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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 currently proposed laws in both Virginia and North Carolina would classify COVID-19 illness as an occupational disease.



An Olympic Medal — For Arts

From 1912-1952, the Olympics awarded medals for arts and sculpture, though most people do not remember this. In 2012, the first book in English on the topic was published, “The Forgotten Olympic Art Competitions” by Richard Stanton.

Stanton dug through decades-old, crumbling files that were packed away in Switzerland in order to uncover the origin of this forgotten Olympic tradition. Apparently, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) and the modern Olympic Games, saw art competitions as integral to his vision of the Olympics.

Stanton told Smithsonian Magazine of Coubertin, “He was raised and educated classically, and he was particularly impressed with the idea of what it meant to be a true Olympian — someone who was not only athletic, but skilled in music and literature.” Coubertin thought that without the arts, it couldn’t be a true Olympic event.

However, Coubertin had no luck convincing local organizers from Athens, St. Louis, or Paris that art competitions were necessary. At the 1912 Stockholm Games, Coubertin finally secured the Olympic

fine art competitions. There were categories for architecture, music, painting, sculpture, and literature, but every work had to somehow be inspired by sports.

Judges didn’t have to award gold medals if they were disappointed by all the submissions, but 1912 was a success. With 33 artists in participation, a gold medal was awarded in every category. (Coubertin even won for his poem, “Ode to Sport”! He disguised it with a pseudonym.)

As the Olympics exploded into a beloved international event, the fine arts competitions rarely caught people’s attention. Not all categories won gold medals, if any at all. There were significant winners, however. John Russell Pope (the architect of the Jefferson Memorial) won a silver at the 1932 Los Angeles Games for his design of the Payne Whitney Gymnasium, constructed at Yale University. Other famous participants include Italian sculptor Rembrandt Bugatti, American illustrator Percy Crosby, Irish author Oliver St. John Gogarty, and Dutch painter Isaac Israëls.

Even if the art competitions are not a part of the games anymore, they are fascinating to learn about! We’ll definitely think about them the next time the Olympics (finally) roll around.



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I GOT HURT AT WORK, SO WHY CAN'T I CAN'T COLLECT ON A CLAIM?

Understanding State Rules for Work-Related Accidents

Imagine getting hurt at work, needing medical treatment or rehab, then hearing that you can’t collect on a workers’ compensation claim. When this happens — and you’ll see why it does — people are often shocked. But the truth is that each state has specific requirements that outline what exactly constitutes an accident at work.

So, what can you make a claim on that won’t be denied? The answer is different in Virginia and North Carolina, the two states I serve, and each state has its own challenges.

Before I explain the differences and some of the complicated-sounding technical terms adjusters will use, I want to say that if you get hurt at work, it’s *always* a good idea to contact a qualified attorney to help you understand your options. At the end of the day, my job is to help people get the compensation they’re entitled to by law, and each individual’s situation and injury is different. We can talk through it together.

To give you a basic sense of each state’s requirement, it helps a bit to contrast them.

- **In Virginia, you must be able to prove that your accident was related to a “risk of employment.”** That essentially means that there must be something about your job — such as a hazardous condition — that puts you at a higher risk for injury than the average person in the general public.
- **In North Carolina, you must have had a slip, trip, or fall for an injury to be considered a workplace accident (spinal injuries being the one exception).**

So let’s say you’re walking down some stairs at work and you fall. Will you be able to file a successful workers’ compensation claim? Well, it depends.

In Virginia, if you fell simply because you tripped on your shoelace or because you’re clumsy, you wouldn’t be able to prove “risk of employment.” Anyone anywhere could have such an accident.

However, if your job requires you to carry large, heavy boxes up and down stairs and you fell and injured yourself because you couldn’t see due to the boxes, you would be able to show “risk of employment.”



In North Carolina, injuries from an accident like a slip, trip, or fall are considered compensable if they arise out of the course of employment. Let’s head back to the stairwell. If your knee gave out, causing you to trip on the stairs while at work, this wouldn’t be considered compensable. But if you fell on the stairs because of slippery conditions, it probably would be. In the former example, the issue arose from the individual’s personal circumstances, while in the latter, it was directly tied to the employers’ negligence.

I’ve seen so many different scenarios in my years of practice that I could give examples for days. But as I said before, this is just intended to be a basic primer to explain the differences between the two states and common phrases you may hear from insurance adjusters regarding your claim. It’s important for me to get to know the details of your particular situation to see if and how I can help.

The law can be complicated, and dealing with an injury can be stressful, painful, and frustrating. I’m here to help with the legal aspects so you can focus on healing.

Joseph Miller

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.

WANT TO GET THE MOST FROM YOUR HEALTH CARE?

When you’re sitting in your doctor’s office feeling unwell — your pain compounded by anxiety from researching your symptoms — it’s easy to assume the worst. You may be worried about whether your insurance will cover necessary medications or procedures and wonder if there are any good options that will actually help.

These worries are normal and understandable, but there’s a rather simple way to ease your mind. To feel empowered to make the right health care decisions for yourself or your loved ones, you need to gather information, and that starts with asking good questions.

What are the benefits and the risks?

To make an educated decision about your health care, you need to know the good, the bad, and the ugly of treatment options your practitioner presents. Since you want to get better, it’s easy to remember to ask how suggested procedures or medications will help. But don’t forget to ask about the downsides, risks, or potential complications.

Pro tip: To humanize the situation and help you understand how to think through a given decision, ask your provider: “What would you tell your family member about the benefits and risks of this procedure if they were considering it?”

Are there alternatives to consider?

Sometimes, the most common treatment isn’t necessarily the best one for you. If you’re hesitant to take a new medication because of the side effects, for example, ask about alternative medications or

therapies. Be prepared that some alternative treatment options may require a greater commitment to lifestyle changes to see results.

Follow-up question: Asking “Why do you recommend this procedure/medication over the other options?” will help you understand the factors your doctor has considered when making their recommendation to you.

What results can I expect, and how long will it take?

This is an often-overlooked question. Say you tell your doctor you have back pain, and they recommend physical therapy. You may be expecting to be pain-free ASAP, while they may think that a successful treatment will yield increased mobility and reduced pain over the course of a few months. It’s important to be on the same page about what to expect and how long it will take to see improvements.

A healthy dose of curiosity may be all you need to get more from your health care and feel confident in your decisions.



Fight SAD Early!

Do you get SAD? We’re talking about seasonal affective disorder, which affects 1%-10% of the population depending on the state you live in. Symptoms of SAD are similar to symptoms of depression, but unlike chronic depression, which can occur at any time, people with SAD only experience symptoms during a certain time of year, usually winter.

SAD has been strongly linked with shorter days and less sun — although summertime SAD can result from long days that make sleep difficult, resulting in irritability and mood swings. In most cases, however, winter is the problem season, likely due to a link between less sun and a vitamin D deficiency.

Depression is one common symptom of vitamin D deficiency, especially in patients who aren’t prone to depression due to other circumstances. Unfortunately, very few foods are good sources of vitamin D. The best source is sunlight itself.

There are a few ways to combat wintertime SAD. Establishing a regular sleep schedule is important, as is an exercise routine and healthy diet. As mentioned, it’s hard to find vitamin D in foods, but milk and other food products are often intentionally enriched with it during processing.



The most common solution, however, is taking a vitamin D supplement, which can be purchased over the counter at drugstores and grocery stores. It is commonly recommended for people living in places with harsher winters, and although there are negative side effects if taken in excess, a regular daily dose of vitamin D is a healthy way to ensure you have the right levels in your system.

This month is the perfect time to begin that process. Vitamin D can take several months to build up to effective levels in our bodies. It may be the hottest time of the year in many places, but it’s also the ideal time to start fighting SAD early!

Our Clients Say It Best

Would Recommend This Law Firm

“I had a very good experience with this Law firm. I worked mostly with Andrew and he was great. Very responsive and very honest. I wasn’t happy that I needed them, but was happy to work with them!”

-Olrica

Excellent

“Worked with Andrew my whole case he was awesome and did everything they could to get me top dollar. Kept me informed really appreciated that!”

-Heather



Joe’s Monthly ‘SOUL SNACKS’

“The man who cannot survive bad times will not see good times.”

-Hasidic Proverb



Ingredients

- 4 sausage links of your choice
- 1 lb green beans
- 1 red bell pepper, diced
- 1 yellow bell pepper, diced
- 1 red onion, diced
- 1 zucchini, diced
- 1 yellow summer squash, diced
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, grated
- 1 tbsp thyme
- 1 tsp oregano
- 1 tsp basil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp crushed red pepper (optional)

Directions

- Preheat your grill to medium heat or your oven to 425 F.
- In a large bowl, add all of the ingredients and mix well. Divide into four equal portions.
- Prepare four 16-inch pieces of foil and place a portion in the middle of each section. Wrap each foil piece tightly and avoid holes.
- Grill each foil packet for 20 minutes, flipping halfway through. You can also bake each packet for 20 minutes at 425 F.