

RCW 51.32.187 Exposed workers—Prima facie presumption of certain occupational diseases—Rebuttal—Definitions. (1) The definitions in this section apply throughout this section.

(a) "Exposed worker(s)" means a worker working at a radiological hazardous waste facility for at least an eight hour shift covered under this title, including conducting an inspection of the facility.

(b) "Radiological hazardous waste facility" means any structure and its lands where high-level radioactive waste as defined by 33 U.S.C. Sec. 1402 or mixed waste as defined by WAC 173-303-040 is stored or disposed of, except for military installations as defined in 31 C.F.R. Part 802.227 and listed in Appendix A to 31 C.F.R. Part 802.

(2) (a) For exposed workers who are covered under this title, there exists a prima facie presumption that the diseases and conditions listed in subsection (3) of this section are occupational diseases under RCW 51.08.140.

(b) This presumption of occupational disease may be rebutted by clear and convincing evidence. Such evidence may include, but is not limited to, use of tobacco products, physical fitness and weight, lifestyle, hereditary factors, and exposure from other employment or nonemployment activities.

(3) The prima facie presumption applies to the following:

(a) Respiratory disease, except communicable diseases;

(b) Any heart problems, experienced within seventy-two hours of exposure to fumes, toxic substances, or chemicals at the site;

(c) Cancer, subject to subsection (4) of this section;

(d) Beryllium sensitization, and acute and chronic beryllium disease; and

(e) Neurological disease, except communicable diseases.

(4) (a) The presumption established for cancer only applies to any active or former exposed worker who has cancer that develops or manifests itself and who either was given a qualifying medical examination upon becoming such a worker that showed no evidence of cancer or was not given a qualifying medical examination because a qualifying medical examination was not required.

(b) The presumption applies to the following cancers:

(i) Leukemia;

(ii) Primary or secondary lung cancer, including bronchi and trachea, sarcoma of the lung, other than in situ lung cancer that is discovered during or after a postmortem examination, but not including mesothelioma or pleura cancer;

(iii) Primary or secondary bone cancer, including the bone form of solitary plasmacytoma, myelodysplastic syndrome, myelofibrosis with myeloid metaplasia, essential thrombocytosis or essential thrombocythemia, primary polycythemia vera (also called polycythemia rubra vera, P. vera, primary polycythemia, proliferative polycythemia, spent-phase polycythemia, or primary erythremia);

(iv) Primary or secondary renal (kidney) cancer;

(v) Lymphomas, other than Hodgkin's disease;

(vi) Waldenstrom's macroglobulinemia and mycosis fungoides; and

(vii) Primary cancer of the: (A) Thyroid; (B) male or female breast; (C) esophagus; (D) stomach; (E) pharynx, including all three areas, oropharynx, nasopharynx, and hypopharynx and the larynx. The oropharynx includes base of tongue, soft palate and tonsils (the hypopharynx includes the pyriform sinus); (F) small intestine; (G) pancreas; (H) bile ducts, including ampulla of vater; (I) gall bladder; (J) salivary gland; (K) urinary bladder; (L) brain

(malignancies only and not including intracranial endocrine glands and other parts of the central nervous system or borderline astrocytomas); (M) colon, including rectum and appendix; (N) ovary, including fallopian tubes if both organs are involved; and (O) liver, except if cirrhosis or hepatitis B is indicated.

(5) (a) The presumption established in this section extends to an exposed worker following termination of service for the lifetime of that individual.

(b) A worker or the survivor of a worker who has died as a result of one of the conditions or diseases listed in subsection (3) of this section, and whose claim was denied by order of the department, the board of industrial insurance appeals, or a court, can file a new claim for the same exposure and contended condition or disease.

(c) This section applies to decisions made after June 7, 2018, without regard to the date of last injurious exposure or claim filing.

(6) (a) When a determination involving the presumption established in this section is appealed to the board of industrial insurance appeals and the final decision allows the claim of benefits, the board of industrial insurance appeals shall order that all reasonable costs of the appeal, including attorneys' fees and witness fees, be paid to the worker or his or her beneficiary by the opposing party.

(b) When a determination involving the presumption established in this section is appealed to any court and the final decision allows the claim for benefits, the court shall order that all reasonable costs of appeal, including attorneys' fees and witness fees, be paid to the worker or his or her beneficiary by the opposing party. [2022 c 62 § 1; 2019 c 108 § 1; 2018 c 9 § 1.]

Effective date—2022 c 62: "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 11, 2022]." [2022 c 62 § 2.]