

Your Independent Medical Exam

For Employees of Self-Insured Businesses



Answers to some commonly asked questions about independent medical exams (IMEs).

Why has an independent medical exam been scheduled for me?

A medical exam is scheduled to ensure you receive appropriate care for your workplace injury or occupational disease. Independent medical examinations are required for any of the following reasons:

- Your doctor, employer or claim manager asked for an evaluation of your condition.
- You asked to have your claim closed, reopened or allowed.
- There is a question about the type or duration of treatment you need.
- The Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) or your employer needs to evaluate the extent of your impairment.
- You appealed a decision or asked L&I to reconsider a decision about your claim.

Do I have to attend an IME?

Yes. You must attend an IME. Your benefits may be reduced, suspended or denied if you fail to attend or cooperate with an examination without a good reason.

How will I be notified about the IME?

Your employer or their representative will mail you an appointment letter at least 14 days before the scheduled exam. The letter will list the date, time and location where the examination will take place. The

letter will also contain the name(s) of the doctor(s). It is your responsibility to keep your appointment.

What if my exam needs to be rescheduled?

You must notify your employer or their representative when you have good reason to reschedule the exam. Call your claim manager at least five working days before the exam date.

Will I have to pay for the exam?

No. The employer or their representative will pay for the examination. However, if you fail to attend or cooperate without a good reason, your time-loss benefits may be reduced by the cost of the examination.

Who will do the exam?

A doctor approved by L&I will review your medical file and examine you. In some cases, several doctors may conduct the exam or there may be a series of exams. You can look up the doctor's qualifications at www.Lni.wa.gov/IMEs under "Find a Medical Examiner."

May I bring a friend or relative to the exam?

Yes. You may have a person accompany you to provide comfort and reassurance. The person coming with you cannot be paid for attending or reimbursed for travel or meals. An attorney or attorney's staff or your doctor or doctor's staff are not permitted to attend with you. If you are scheduled for a psychiatric exam, no one will be allowed in the room except you and the doctor.

Do not bring minor children to an IME.

What if I am asked to bring x-rays, MRIs or CT scans to the exam?

Contact your doctor's office if you need help obtaining the x-ray, MRI or CT scan. The IME doctor is qualified to read and interpret the actual film or image. The employer or their representative will mail relevant medical records to the doctor. You may bring copies of medical reports in your possession.

What will happen at the exam?

Most of the appointment time will be spent reviewing the medical file and asking you questions. Sometimes, doctors ask questions you may not think are related to your injury or illness. Be patient. The doctor is trying to be fair and objective and address many aspects about your injury and medical care.

The physical examination may be brief. You should not expect a complete physical exam. The doctor is not a treating doctor. However, in some cases, a full exam, lab tests and x-rays may be needed. Requesting additional tests will be the examining doctor's decision.

The report will be mailed to the employer or their representative within 14 days after the exam or within 14 days after the test results are available. You may request in writing a copy of the report from the employer or their representative.

What if I am late to the exam or the exam is not conducted at the scheduled time?

Call the number listed on your appointment letter if you will be more than 15 minutes late or if you leave after waiting for 1 hour. Your exam may need to be rescheduled.

An IME typically takes an hour. Arriving on time means:

- Your exam is not rushed.
- Other workers are seen on time.
- Other workers' exams are not rushed.

What if I have to miss work?

You will be paid your regular salary for the actual hours you miss work to attend an IME. You will need to submit a request to your claim manager. Attached is a reimbursement form for your use.

Who will pay my travel expenses?

Your employer or their representative will reimburse your travel expenses. Most of the time you will only be paid for mileage. Mileage or other expenses such as meals, hotel room expense, taxi fare, parking, etc. will be paid at the current L&I rate. Please obtain receipts for these expenses and record your miles to and from the examination.

Overnight stays and travel by airplane, train or bus require prior approval by the employer or their representative. Call the number listed on the appointment letter for more information or instructions.

Mail the attached request for reimbursement, along with your receipts, to your employer or their representative within one year of the exam. Keep a copy of your request and receipts.

What if I have a physical or mental disability that limits how I can travel to a medical exam?

Call the number listed in your appointment letter so arrangements can be made to assist you in traveling to the exam. Your disability does not need to be related to your claim.

Here's how to get more help

- **Questions about your claim:** Call your employer or their representative
- **Self Insurance Ombudsman:** Call 1-888-317-0493
- **Comments about your exam experience:**
 - Provide your comments in writing and mail them to either your employer or their representative.
You can also mail your comments to:
Department of Labor & Industries
Provider Quality and Compliance
PO Box 44322
Olympia, WA 98504-4322
 - An IME comment form is not required but L&I provides a form at www.Lni.wa.gov. Conduct a search for F245-053-000.

📄 Visit the L&I website: www.Lni.wa.gov

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Independent Medical Exam (IME) Travel and Wage Reimbursement Request

Read the instructions on the back before you start.

Worker Information

			Claim No.
Name (Last, First, Middle initial)		Date of injury	
Worker's home address (not PO Box)			Social Security No. (for ID only)
City	State	Zip Code	Worker's phone number

Travel Information – see the instructions and example on the back.

	A. Date of each trip (mm-dd-yyyy)	B. Travel code (one per line – see back of form)	C. From (city)	D. To (city and person seen)	E. No. of miles (roundtrip)	F. Expense cost (one per line)
1.						\$
2.						\$
3.						\$
4.						\$
5.						\$
6.						\$
7.						\$
8.						\$

Reimbursing Wages:

If you took more than 30 minutes of time off work **without** pay to attend your Independent Medical Exam (IME), your employer will reimburse you for the time you missed. You will be reimbursed the hourly wage you were making at the time of the IME. Please list the total time and wage below, then enter the information on the lines above using travel code 0411A.

Time missed from work to attend the IME: _____ hrs _____ min. Hourly wage at the time of the IME: \$_____

Employer's name		Employer's phone number	
Employer's address		City	State
			Zip

Worker's Signature – forms not signed will be returned.

These expense are related to attending the IME scheduled by my employer or their representative. I have not been reimbursed for these expenses. I understand it is a crime to submit information I know is false.

Worker's signature	Date
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Instructions for completing IME Travel Reimbursement Request:

Read the instructions before you complete this form. You can only be reimbursed if your form is complete, correct, and signed.

You must complete this form within one year from the date of your exam to be reimbursed.

Complete each column:

- **Column A:** Date you traveled (one date per line).
- **Column B:** Travel code. Find the correct code from the list below. Only one code per line.
- **Column C:** City you traveled from.
- **Column D:** City you traveled to.
- **Column E:** Total number of miles you traveled roundtrip. You will be paid at the current mileage rate according to the shortest direct route from your home.
- **Column F:** Dollar amount of each expense. One expense per line. You must attach copies of all receipts. All receipts must be itemized and legible. No credit card slips. Parking expenses under \$10 don't require a receipt.

Travel code:

Expense	Travel code
Unpaid time from work (hours x wage)	0411A
Private vehicle mileage	0412A
Parking	0402A
Bridge & ferry toll	0403A
Commercial transportation	0405A
Taxi	0414A
Lodging	0406A
Breakfast	0407A
Lunch	0408A
Dinner	0409A

Signature:

You must sign the form to receive reimbursement.

Example:

	A. Date of each trip (mm-dd-yyyy)	B. Travel code (one per line – see back of form)	C. From (city)	D. To (city and person seen)	E. No. of miles (roundtrip)	F. Expense cost (one per line)
1.	02/14/14	0412A	Olympia	Seattle; Dr. Smith	60	\$
2.	02/14/14	0408A				\$ 20.00

Mail completed forms to:

The self-insured employer or their representative who scheduled the IME. Their name and address will be on the IME notification letter you received.