



Employer
Solutions Law

Newsletter: January

FREE Webinar

WORKERS' COMPENSATION 101: Overview, Warning Signs, and Strategies

Washington's workers' compensation system can feel complex—especially when a claim arises. In this webinar, Brian Padgett, provides a **practical overview of how Washington's workers' compensation system works** and how it has evolved.

He will outline **proactive strategies** employers can use *before, during, and after a claim* to reduce risk, manage costs, and **avoid common pitfalls**, and will identify key warning signs that may indicate an illegitimate or problematic claim—helping employers **respond effectively** while remaining compliant.

 **Date:** Tuesday, February 3

 **Time:** 11:00 AM (Pacific Time)

 **Where:** Online – Free to attend

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DOSH Gravity-Based Penalties Increase

Washington DOSH is increasing gravity-based penalties for serious violations **effective January 15, 2026**. These penalties are calculated using a gravity score (Severity × Probability), and the base penalty amounts are **increasing by 4.92%** for 2026.

2025 vs. 2026 Gravity-Based Penalty Amounts (Serious Violations)

Gravity 9 (High): \$7,140 → \$7,491

Gravity 6: \$6,120 → \$6,421

Gravity 4: \$4,080 → \$4,281

Gravity 3: \$3,060 → \$3,211

Gravity 2: \$2,040 → \$2,140

Gravity 1: \$1,020 → \$1,070

Bottom line: inspections opened on or after January 15, 2026 will be subject to these increased penalty amounts.

2026 Legislative Outlook

Recent Webinar Recap: In December, we hosted a [free webinar](#) on **new employment laws** taking effect in 2026 and 2027.

What We're Expecting This Session: With a significant budget shortfall, lawmakers are likely to focus on clarifying, adjusting, and enforcing current laws rather than introducing broad new employer mandates.

Incremental Policy Changes: Legislators may continue to explore targeted adjustments to areas like paid leave, fair hiring, and workplace safety—focused on thresholds, notice requirements, and enforcement rather than new mandates.

Enforcement Focus: Budget pressures may increase attention on wage and hour compliance, safety oversight, and enforcement agency funding, which could mean more enforcement activity for employers.

Bottom Line for Employers: 2026 may bring fewer new laws but more enforcement.

Watch Free Webinars on Our Website

Our most requested webinars are available as **free on-demand** recordings on our website, allowing you to **revisit key topics** and compliance updates at your convenience.

✓ [WA State 2026 Employment Law Updates](#)

✓ [Kept on Salary and Light Duty Job Offers – Tools and Best Practices for Employers in Washington](#)

✓ [Facing An Active Threat: Preparation, Immediate Response, and Post Incident Management](#)

✓ [How to Navigate a DOSH Inspection \(Washington State\)](#)

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