarily operate throughout the entire year. Seasonal employment is determined  
3                    by what is customary with respect to the employer at the time of injury.
- 4    ~~28-29.~~    "Spouse" includes only the decedent's husband or wife who was living with the  
5                    decedent or was dependent upon the decedent for support at the time of injury.
- 6    ~~29-30.~~    "Temporary total disability" means disability that results in the inability of an employee  
7                    to earn wages as a result of a compensable injury for which disability benefits may not  
8                    exceed a cumulative total of one hundred four weeks or the date the employee  
9                    reaches maximum medical improvement or maximum medical recovery, whichever  
10                   occurs first.
- 11   ~~30-31.~~    "Utilization review" means the initial and continuing evaluation of appropriateness in  
12                   terms of both the level and the quality of health care and health services provided a  
13                   patient, based on medically accepted standards. The evaluation must be  
14                   accomplished by means of a system that identifies the utilization of medical services,  
15                   based on medically accepted standards, and which refers instances of possible  
16                   inappropriate utilization to the organization to obtain opinions and recommendations of  
17                   expert medical consultants to review individual cases for which administrative action  
18                   may be deemed necessary.
- 19   ~~31-32.~~    a.    "Wages" means:
- 20                   (1)    An employee's remuneration from all employment reportable to the internal  
21                   revenue service as earned income for federal income tax purposes.
- 22                   (2)    For members of the national guard who sustain a compensable injury while  
23                   on state active duty, "wages" includes income from federal employment and  
24                   may be included in determining the average weekly wage.
- 25                   (3)    For purposes of chapter 65-04 only, "wages" means all gross earnings of all  
26                   employees. The term includes all pretax deductions for amounts allocated  
27                   by the employee for deferred compensation, medical reimbursement,  
28                   retirement, or any similar program, but may not include dismissal or  
29                   severance pay.
- 30                   b.    The organization may consider postinjury wages for which coverage was not  
31                   required or otherwise secured in North Dakota for purposes of determining

1 appropriate vocational rehabilitation options or entitlement to disability benefits  
2 under this title.

3 **SECTION 2. AMENDMENT.** Subsection 8 of section 65-05-07 of the North Dakota Century  
4 Code is amended and reenacted as follows:

5 8. The organization may not pay for:

- 6 a. Personal items that are for the injured employee's personal use or hygiene,  
7 including toothbrushes, slippers, shampoo, and soap.
- 8 b. ~~Any~~A product or item ~~such as~~including clothing or footwear unless the items are  
9 considered orthopedic devices and are prescribed by the treating doctor or health  
10 care provider.
- 11 c. ~~Any furniture~~Furniture except hospital beds, shower stools, wheelchairs, or  
12 whirlpools if prescribed by the treating doctor or health care provider.
- 13 d. Vitamins and food supplements except in those cases in which the injury causes  
14 severe dietary problems, the injury results in the employee's paraplegia or  
15 quadriplegia, or the employee becomes wheelchair-bound due to the injury.
- 16 e. Eye examinations unless there is a reasonable potential for injury to the  
17 employee's eyes as a result of the injury.
- 18 f. Private hospital or nursing home rooms except in cases of extreme medical  
19 necessity and only when directed by the attending doctor. If the employee desires  
20 better accommodations than those ordered by the attending doctor, the employee  
21 will pay the difference in cost.
- 22 g. Serological tests, including VDRL and RPR, or other tests for venereal disease or  
23 pregnancy, or any other routine tests unless clearly necessitated by the injury.
- 24 h. Aids or programs primarily intended to help the employee lose weight or stop  
25 smoking unless ordered by the organization.
- 26 i. Home gymnasium or exercise equipment unless ordered by the organization.
- 27 j. Memberships or monthly dues to health clubs, unless ordered by the  
28 organization.
- 29 k. Massage, unless ordered by the organization.
- 30 l. Medical marijuana.

1       **SECTION 3. AMENDMENT.** Section 65-05-08 of the North Dakota Century Code is  
2 amended and reenacted as follows:

3       **65-05-08. Disability benefits - Not paid unless period of disability is of five days'**  
4 **duration or more - Application required - Suspended during confinement - Duty to report**  
5 **wages.**

6       ~~No benefits~~Benefits may not be paid for disability, the duration of which is less than five  
7 consecutive calendar days. An employer may not require an employee to use sick leave or  
8 annual leave, or other employer-paid time off work, before applying for benefits under this  
9 section, in lieu of receiving benefits under this section, or in conjunction with benefits provided  
10 under this section, but may allow an employee to use sick leave or annual leave to make up the  
11 difference between the employee's wage-loss benefits and the employee's regular pay. If the  
12 period of disability is five consecutive calendar days' duration or longer, benefits must be paid  
13 for the period of disability provided that:

- 14       1. When disability benefits are discontinued, the organization may not begin payment  
15       again unless the injured employee files a reapplication for disability benefits on a form  
16       supplied by the organization. In case of reapplication, the award may commence no  
17       more than thirty days before the date of reapplication. Disability benefits must be  
18       reinstated upon proof by the injured employee that:
  - 19       a. The employee has sustained a significant change in the compensable medical  
20       condition;
  - 21       b. The employee has sustained an actual wage loss caused by the significant  
22       change in the compensable medical condition; and
  - 23       c. The employee has not retired or voluntarily withdrawn from the job market as  
24       defined in section 65-05-09.3.
- 25       2. ~~All payments~~Payments of disability and rehabilitation benefits of ~~any~~an employee who  
26       is eligible for, or receiving, benefits under this title must be suspended when the  
27       employee is confined in a penitentiary, jail, youth correctional facility, or any other  
28       penal institution for a period of between seventy-two consecutive hours and one  
29       hundred eighty consecutive days. ~~All payments~~Payments of disability and  
30       rehabilitation benefits of ~~any~~an employee who is eligible for, or receiving, benefits  
31       under this title must be discontinued when the employee is confined in a penitentiary,

jail, youth correctional facility, or any other penal institution for a period in excess of one hundred eighty consecutive days.

3. ~~Any~~An employee who is eligible for, or receiving disability or rehabilitation benefits under this title shall report any wages earned, from part-time or full-time work from any source. If an employee fails to report wages earned, the employee shall refund to the organization ~~any~~all disability or vocational rehabilitation benefits overpaid by the organization for that time period. To facilitate recovery of those benefits, the organization may offset future benefits payable, under section 65-05-29. If the employee willfully fails to report wages earned, the employee is subject to the penalties in section 65-05-33. An employee shall report whether the employee has performed work or received wages. The organization periodically shall provide a form to all injured employees receiving disability or rehabilitation benefits which the injured employee must complete to retain eligibility for further disability or rehabilitation benefits, regardless of the date of injury or claim filing. The form will advise the injured employee of the possible penalties for failure to report any work or activities as required by this section. An injured employee who is receiving disability or vocational rehabilitation benefits must report any work activities to the organization whether or not the injured employee receives any wages. An injured employee who is receiving disability or vocational rehabilitation benefits ~~also~~ must also report any other activity if the injured employee receives any money, including prize winnings, from undertaking that activity, regardless of expenses or whether there is a net profit. For purposes of this subsection, "work" does not include routine daily activities of self-care or family care, or routine maintenance of the home and yard, and "activities" does not include recreational gaming or passive investment endeavors.

4. An employee shall request disability benefits on a claim form furnished by the organization. Disability benefits may not commence more than one year prior to the date of filing of the initial claim for disability benefits.

5. The provisions of this section apply to ~~any~~an disability claim asserted against the fund on or after July 1, 1991, irrespective of injury date.

6. It is the burden of the employee to show that the inability to obtain employment or to earn as much as the employee earned at the time of injury is due to physical limitation

1 related to the injury, and that any wage loss claimed is the result of the compensable  
2 injury.

3 7. If the employee voluntarily limits income or refuses to accept employment suitable to  
4 the employee's capacity, offered to or procured for the employee, the employee is not  
5 entitled to any disability or vocational rehabilitation benefits during the limitation of  
6 income or refusal to accept employment unless the organization determines the  
7 limitation or refusal is justified.

8 8. The organization may not pay disability benefits unless the loss of earning capacity  
9 exceeds ten percent. The injured employee may earn up to ten percent of the  
10 employee's preinjury average gross weekly earnings with no reduction in total  
11 disability benefits. The employee must report any earnings to the organization for a  
12 determination of whether the employee is within the limit set in this subsection.

13 9. Upon securing suitable employment, the injured employee shall notify the organization  
14 of the name and address of the employer, the date the employment began, and the  
15 amount of wages being received. If the injured employee is receiving disability  
16 benefits, the injured employee shall notify the organization whenever there is a change  
17 in work status or wages received.

18 10. The organization shall pay to an employee receiving disability benefits a dependency  
19 allowance for each child of the employee at the rate of fifteen dollars per week per  
20 child.

21 11. Dependency allowance for the children may be made directly to either parent or  
22 guardian at the discretion of the organization.

23 12. The organization may not pay wage loss benefits if the wage loss is related to the use  
24 or presence of medical marijuana.

25 **SECTION 4. APPLICATION.** Sections 2 and 3 of this Act apply to all claims regardless of  
26 date of injury.