# HN1400 – OHS

# Chapter 3– workers compensation

# Chapter Objectives

**After reading this chapter, you will be able to do the following:**

1. Outline the goals and methods of Workers’ Compensation Boards (WCBs)
2. Discuss the problems associated with compensating for psychological conditions and occupational illnesses
3. Describe the assessment methods of WCBs
4. With the use of the chapter appendix, understand the methods of calculating injury frequency and severity rates

**Chapter Summary**

Chapter 3 begins with a discussion of the historical and present the goals and responsibilities of the Workers’ Compensation Board (WCB). It gives an overview of the WCB system today as one that retains the earlier principles of compulsory and collective liability and wage replacement with an expanded mandate to include vocational rehabilitation, healthcare, prevention, training, and public awareness. The chapter describes the WCB employee compensation rates, types of benefits, and return to work programs. It describes the assessment methods of the WCB, including classification, rate setting and experience rating. The chapter concludes by discussing the challenges associated with compensating and managing employees with psychological conditions and illnesses and establishing an integrated disability management program.

**Historical, Present and Future Responsibilities of the WCB.**

The inception of the first WCA maintained the following goals and principles: collective liability for employers, workers compensated regardless of the employer’s financial condition, compensation based on loss of earnings, a “no-fault” system, and little recourse to the courts. The goals of WCB at this time in history were to ensure that injured workers received compensation, employers accepted liability, and to prevent workplace accidents and illnesses. The goals of the Workers’ Compensation Board continued throughout the 20th century to retain these earlier principles, but broadened its mandate from employee wage replacement to include vocational rehabilitation and healthcare. Their role and responsibilities continue to expand to include a focus on prevention, training, promoting a culture of commitment, and public awareness.

**Compensation Rates and Methods**

Workers’ Compensation is a form of no-fault insurance governed by an act (i.e.:BC Workers Compensation Act) to help injured workers safely and effectively return to work as well as receive fair compensation for any workplace injuries or diseases. They will ensure the injured worker receives immediate medical treatment, benefits while recuperating, proper treatment for any injury, and compensation for lost income. The WCB provides employers with general information on WCB compensation services, types of benefits, and return-to-work programs. The types of benefits an injured worker can expect to receive are: wage-loss, permanent disability, death, health care and rehabilitation and return to work assistance. The HRM will need to communicate immediately and regularly with the employee (as well as doctors, health professionals, WCB, their insurance company, and staff as required) about the details of their disability and support the most appropriate, effective, timely, and efficient treatment so that the employee can return to work as safely and quickly as possible.

Employers in industries with similar claim costs pay similar base rates. The same base rate applies to all employers in a classification unit. The rate is expressed as an amount per $100 of assessable payroll. Experience rating adjustments may result in a discount or surcharge on your base rate.

**Occupational Diseases and Work Place Stress**

The issue of mental stress resulting in a mental condition is seldom compensated by WCBs. Causative factors (stressors) causing the stress need to be identified, and supports that allow employees to stay connected to the workplace need to be established

**Organizations Can Manage Disability and Return to Work Programs**

Disability management refers to the coordination of a variety of processes and programs (from prevention to claims management and return to work programs) in an organization to manage disability.