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Have you or a loved one become seriously ill from exposure to COVID-19 on the job? We are currently accepting COVID-19 cases of workers employed in certain occupations where new laws in Virginia and proposed laws in North Carolina cover workers who contracted COVID-19 in those occupations.



WILLIE THE PARROT: THE ULTIMATE DANGER ALARM

Willie the Quaker parrot was a pretty remarkable bird. Like many parrots, he had a knack for mimicking certain sounds and words, including barking dog noises, human kissing noises, and a fair share of swear words. However, what made Willie a hero one day was not just what he said, but also when he said it.

Meagan Howard, Willie's owner, brought him over to her friend Samantha Kuusk's house while she babysat Kuusk's little daughter, Hannah. Hannah and Willie were both in the kitchen while Meagan prepared a Pop-Tart for Hannah's breakfast. After placing the Pop-Tart on the table, Meagan stepped away to use the bathroom.

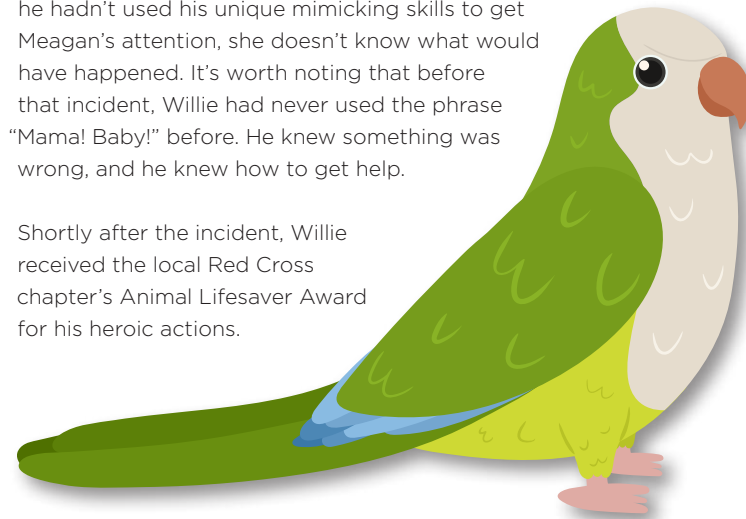
While she was away, however, Hannah got her hands on the Pop-Tart and began to scarf it down, lodging a piece in her windpipe. She started choking and was unable to signal to Meagan that something was wrong. Luckily, Willie came to the rescue.

Willie began squawking and shrieking, saying the words "Mama! Baby!" over and over again. In a matter of moments, Meagan knew something was wrong. She rushed to the kitchen to find a very frantic Willie and a very blue Hannah. Meagan jumped into action. She

grabbed Hannah and performed the Heimlich maneuver until the Pop-Tart piece dislodged itself and shot out of her mouth.

Meagan may have been the one to stop Hannah from choking, but she insists that Willie was the real hero of the story. If he hadn't used his unique mimicking skills to get Meagan's attention, she doesn't know what would have happened. It's worth noting that before that incident, Willie had never used the phrase "Mama! Baby!" before. He knew something was wrong, and he knew how to get help.

Shortly after the incident, Willie received the local Red Cross chapter's Animal Lifesaver Award for his heroic actions.



Great News for Virginians!

Health Care Workers and First Responders Can Now Be Compensated for COVID-19

Last August in this newsletter, I wrote to you about two bills under consideration in Virginia and North Carolina that would change the way COVID-19 workers' compensation claims are handled. You might remember that I suggested waiting to file your COVID-19 claim until those bills became law because they would increase your odds of approval. Well today, I have good news for Virginians: Two similar bills, House Bill 1985 and Senate Bill 1375, have passed, and now is the perfect time to file your claim!

In case you missed that August newsletter, here's a quick recap on what these bills entail and what they mean for you.

Why were these bills needed?

Before the bills passed, almost everyone who filed a workers' compensation claim because they contracted COVID-19 on the job was denied. That included doctors, nurses, firemen, and other health care workers and first responders. It might seem crazy, but the denials stemmed from the fact that COVID-19 was considered an "ordinary disease of life," so claimants had to prove definitively that they got it from work and not from social activities or their family.

This was a real uphill battle, and honestly, it was unfair to workers who put their lives on the line for all of us during the COVID-19 crisis. Fortunately, these bills change all that for Virginians! Now that they've passed, *health care workers and first responders in Virginia are automatically entitled to a presumption that they are due workers compensation benefits — including retroactive compensation — for*

If you belong to a union or other labor-related group and want to schedule my presentation at your group's speaking arrangement, you can do so by calling 888-667-8295. The presentation is free of charge, offers important information for taking appropriate action in Virginia workers' compensation cases, and everyone in attendance gets a free copy of my book, "10 Traps and Lies That Can Ruin Your Virginia Workers' Compensation Case." Education is the best way to protect yourself from making a mistake. Call now, before it's too late.

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medical bills, missed work, and other expenses caused by contracting COVID-19 on the job. I can't tell you how excited I am about this! This law will enable me to help many, many more people in need get the compensation they deserve.

Who do these bills cover, and how far back does the coverage go?

House Bill 1985 covers all health care providers, including doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, and more and is retroactive through March 12, 2020. That means if a health care worker contracted COVID-19 on or after March 12, received a clinical diagnosis, and became disabled or died, they are eligible to have all of their bills paid retroactively. Senate Bill 1375 is similar, but it covers first responders including "firefighters, emergency medical services personnel, law-enforcement officers, and correctional officers." It's retroactive through July 1, 2020 for people who received a clinical diagnosis and tested positive for COVID-19. *It's important to note that regardless of your profession, these bills will NOT cover you if you refuse to be vaccinated (unless your doctor has told you the vaccine is a health risk for you).*

What about North Carolina?

Unfortunately, as I write this, North Carolina — where I also serve clients — has yet to pass a similar bill. There is one in the works, but the legislators are still debating who it should cover. That debate is also the reason that Virginia's bills took so long to pass.

I'm pushing for North Carolina legislators to pass legislation covering health care workers and first responders as soon as possible, just like I did in Virginia. I've written letters to legislators and sponsors, posted YouTube videos, and done everything I can to throw my support behind that kind of bill. As soon as something passes, you'll hear about it in this newsletter.

What's next?

If you or someone you love is a health care worker or first responder living in Virginia who contracted COVID-19, now is the time to file your workers' compensation claim! These bills have rolled out the red carpet, and I can help you walk down it. To get started, give me a call at 888-667-8295 or head to my website at JoeMillerInjuryLaw.com, to fill out a claim form.

-Joseph Miller

Remembering the Heroes Amid the Tragedy

The Everyday People Who Saved Countless Lives on 9/11

As we approach its 20th anniversary, Sept. 11, 2001, remains one of the darkest days in American history. Almost 3,000 people lost their lives when terrorists flew passenger airplanes into the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. The infrastructural damage was severe, but the damage done to thousands of families across the country was even worse.

While 9/11 remains a day of remembrance of these tragic events, it should also be a day to remember the brave men and women who sacrificed their lives to save others. These are just a few of their stories.

Betty Ong and Amy Sweeney

After five al-Qaida terrorists hijacked American Airlines Flight 11, Ong and Sweeney, two flight attendants, used the crew phone to call their colleagues and give them information about their attackers, including what they looked like and what seats they had been sitting in. Both attendants perished, but the information they shared helped the FBI jump-start their investigation.

Rick Rescorla

A Vietnam veteran who had earned a silver star for his service, Rescorla was no stranger to stressful life and death situations. As the head of corporate security for Morgan Stanley in the South Tower, he defied orders from Port Authority to stay put and instead escorted 2,700 people out of the building before it collapsed. After that, he headed back in to look for stragglers. That was the last time anyone saw him.

Passengers of Flight 93

While two planes hit the World Trade Center towers and one plane hit the Pentagon, another plane that headed for the White House never reached its destination. That's because passengers aboard this flight, upon learning their plane had been hijacked, decided to rush the cockpit and overtake the terrorists. They caused the plane to crash in an empty field in Pennsylvania, saving the White House but killing everyone on board.

Sad though their deaths may be, these heroic men and women continue to inspire people even 20 years later. We should never forget the tragedy of 9/11, but we should also remember these regular people who decided to take extraordinary lengths to save others.



OUR CLIENTS SAY IT BEST

“I injured my back at work and was getting the runaround from my employer and the insurance company. I contacted Joe, and he got involved and helped me get things done. I didn’t have the physical ability to return to the job I had been doing. Joe got me a settlement that was more than I expected and helped me get my own business started. I am grateful for all they did for me. I love Lisa. She is like having a pit bull on your side in a fight.”

-Solly O.



Self-Help Books Can’t Do It All

How Reading Fiction Can Benefit You

Many CEOs and other successful individuals continually espouse the benefits of regular reading. Many times, leaders read self-help books to improve their leadership skills and become more successful.

This is all well and good, but even the most successful people in the world could be missing out on the unique benefits that come specifically from reading fiction. But what are those benefits exactly?

Greater Empathy

When a psychologist analyzed 86 functioning MRI (fMRI) studies, he found that the same parts of the brain that fire up when reading fictional stories also fire up when we’re seeking to understand the thoughts and feelings of others. That’s because when the characters in the book we’re reading are thinking or feeling a certain way, we tend to think or feel that way with them.

Less Stress and Better Sleep

When we read fiction specifically, we tend to disengage from the world — and that’s a good thing! Our brains can’t always be functioning at their peak capacity. We need breaks, or else we’ll stress ourselves out and negatively affect other areas of our lives. Stress tends to keep us from sound sleep, but reading fiction before bed engages the imagination, taking us away from the stresses of everyday life before we drift off.

More Comfort With Uncertainty

Even though many stories (particularly those portrayed in popular movies) have nice happy endings, most people would agree that life sometimes leaves things a little more open-ended. While this fact might stress out some people, researchers have discovered that fiction readers don’t need “cognitive closure” as much as nonfiction readers.



Greater Happiness

Even if none of the benefits of fiction interest you, everyone wants to find ways to make themselves happy — and for many, that is reading fiction. According to one survey, 76% of participants said that reading makes them feel good and improves their lives. So, what are you waiting for? Dust off that novel you’ve been meaning to read and crack it open!

Joe’s Monthly ‘SOUL SNACKS’

“Who is wise? He who can learn from every man. Who is strong? He who can control his passions. Who is rich? He who is content with his lot. Whom do men honor? He who honors his fellow men.”

-Ben Zoma

Slow Cooker Squash, Kale, and Sausage Soup

This healthy, savory soup is the perfect lunch for a cool fall day.

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 4 Italian chicken sausages, sliced to bite-size pieces
- 6 cloves garlic
- 1 onion, chopped
- 6-7 cups butternut squash, peeled and cubed
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp Italian seasoning
- 3 cups kale, chopped
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar

Directions

1. In a large pot, heat oil over medium heat. Add sausage and cook 4-5 minutes, stirring often, then remove from the pot and set aside.
2. Add garlic and onion to the pot. Sauté 4-5 minutes. Add squash, salt, and pepper. Sauté 8 minutes.
3. In a slow cooker, combine sautéed vegetables, sausage, chicken broth, and seasonings. Cook on low heat for 3 hours and 30 minutes.
4. Open the pot and add the kale. Cook another 20 minutes, then add the red wine vinegar and stir to combine. Cook 10 more minutes, then serve and enjoy!