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Labor & Industries Matters	WISHA/DOSH	Workers' Compensation
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## 2025 WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUM RATES UP BY AN AVERAGE 3.8%

Effective Jan. 1, employers and workers together will pay, on average, about a dollar a week more for each full-time position. Workers will pay about a quarter of the premium, similar to last year.

“This modest change helps us cover the higher cost of crucial wage and medical benefits for workers, while keeping rates steady and predictable,” L&I Director Joel Sacks said.

“This increase will help us ensure our workers’ compensation system is financially healthy and dependable for all workers and employers in our state,” he said.

The 3.8 percent increase is an average for all industries. The base rate for specific industries could be higher or lower depending on their recent claims history.

2025 WC Base Rate by Industry

## ERGONOMIC RULEMAKING First up, Scheduled Airlines - Ground Crew



The recent initiation of rulemaking by the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries (L&I) on October 29, 2024, regarding Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WMSDs) marks a significant development for employers across the state. As the leading type of occupational injury in Washington, WMSDs account for at least one-third of workers' compensation claims that lead to time-loss or wage

replacement underscoring the critical need for effective workplace safety measures. WMSDs encompass a range of disorders affecting the muscles, nerves, tendons, joints, cartilage, spinal disks, and other components of the musculoskeletal system, often arising from factors such as excessive force, repetitive movements, awkward postures, and exposure to vibration.

The recent legislative passage of RCW 49.17.520 empowers L&I to implement rules aimed at preventing WMSDs in specific industries or risk classes that experience WMSD claims at rates exceeding the overall state average. Consequently, a high-priority list was established and the decision was made to select Scheduled Airlines Ground Crew Operations as the first industry for regulation.

At Employer Solutions Law, we are committed to educating our clients about the implications of these regulations and their legal responsibilities regarding workplace safety. We encourage all employers to proactively review their workplace practices and consider implementing measures to mitigate the risks associated with WMSDs. As your trusted partner in navigating the complexities of workplace regulations, we invite you to reach out for personalized legal guidance and training opportunities that can empower you to effectively manage the challenges posed by these new regulations.

\*L&I has announced that the second rulemaking will be for Fulfillment Centers, Risk Classification 2103. The Fulfillment Center risk classification applies to employers who operate warehouses that store, select, pack and ship customer orders and use automated vehicles and robotics. Common tasks include loading and unloading trailers, unpacking cases, picking and packing orders, and sorting items for final delivery.

[Rule Development Roadmap](#)

[Ergonomic Initiative Q&A](#)



## WATCH FOR YOUR UNEMPLOYMENT TAX RATE NOTICE COMING TO YOU VIA USPS

*From WA Employment Security Department*

Each December, Employment Security Department sends employers an annual unemployment tax rate notice. We send the printed notice via the U.S. Postal Service. Go to the Employment Security Department website to learn more about how we determine tax rates.

\*Please remember to update your unemployment tax filing software. Or provide a copy of your tax rate notice to your bookkeeper, CPA or third-party representative so your business uses the correct rate for filing 2025 quarterly reports.

[How Your Tax Rate is Determined](#)

## IN THE NEWS

## A Letter from new Kids' Chance Board President Mandi Kime

Hello Friends of Kids' Chance! My Name is Mandi Kime, your new Kids' Chance Washington Board President. I am the Director of Safety for Associated General Contractors of Washington and a mom of four (triplets plus one). My passion for Kids' Chance started earlier in my career when I would see the Kids' Chance flyers at the annual Labor & Industries Worker memorial, and I remember thinking the mission was a great way for safety professionals to give back.

Fast forward 20 years in my career and I had the opportunity to volunteer for the outreach committee, which led me to accepting a nomination to hold the vice president role under the leadership of Judy Schurke. I am so fortunate to have been Judy's understudy. She has such a passion and great historical perspective to learn from as I adapt to this role.

My personal commitment to KCWA for my tenure as president is simple: BUILDING AND STRENGTHENING RELATIONSHIPS. My plan is to focus on the relationships with our donors, scholars, and volunteers and grow them to their most collaborative potential and recruit more people to our mission. Thank you all for allowing me this opportunity to serve KCWA and our constituents!

Kids' Chance WA

## Workers' Compensation Fraud

In November, a Renton man was charged with stealing \$28,000 in a fraudulent Worker's Compensation payments and faces felony charges.

According to charging papers, the claimant regularly told L&I he couldn't work due to an on-the-job back injury. That was among the key requirements allowing him to receive payments to replace his lost wages.

However, L&I undercover investigators recorded the claimant doing physically demanding weight-training exercises, sometimes lifting up to 155 pounds, at a fitness center in Renton.

If you see or suspect someone is cheating the workers' comp system, contact [L&I's Fraud division](https://www.lni.wa.gov/Fraud) ([Lni.wa.gov/Fraud](https://www.lni.wa.gov/Fraud)) or call 1-888-811-5974.

Report Worker Fraud

**May you have a Wonderful Holiday Season  
Filled with Laughter, Joy, Cheer and Good  
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