

A Bill for an Act Relating to the Medical Claim Conciliation Panels.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Hawaii:

SECTION 1. Section 671-11(b), Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“(b) A medical claim conciliation panel shall be formed for each claim filed pursuant to section 671-12 and after each panel renders its decision or the claim is otherwise disposed of it shall be disbanded. Each medical claim conciliation panel shall consist of one chairperson selected from among persons who are familiar with and experienced in the personal injury claims settlement process, one attorney licensed to practice in the courts of the State and experienced in trial practice, and one physician or surgeon licensed to practice under chapter 453. The chairperson shall be appointed by the chief justice of the supreme court of Hawaii. The attorney shall be appointed by the chairperson from a list of not less than 35 attorneys experienced in trial practice submitted annually by the supreme court. The physician or surgeon shall be appointed by the chairperson from a list of not less than 35 physicians or surgeons submitted annually by the board of medical examiners.

The chairperson shall preside at the meetings of the panel. The chairperson and all panel members shall serve voluntarily and without compensation, but shall be paid allowances for travel and living expenses which may be incurred as a result of the performance of their duties on the panel. Such costs shall be paid by the department of regulatory agencies.

The office and meeting space, secretarial and clerical assistance, office equipment and office supplies for the panel shall be furnished by the department of regulatory agencies.

The board of medical examiners shall prepare a list of physicians and surgeons along with their respective specialties who shall then be considered consultants to the panel in their respective fields. Panel members may consult with other legal, medical and insurance specialists. Any consultant called by the panel to appear before the panel shall be paid an allowance for travel and living expenses which may be incurred as a result of such person's appearance before the panel. Such costs shall be paid by the department of regulatory agencies.”

SECTION 2. Section 671-15(a), Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended to read as follows:

“(a) Within 30 days after the completion of a hearing, the medical claim conciliation panel shall file a written advisory decision with the insurance commissioner who shall thereupon mail copies to all parties concerned, their counsel, and the representative of each health care provider’s liability insurance carrier authorized to act for such carrier, and the board of medical examiners. The panel shall decide the issue of liability and shall state its conclusions in substantially the following language: “We find the health care provider was actionably negligent in his or her care and treatment of the patient and we, therefore, find for the claimant”; or “We find the health care provider was not actionably negligent in his or her care and treatment of the patient and we, therefore, find for the health care provider”.

SECTION 3. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed. New material is underscored. In printing this Act, the revisor of statutes need not include the brackets, the bracketed material, or the underscoring.*

SECTION 4. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

(Approved May 8, 1978.)

*Edited accordingly.