



STATE OF TENNESSEE
BUREAU OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION
COURT OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS
5788 BOBBY HICKS HIGHWAY
GRAY, TN 37615-3190
(423) 854-5160

ABIGAIL S. HUDGENS
ADMINISTRATOR

BRIAN ADDINGTON
JUDGE

March 16, 2020

**GRAY TEMPORARY TELEPHONE APPROVAL PROTOCOL DUE TO
CORONAVIRUS OUTBREAK 2020**

- The Court will continue to hear approvals on Mondays through Fridays as usual, but will do so telephonically by utilization of the Judge's Conference line at 855-543-5044.
- Rather than setting approvals in hourly blocks as it does for in person hearings, the Court must instead, for efficiency and practicality, set hearings in 20 minute intervals between the hours of **8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. and 1:00p.m. and 2:00 p.m. Eastern Time**
- Parties should schedule the approval hearings by email with administrative staff or Traci Haynes the Court's staff attorney, as by the current protocol. Administrative staff emails are elizabeth.vandelinder@tn.gov and melissa.welch@tn.gov. Traci Haynes' email is traci.haynes@tn.gov.
- The parties should send **ALL SIGNED** documents, electronically, to administrative staff or Ms. Haynes 3 days in advance of the scheduled approval.
- The documents include **SIGNED** originals of the proposed Settlement Agreement, Proposed Order Approving Settlement, FULLY-completed SD2 form, Explanation of Benefits and supporting medical records when future medicals are to be closed; any supporting documents such as the First Report of Work Injury or Wage Statement should also be sent if bearing on the issues to be approved. Receipt of the documents is required for the setting of an approval.
- The attorneys and the employee shall call the Judge's Conference Line 855-543-5044 **PROMPTLY** at the appointed time. Failure to do so could result in a scheduled approval call carrying-over into the next appointment and create confusion, inability to complete approvals, and unprofessionally disrupt the administration of the system.
- The Employer's attorney **SHALL** pay the \$150 filing fee required for all approvals in advance. Receipt of the fee is required for the setting of an approval. Please send the filing fee to the attention of Melissa Welch at the address above.
- Staff will return a copy of the signed documents to the parties, electronically unless otherwise required, accompanied by a copy of the receipt for the filing fee to Employer's counsel.
- In person approvals at the Hamblen Co. Courthouse on the first Wednesday of each month will be suspended per order of the Supreme Court.
- The Court will continue to conduct expedited and compensation hearings in person, unless conducting the hearing in person presents a safety hazard. If you have an expedited or compensation hearing scheduled and any person to be present at the hearing has been diagnosed or exposed to Covid-19 (the coronavirus), please contact the Court clerk immediately and file a motion.