

Improving Integrity and Accountability in the Workers' Compensation System

*Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Annual Report to the
Legislature*

January 2024

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Executive Summary

This annual report summarizes the Department of Labor & Industries' (L&I) efforts to educate first, recognizing that the vast majority of workers, employers, and providers intend to do the right thing; and, where education is unsuccessful, to find and eliminate deliberate fraud in the workers' compensation system. It describes the department's education and assistance efforts with employers and, as mandated by law, includes actual and estimated cost savings from the agency's investigations into workers' compensation fraud. This report does not address L&I's investigations into employer practices regarding minimum wage, overtime, other pay requirements, or meal and rest breaks. That information can be found in the [Workplace Rights Investigations Legislative Report](#).

Education and Outreach

Education and outreach is the department's first priority in this area. L&I offered a wide array of programs and services virtually in fiscal year (FY) 2023 (July 1, 2022 to June 30, 2023) to help businesses reduce reporting mistakes and understand applicable laws and rules, including:

- contractor training days;
- "Introduction to L&I" workshops;
- helping health care providers understand L&I's billing and documentation requirements;
- webinars and e-learning modules; and
- early contact calls to employers who have a time loss claim.

In addition, using Lean principles, L&I standardized processes for employers opening new workers' compensation insurance accounts. The key focus areas are to ensure correct premium rates are being charged and educate businesses about quarterly-reporting requirements.

Identifying and addressing fraud

L&I confronts workers' compensation fraud in three critical areas: among workers, employers, and also those providers who treat or train injured workers. Along with pursuing both civil and criminal charges, the department intervenes on behalf of injured workers who may be discriminated against for filing a workers' compensation claim or whose employer knowingly suppresses the filing of an injury or illness claim.

Worker fraud

In FY 2023, L&I received more than 1,800 referrals of potential worker fraud, which resulted in completing over 1,350 individual investigations of all types. Of these, 38 cases were referred as willful misrepresentation/fraud cases to fraud adjudicators for civil decisions. Fraud investigations for FY 2023 resulted in cost savings of more than \$9.82 million.

The Case Reserve unit reviewed completed investigation cases to determine cost savings directly associated to investigation assignments and findings. Prior to July 2022, cases submitted to the unit were

sent only when they believed cost savings may have occurred. In July 2022, the program piloted a process in which all completed investigations were sent for a cost savings for review. The results clearly affirmed the need to review all completed investigations. Based on the pilot results, all cases since December 2022 have been submitted to the Case Reserve unit for cost savings data.

In FY 2023, the more than \$9.82 million in cost savings was directly related to the Investigations Program within L&I's Fraud Prevention and Labor Standards division. Not all investigations were able to be reviewed in FY 2023, so the actual cost savings may be higher.

Employer fraud

L&I received nearly 2,700 leads related to potential employer misreporting in FY 2023. The resulting reviews and audits led to more than \$26.8 million in additionally assessed premiums, penalties, and interest. To reduce and prevent employer fraud in FY 2023, L&I:

- Audited nearly 2,000 employers; of those, 71% were found to owe debts to L&I; over 520 of these were unregistered employers.
- Reviewed about 4,200 public works contracts worth \$6.9 billion to ensure workers' compensation premiums were paid.

Provider fraud

The Provider Fraud unit addresses fraud allegations among providers entrusted to help injured workers. These include claims related to medical or therapeutic care, as well as vocational training and language interpretation. L&I identified over \$9 million in provider overpayments in FY 2023.

The unit completed 25 cases in FY 2023 that included reviewing nearly 800 providers, over 27,000 claims and files, and more than 200,000 line items that were billed to the department.

Collections

In FY 2023, L&I collected \$252.4 million in delinquent funds, of which \$233.1 million was from employer workers' compensation premiums. Other sources include the Retrospective Rating program, Washington Industrial Safety and Health Act (WISHA) citations, contractor infractions, the Medical Information Payment System (MIPS) for provider payments, claims overpayments, the Wage Payment Act, and third-party claims.

Measuring return on investment

In FY 2023, 243 FTEs detected, investigated, and enforced actions against workers' compensation fraud. For every dollar spent on these efforts, L&I returned \$10.32 to employers, workers, and providers.

Introduction

To preserve the integrity of the workers' compensation fund, L&I provides information and services to help workers, employers, and providers understand and comply with state workers' compensation requirements to preserve the integrity of the workers' compensation fund. The goal is to ensure money is available to pay for injured worker benefits and help reduce premium costs for both workers and employers. The department uses discovery tools, interagency partnerships, and public tips to detect and deter workers' compensation fraud. In the most egregious cases, the department pursues criminal prosecution.

This report describes how L&I detects, audits, investigates, and prosecutes fraud committed by workers, employers and providers. It details L&I's efforts in FY 2023 to find and eliminate deliberate fraud in the workers' compensation system. It explains how L&I collects debt, averts fraud through education and outreach, and implements innovative programs and tools to combat fraud.

This report also describes the department's first priority of providing employers with targeted education and assistance, in accordance with state law. It includes actual and estimated cost savings from the agency's investigations into workers' compensation fraud. This report does not address L&I's investigations into employer practices regarding minimum wage, overtime, other pay requirements, or meal and rest breaks. That information can be found in the Workplace Rights Investigations Report.

Types of fraud

Workers' compensation fraud comes in three forms: **employers** that fail to pay their workers' compensation premiums; **employees** who make false injury and disability claims; and **providers** that bill dishonestly.

Cheating the workers' compensation system is not a victimless crime. Fraud drives up workers' compensations costs. These increases are then passed along to both employers and workers in the form of higher insurance premiums.

What is Workers' Compensation?

Workers' compensation is a form of insurance that provides medical treatment, wage replacement, and other disability benefits when workers are injured or suffer a work-related illness.

About 198,000 employers and 2.66 million workers pay premiums to fund the system.

Insurance premiums are based on the risk associated with the type of work employees perform. Employers with similar job hazards are grouped into "risk classes".

In addition to the assigned risk class(es), **premium rates** are adjusted for each individual employer based on the number of injuries and worker hours the employer reports.

This is referred to as the employer's "experience factor." Hazardous work activities with an increased risk of injury require a higher premium rate through the risk class.

Companies that experience more costs for workplace injuries pay higher rates within the class, and those with lower costs pay less.

Impact to honest employers

Employers that do not comply with business regulations and laws have lower costs, giving them an unfair advantage over businesses that do. By not paying workers' compensation or other taxes, licenses, and wages required by law, compliant businesses must bear the burden of paying higher workers' compensation costs to cover all system expenses.

Impact to workers and the public

Higher premium rates resulting from workers' compensation fraud may also result in reduced employee wages, lower legitimate business profits, and higher prices for consumer goods and services.

Along with pursuing both civil and criminal charges, L&I intervenes on behalf of injured workers who may be discriminated against for filing a workers' compensation claim or whose employer knowingly suppresses the filing of an injury or illness claim.

Worker Fraud Investigations

OVERVIEW

In general, anyone collecting workers' compensation benefits to which they are not legally entitled, or obtaining benefits through deliberate misrepresentation, is committing fraud.

Fraud investigations may result in workers having to repay benefits, including penalties and interest. In some cases, workers may face criminal charges. Investigations do more than identify debts owed to L&I; they help avoid unnecessary expenses to the system. When an investigation determines someone is not entitled to workers' compensation benefits, L&I stops paying benefits to the worker. Investigations often uncover vital information that enables better claim adjudication decisions and helps workers return to work, avoiding workplace disability.

DETECTION

Detection and tracking identifies and prevents fraud within the injured worker claim system using a variety of resources and tools. L&I employees review individual claims and assess the potential for fraud by analyzing multi-agency, cross-matched resources and data. They also review tips from the public and share them among internal programs.

In FY 2023, more than 1,800 tips were received using these methods and filed in the internal Investigation Case Management (ICM) system.

CRIMINAL AND CIVIL CASES

Investigative staff will refer a case to fraud whenever they believe there is evidence of fraud or willful misrepresentation. During this reporting period, 93 cases were referred to fraud.

Of the completed fraud cases, 23 willful misrepresentation orders were issued, totaling over \$800,000. Six of these claimants were referred for criminal prosecution, two of which were charged in Thurston County. There are currently four cases pending decision at the Office of the Attorney General. Four cases from past reporting periods are still pending trial; seven claimant fraud cases have active bench warrants from past years.

INVESTIGATION PROCEDURES

L&I's methods in conducting investigations into potential worker fraud include:

- **activity checks** to review worker activities to see if the worker is still unable to work;
- **validity checks** of a claim to confirm it is legitimate (e.g., the injury was work-related);
- **intentional misrepresentation** of injuries to continue receiving benefits (e.g., a person working under the table while continuing to receive wage-replacement funds);
- requests to **reopen claims** that were previously closed to ensure no intervening incidents (such as traffic accidents or other insurance claims for the same type of injury) occurred between the time the claim was closed and the request to reopen it was received;
- **other** investigations resulting from discoveries of irregularities by claim managers when they request information, such as medical records, to manage a claim; and
- **claim inquiries** to obtain additional information from internal claims staff for a variety of reasons, such as to verify an address or obtain medical documents. The program completed over 1,300 of these investigations.

Figure 1 shows the number and types of worker fraud investigations in FY 2023. Nearly 1,400 investigations were conducted, the most common of which were activity investigations to verify whether an injured worker was still unable to work. The data in Figure 1 includes identified civil and criminal cases, as described above.

Figure 1: L&I worker fraud investigations, FY 2023

Type of Referral	Number of Referrals
Activity	872
Other	281
Validity	173
Fraud	38
Claim Reopening	2
Total	1,366

Source: L&I Investigations

Employer Fraud Investigations

OVERVIEW

Employers that knowingly misclassify employees in lower-cost rate classes, underreport or fail to report worker hours, or fail to pay required premiums are committing employer fraud. Cases of employer fraud are investigated by L&I auditors and investigative staff. Employers that commit fraud can incur large assessments and penalties and may be criminally prosecuted. Some examples of employer fraud include:

- operating a business without the proper license;
- paying workers in cash with no payroll records;
- intentionally underreporting worker hours;
- deliberately reporting worker hours in the incorrect risk classification; and
- treating workers as independent contractors (not covering workers with workers' compensation insurance).

In FY 2023, the Investigations program initiated 11 criminal cases related to employer fraud in the most serious cases. These involved allegations of employer misconduct, such as failure to secure workers' compensation insurance for employees, continuing to employ workers after their certificate of coverage was revoked, or any of the violations listed above. These referrals come from internal collections activity, audits, and L&I's Contractor Compliance program. Though rare, their complexity requires the most investigative time.

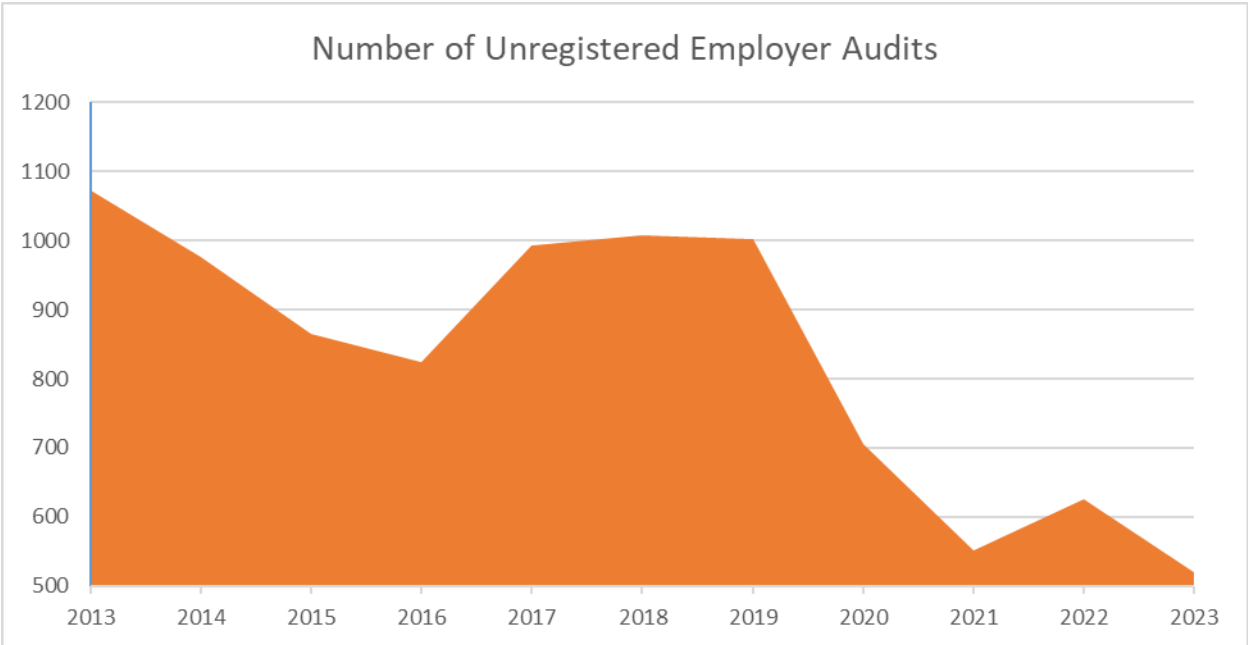
DETECTION

Ongoing enhancements in detection and analytic capacity has led to better detecting employers that owe premiums, and fewer audits on businesses that are correctly reporting workers' compensation premiums.

To identify businesses most likely to owe premiums, L&I uses tips from the public, shares data and information with other agencies, and uses available internal data to send auditors to the right businesses. Enhanced detection methods ensure L&I identifies and actively pursues the employers most likely to commit fraud — saving time and trouble for employers that are compliant. In FY 2023, L&I received nearly 2,700 employer fraud leads. Of the nearly 2,000 employer audits completed in FY 2023, 71% were found to owe money to L&I — resulting in more than \$26.8 million in assessed premiums.

As shown in Figure 2, since 2013, the number of audits of unregistered businesses has fluctuated. The rapid decline during fiscal years 2020 and 2021 is due to pauses in audits as a result of COVID-19, and to fewer audit referrals for unregistered firms in 2023.

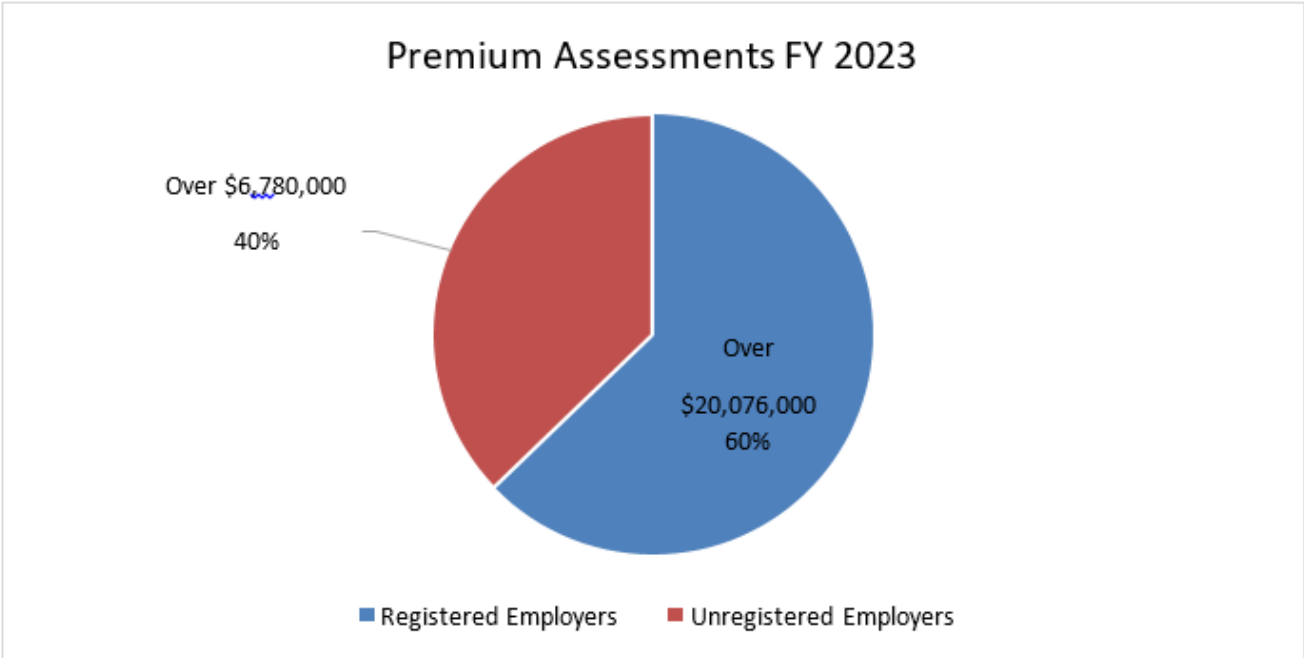
Figure 2: Unregistered employer audits, fiscal years 2013-2023



Source: L&I Field Audit

As shown in Figure 3, about 40% of premium assessments in FY 2023 involved unregistered employers, totaling more than \$6.7 million. This is slightly down from 42% in FY 2022, affirming continued success in leveling the playing field for all employers.

Figure 3: Premium assessments, FY 2023



Source: L&I Field Audit

Field audits

Field audits are an important tool to ensure employers report their worker hours correctly and pay appropriate workers' compensation premiums. L&I's standard audit process includes checking business records, conducting interviews, verifying the number of workers reported, and that all hours are reported in the correct risk class.

Auditors throughout Washington conduct these reviews in the field. After completing an audit, L&I holds a closing conference with the employer — either by phone or in person — during which auditors supply educational materials and explain how to improve record-keeping. This post-audit conference is required for every audit to help employers understand their reporting obligations. It is also an opportunity to answer employer questions, which helps prevent recurring issues. In FY 2023, one auditor successfully completed the Certified Fraud Examiner (CFE) certification, including a rigorous study program and a four-part examination. Currently, 33% of all Fraud Prevention and Labor Standards (FPLS) Audit Program auditors are CFEs.

Public works contracts

L&I reviews public works contracts valued at over \$35,000 to verify appropriate workers' compensation premiums were paid. On these projects, the final 5% of payments is withheld until certain tax payments are verified by the Contract Release unit. This ensures contractors follow the law and pay taxes, including any premiums owed to L&I. If L&I discovers a contractor owes premiums on other projects, the department may pursue those debts as well. In FY 2023, L&I reviewed about 4,200 public works contracts valued at nearly \$6.9 billion. During this review, L&I found over \$2.05 million in workers' compensation premiums that were owed for work on public projects during the fiscal year.

L&I works with contractors to resolve unintentional reporting discrepancies. Not all cases are resolved voluntarily, however, and a small number require an audit. In FY 2023, more than 31,600 account reviews were completed, and 20 of those were audited. This was a smaller number than recent years due to the audit team's availability and staffing adjustments in early 2023. The dedicated team has recently hired and is now fully staffed. In FY 2023, the Contract Release unit focused the second half of the year on educating employers and requesting that they voluntarily amend their reports to come into compliance. Contract Release is working to resume the standards audit referral process in the 2024 calendar year.

EMPLOYER FRAUD CRIMINAL AND CIVIL CASES

Criminal cases

A criminal case may be filed against an employer for the most egregious actions of underpayment or non-reporting. Vital support comes from the Office of the Attorney General, which helps develop these cases for criminal prosecution. In FY 2023, L&I forwarded two of the four completed cases of employer fraud investigations to the Attorney General's Office. Criminal charges were filed on one of these cases.

Civil cases

Civil misrepresentation penalties occur when employers intentionally misclassify or underreport employee hours for workers' compensation. In FY 2023, L&I assessed 10 misrepresentation penalties totaling over \$2 million. This was in addition to premiums owed.

Provider Fraud Investigations

OVERVIEW

The Provider Fraud unit addresses allegations of fraud among providers who treat injured workers. Treatments include medical or therapeutic care, as well as vocational training and language interpretation in worker compensation claims. Most of these providers ensure the needs of the injured worker are met with integrity and honesty. However, some provider fraud does occur.

In this context, provider fraud is any scheme to obtain payment from L&I that was not earned. Examples include medical billing in excess of the services provided and “upcoding” (e.g., billing for an electric wheelchair but providing a manual wheelchair). L&I has one employee dedicated to completing a preliminary review to validate referrals.

Figure 4 shows eight common types of provider fraud. Any of these fraud types may be represented in the cases described below.

Figure 4: Types of health care provider fraud

Billing for services not rendered
Billing for a non-covered service as a covered service
Misrepresenting location of service (billing for treatment services while in a separate physical location)
Misrepresenting provider of service
Incorrect reporting of procedures (includes unbundling and upcoding)
Overutilization of services
Corruption (kickbacks and bribery)
False or unnecessary issuance of durable medical equipment (DME)

Source: L&I Investigations

DETECTION

L&I receives referrals of provider fraud from internal and external sources, including injured workers, claims managers, other medical providers and agencies, and staff responsible for paying bills related to treating injured workers. In FY 2023, L&I reviewed 39 referrals of suspected provider fraud involving

185 providers, and — after reviewing all 185 providers referred for suspected fraud — five potential cases totaling more than \$7,893,000 in estimated improper payments were identified. These five cases were forwarded to fraud investigators for further action.

CRIMINAL AND CIVIL CASES

Provider Fraud criminal cases

In FY 2023, L&I did not refer any new health care provider cases to prosecutors for potential criminal charges. The Provider Fraud unit did negotiate payment of debt originating from 2001 for \$100,000, which was paid in full.

Provider Fraud investigations

Provider Fraud completed 14 cases in FY 2023, including the review of nearly 800 providers, over 27,000 claims and files, and more than 200,000 line items billed to the department totaling over \$9,914,000. While working the cases, Provider Fraud identified just over \$1,000, which was recouped internally for billing errors.

Provider Fraud staff assisted on fraud and abuse cases with other state and federal agencies; provided outreach to internal and external customers; attended inter- and intra-state health care fraud task force workgroups on rising trends in provider and workers' compensation fraud; and worked with internal customers on tightening policies to prevent future fraud and abuse.

Provider Fraud civil cases

Civil cases rely on lower evidentiary standards and are more common than criminal cases. Provider civil fraud cases primarily involved issues around hearing aids, interpreters, and improper billing for service in FY 2023. During this period, the department notified providers of violations and collected money that was owed due to improper billing, but did not assess penalties.

PROVIDER OVERSIGHT

Private sector rehabilitation services

L&I's Private Sector Rehabilitation Services (PSRS) unit ensures that Washington's injured workers receive high-quality vocational rehabilitation services that comply with applicable state laws, regulations, and policies. PSRS investigates complaints about vocational providers, monitors and audits how providers deliver their services, what those services are, and how providers bill for their services.

Provider quality and compliance

L&I's Provider Quality and Compliance (PQC) unit audits medical bills for services paid by the state's workers' compensation fund. The purpose of the audits is to notify providers of any violations regarding applicable laws, regulations, and L&I policies that affect the billing of, and payment for,

services provided to injured workers. The audits also enforce compliance with L&I’s medical aid rules and fee schedules. In FY 2023, the unit completed 20 medical provider reviews and assessed over \$1,112,000 for improper billing. Actions related to collections efforts are included below.

Data Sharing

In addition to L&I’s detection efforts, cross-matching L&I data with other agencies helps catch inconsistent reporting or duplicated claims that may indicate worker, employer, or provider fraud. Here are some ways L&I is using data sharing to fight fraud.

Cross-agency collaboration

L&I receives and shares data with the Department of Revenue (DOR) and the Employment Security Department (ESD) when any of the agencies finds businesses or individuals that may need to be investigated. The process is to send referrals and share or cross-check data with the other agencies.

L&I and the Department of Corrections (DOC) have an interagency data-sharing agreement to ensure incarcerated individuals are not receiving wage replacement benefits through workers’ compensation.

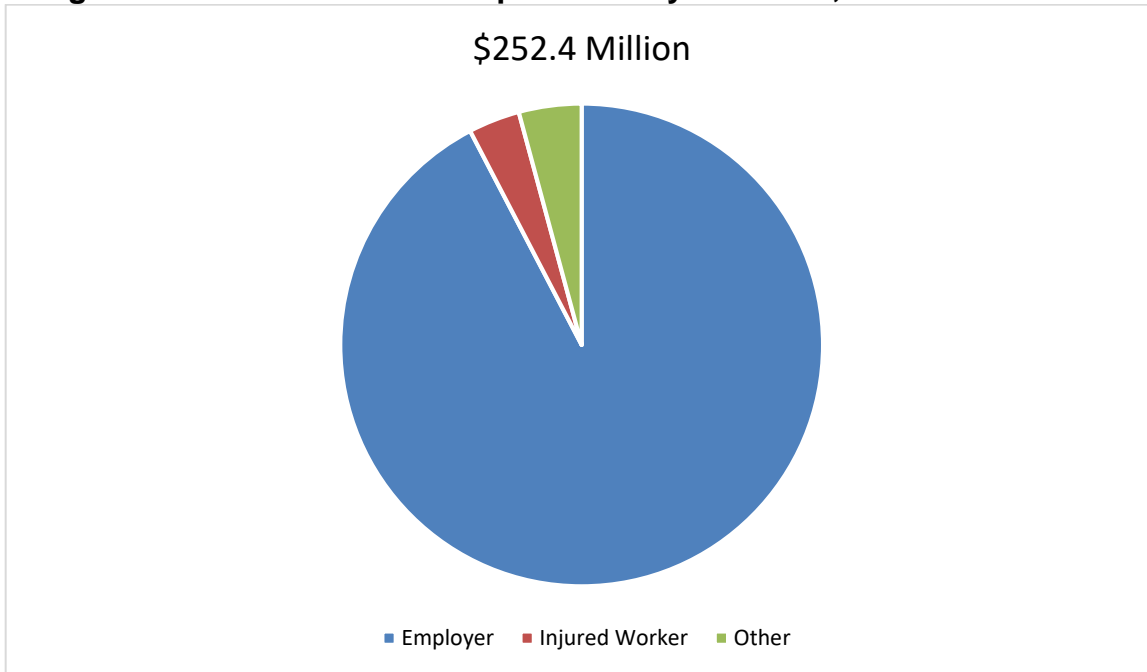
L&I’s Fraud Management team began meeting on a regular basis with fraud managers from ESD, DOR, and the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) to further collaborate and share data. This group has been expanding to include the Department of Licensing (DOL) and Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC), and continues to expand to other agencies and programs.

Collections

L&I’s Collections program gets involved when workers, employers, or providers are delinquent in paying money owed to L&I, whether workers’ compensation premiums, overpayments to providers or injured workers, or penalties. The program is also responsible for collecting other types of debt on behalf of other L&I programs.

Figure 5 shows the sources of the collections. Employer premiums account for the vast majority of dollars identified as owing to the department and collected, totaling more than \$233.1 million of the \$252.4 million collected in FY 2023. “Other” debts includes unpaid wages, unpaid penalties, safety and health citations, Right-to-Know billings, and Retrospective Rating program billings.

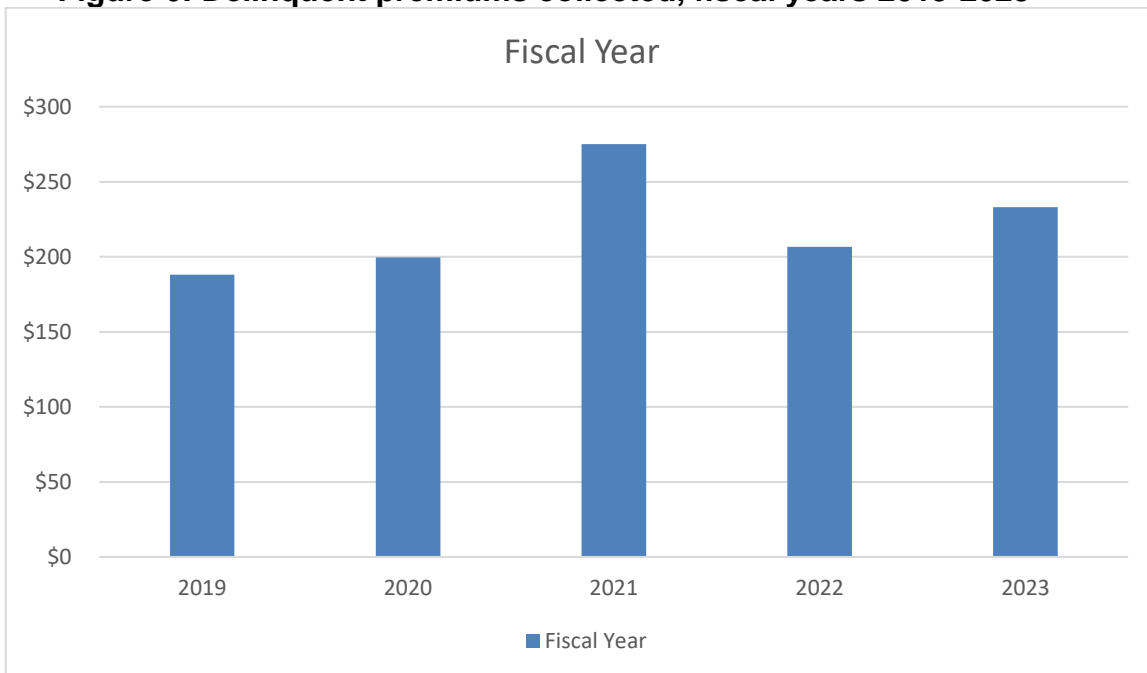
Figure 5: Distribution of delinquent money collected, FY 2023



Source: L&I Collections

Figure 6 shows collections for delinquent workers' compensation premiums over the past five fiscal years. FY 2021 was an unusual increase due to the impacts of COVID-19. Amounts collected in FY 2023 decreased by 10% compared to 2021, as the COVID-19 impacts for businesses were reduced.

Figure 6: Delinquent premiums collected, fiscal years 2019-2023



Source: L&I Collections

Education and Outreach

L&I proactively helps employers avoid making costly mistakes that can potentially lead to fraud. Reducing reporting errors and knowing the rules they must follow make it easier for employers to do business with L&I. Importantly, it enables the agency to focus efforts on businesses that intentionally undermine the system. L&I offers many programs and services with this goal in mind.

New employer reviews

Historically, L&I offered new employer reviews with instructional audits, but only a handful participated. Now, the team contacts employers directly when they open a new account. This gives L&I an opportunity to help ensure employers understand compliance requirements. For established accounts that are out of compliance, L&I offers ways to self-correct. If that is unsuccessful, the employers are referred to audit.

Contractor training

L&I invests considerable time to help all businesses, including construction contractors, know their legal obligations. In FY 2023, nearly 1,400 construction contractors received virtual training. At these highly rated webinars, L&I offers training on a variety of subjects, including proper reporting and payments, ensuring workplace safety, marketing, contract writing, and more.

Workers' compensation coverage determination

The Workers' Compensation Coverage Determination unit offers guidance about coverage requirements without fear of an assessment. Assistance includes determining whether a worker is an independent contractor or must be covered for workers' compensation purposes. The team helps employers by combining education and support to bring businesses into compliance before any reporting errors are discovered during an audit.

EMPLOYER OUTREACH

L&I has continued to prioritize outreach to the employer community to help employers avoid reporting mistakes. The following are several examples of this outreach.

L&I Essentials for Business workshops

L&I holds virtual workshops offering a quick but comprehensive overview of L&I requirements, resources, and services. They are promoted through an array of platforms. In FY 2023, the agency offered 15 of these courses.

- Twelve were in English, and three were in Spanish.
- Over 1,000 employers attended these workshops.
- In post-workshop surveys, 99.8% gave the webinar an overall rating of "Excellent" (87.4%) or "Good" (12.4%).

- Also, 100% rated as “Excellent” (83.5%) or “Good” (16.5%) the webinar’s “ability to answer your specific questions.”

Small Business News

L&I’s Small Business Liaison Office publishes a quarterly e-newsletter, “News for Small Business”. More than 10,600 subscribers learn about upcoming training courses, new L&I resources and tools, new laws or changes in laws, rules and policies, and a variety of other information of benefit to small businesses.

Small Business Outreach Contracts

L&I launched the Small Business Outreach Contracts program in 2020 with employer-trusted groups to deliver important messaging to small businesses and nonprofits, significantly expanding the number of employers that learn about L&I requirements, resources, and services. During the 2021-2023 biennium, L&I has had contracts with 27 organizations including industry associations, ethnic and cultural groups, entrepreneurial training and advising organizations, chambers of commerce, and others. In FY 2023, L&I reached nearly 84,000 employers through these contractors.

Multi-Agency Small Business Requirements & Resources (SBRR) Workshops

L&I partners with other agencies to offer collaborative SBRR virtual workshops called “Start Your Business in Washington”. In FY 2023, more than 350 people attended the six SBRR webinars that were offered. Additionally, 320 people attended nine in-person SBRR workshops (five in Spanish and four in English). Attendees learned business essentials, including L&I requirements and access to resources.

Provider outreach

The department took a unique approach to provider education in FY 2023, offering one-on-one consultations to providers on specific questions and needs. During these consultations, providers receive step-by-step help and hands-on demonstrations of how to use L&I resources. Most important, they can ask questions about their specific billing needs. In addition, L&I provides an online option to [receive provider questions](#).

FUTURE INITIATIVES

L&I will continue to prioritize educating workers, employers, and providers, and will also aggressively pursue fraud. In FY 2024, the department is continuing several strategies and adding more collaboration on suspected violations. Goals for 2024 include:

- Apply lessons learned, using virtual platforms to reach more employers and providers for future training, small business assistance, and compliance actions.
- Increase contact with business entities to expand the number of employers receiving educational materials.
- Transform data collection tools to be incorporated into the workers' compensation modernization system. This will enable more efficient identification of fraudulent activity.
- Build upon coordinated enforcement concepts that have been embedded into the standard operating procedures of many L&I programs to ensure agency response is appropriate to the employer's action, and that there is a consistent application of consequences.
- Continue to look for and implement computer forensics and auditing resources.
- Collaborate with employers, retrospective rating groups, advocates, trade groups, and others to identify, deter, and report all types of suspected violations.
- Focus on bad actors severely out of compliance across various business lines. FPLS has collaborated with agency partners to create the Business Strategy Group, which works across the enterprise to resolve issues with cross training, systems, and policies, as well as share significant cases impacting multiple business areas.
- Implement data analytics for high-probability case leads on early worker fraud investigations.
- Collaborate with other federal, state, and private investigation groups to identify provider investigations with common themes.
- Develop and enhance relationships with key partner groups to improve investigations.

ANYONE CAN REPORT FRAUD. HERE'S HOW.

Anyone can help stop workers' compensation fraud by reporting situations that may be fraudulent, and telling others how to report:

- Fraud hotline: 888-811-5974
- [L&I's fraud website](#)
- [Report a contractor](#)

Employers can help L&I detect workers' compensation fraud by reporting [newly hired workers](#).

The information will be shared with L&I to ensure employed workers are not also claiming benefits they are not entitled to receive.

Conclusion

Educating workers, employers, and providers about their rights and responsibilities in the workers' compensation system is a top priority at L&I. Fighting fraud is necessary when education is not enough. The department continues to focus on a range of initiatives — including increased innovation, regulatory actions, and collective resources — to bolster measurable results in the fight against fraud.