WAGE CALCULATION TIPS

When a wage statement arrives at DLT, Division of Workers' Compensation from the claim administrator, each one is calculated separately to ensure accuracy. If incorrect, a letter is sent to the claim administrator who must contact the employer to get the corrections; the corrections go back to the claim administrator and again are sent to DLT. To avoid this lengthy process and promote prompt payment to the injured worker, please review these tips.

- Be ready to prepare a wage statement as soon as the employee has been out of work for 4 calendar days. A delay in completing the wage statement can lead to problems with a claim.
- Know which wage statement to use and have it available. Do not wait for the claim administrator to send you the wage statement. Use the…
  - Full-time for a person hired for 20 hours or more per week.
  - Part-time for a person hired for less than 20 hours per week.
  - Seasonal for a person hired to work for 16 weeks or less.
- The same rules for completion apply to the full-time and the part-time wage statements. The seasonal wage statement is different (see Seasonal Wage Statement instructions).
- Complete all areas of the wage statement – you may not realize the many uses for a single number or date.
- Be sure to include the number of hours per week the employee was hired to work.
- Injury date and Incapacity date are very important. Incapacity date is the first full calendar day that the employee was out of work due to their injury.
- Hire date must be provided – it is used for several reasons.
- Use the correct section depending on whether the employee worked less or more than 2 weeks.
- USE CONSECUTIVE WEEKS ALWAYS – whether the employee earned money or not.
- COMPLETE ALL COLUMNS. Skipping weeks and incomplete columns are two troublesome errors.
- Weeks go backwards from the incapacity date – not the injury date.
  - EX: Injury date: 5/10/2003; Incapacity date: 8/13/2003. Wages would go from 8/13/2003 back 13 or 26 weeks (depending on the statement used).
- In this same example, you would not use the week of incapacity unless it was a full week worked.
  - EX: If the employee was hired for 40 hours and worked 40 hours during the week of the incapacity, that week could be used on the wage statement. If the employee worked less than the 40 hours, you would not list the week, but would start with the week previous (no matter how many hours worked that week).
  - The same rule applies for the week of hire if it appears on the wage statement, only use it if a full week was worked.
- No overtime or bonus monies or hours should be listed in the 13 (26) weeks. They are calculated separately on the right side of the form.
- Since overtime is generally paid after 40 hours, if an employee worked more than 40 hours without earning any overtime, use the total hours and put *NO OT* next to the hours. This will let others know that, although more than 40 hours are listed, no overtime is included.
- Common examples of what <u>will be</u> included in the 13 (26) weeks:
  - Commissions
  - Holiday Pay - except during an unpaid plant shutdown week
  - Shift Differential
  - Sick Pay or put "UNPAID"
  - Sunday Pay
  - Vacation Pay or put "UNPAID"
- Sick and vacation pay are included, but if the employee did not receive payment for any of those weeks which might appear, put the word "UNPAID" in the Gross Wages column instead of a zero. This will let others know that it was, in fact, unpaid. Otherwise, one might think that the preparer did not know that those monies are used.
- When determining *Total number of usable weeks*, add up only the weeks where wages are listed. Zero weeks are not used in the mathematical computation when getting the average weekly wage (AWW).
- Although only 13 or 26 weeks of wages are used, you must go back 52 weeks from the incapacity date to collect bonus and overtime monies.
- In *Block 1*of the Bonus and Overtime Calculation, remember to only use the number of weeks employed up to 52. If the employee worked for less than 52, list the actual number – if greater than 52, list 52.
- Following the step-by step instructions on the remainder on the wage statement should result in an accurate computation of the AWW.
- Many unique circumstances may develop when completing a wage statement, contact your WC claim administrator or call a DLT Claims Analyst at (401) 462-8120 for help.
- All wage statements are available in an Excel format, which will do the final calculations for you!