

Payment Policies for Healthcare Services

Provided to Injured Workers and Crime Victims

Chapter 7: Chiropractic Services

Effective July 1, 2024

Link: Look for possible <u>updates and corrections</u> to these payment policies on L&I's website.

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Definitions

The following terms are utilized in this chapter and are defined as follows:

Body regions: One of the factors contributing to clinical decision-making complexity for chiropractic care visits. Body regions include:

- Cervical (includes atlanto-occipital joint),
- Thoracic (includes costovertebral and costotransverse joints),
- Lumbar,
- Sacral,
- Pelvic (includes sacroiliac joint),
- Extra-spinal (considered one region), which includes:
 - o Head (includes temporomandibular joint; doesn't include atlanto-occipital), and
 - Upper and lower extremities, *and*
 - o Rib cage (doesn't include costotransverse and costovertebral joints).

Chiropractic care visits: Office or other outpatient visits involving subjective and objective assessment of patient status, management, and treatment.

Clinical decision-making complexity: The primary component influencing the level of care for a chiropractic care visit. Clinical complexity is similar to established patient evaluation and management services, but emphasizes factors typically addressed with treating workers. Factors that contribute to clinical decision-making complexity for injured workers include:

- The current occupational condition(s),
- Employment and workplace factors,
- Non-occupational conditions that may complicate care of occupational condition,
- Care planning and patient management,
- Chiropractic intervention(s) provided,
- Number of **body regions** involved, and
- Response to care.

The number of **body regions** being adjusted is only one of the factors that may contribute to visit complexity, but should be weighted less heavily than other components.

L&I defines clinical decision-making complexity according to the definitions for medical decisionmaking complexity in the Evaluation and Management Services Guidelines section of the CPT® book. **Complementary and preparatory services**: Interventions used to prepare a body region for or facilitate a response to a chiropractic manipulation/adjustment. For example, the application of heat or cold is considered a complementary and preparatory service.

Distant site: The location of the provider who performs telehealth services. This provider isn't at the originating site with the worker.

Established patient: One who has received professional services from the provider, or another provider of the same specialty who belongs to the same group practice, within the past three years.

L&I uses the CPT® definition for established patients. Refer to a CPT® book for complete code descriptions, definitions, and guidelines.

New patient: One who hasn't received any professional services from the provider, or another provider of the same specialty who belongs to the same group practice, within the past three years.

L&I uses the CPT® definitions for new patients. Refer to a CPT® book for complete code descriptions, definitions, and guidelines.

Originating site: The place where the worker is located when receiving telehealth. For the purposes of this policy, the worker may be at home when receiving telehealth.

Telehealth: Face-to-face services delivered by a qualified medical provider through a real-time, two-way, audio video connection. These services aren't appropriate without a video connection.

Modifiers

The following CPT®, HCPCS, and/or local code modifiers appear in this chapter:

Use	Payment Information			
-22 (Increased Procedural Services)				
Use this modifier to indicate the work to provide the service was substantially greater than typically required. Documentation must include an explanation of the increased complexity and why it was required for proper treatment. Note : This modifier shouldn't be used with E/M services.	Procedures with this modifier are reviewed and priced on an individual basis (by report). If allowed, payment is made at a maximum of 125% of the fee schedule level or billed charge, whichever is less.			
-25 (Significant, separately identifiable evaluation and management (E/M) service by the same provider on the same day of the procedure or other service.)				
Use this modifier to indicate a significant, separately identifiable E/M service that went above and beyond another service provided by the same provider, for the same patient, on the same date of service. Note : This modifier should only be used with E/M services.	This modifier allows payment for the significant, separately identifiable E/M service. Payment is made at a maximum of 100% of the fee schedule level or billed charge, whichever is less.			
-93 (via telephone or other audio-only telecommunications system)				
Use this modifier to indicate when a service was performed via audio-only. Note: Limited to certain services. This modifier is only applicable to certain mental health and behavioral health intervention services. See the applicable audio-only payment policy for more details.	This modifier doesn't affect payment but is necessary to describe the service.			

Use	Payment Information		
-GT (Via interactive audio and video telecommunication systems)			
Use this modifier to indicate when a service was performed via telehealth. Note: Modifier –95 (telehealth service) isn't recognized by the	This modifier doesn't affect payment but is necessary to describe the service.		
insurer.	Payment is based on the Place of Service (POS) billed with the telehealth service and this modifier. See the telehealth payment policy in this chapter for more information.		

Note: Many factors contribute to the resulting allowed amount. Therefore, there may be other factors aside from modifier usage that reduce or affect payment. Refer to the applicable payment policies and fee schedules for the service(s) being provided for more information.

Payment policy: Chiropractic care visits

Prior authorization

Prior authorization is required for all types of conservative care, including chiropractic, when billing for:

- More than 20 office visits, or
- Visits that occur more than 60 days after the first date you treat the worker.

Links: For more information, see <u>WAC 296-20-030(1)</u> and <u>WAC 296-20-03001(1)</u>.

Services that can be billed

Local codes **2050A**, **2051A**, and **2052A** account for both professional management (clinical complexity) and technical service (manipulation and adjustment). There are three levels of **chiropractic care visits**:

The primary component is clinical decision-making. If it is…	OR the number of body regions adjusted or manipulated is…	and typical face- to-face time with patient or family is…	Then the appropriate billing code and maximum fee is
Straightforward	Up to 2	Up to 15 minutes	2050A (Level 1) \$50.49
Low complexity	Up to 3 or 4	15-25 minutes	2051A (Level 2) \$64.17
Moderate complexity	Up to 5 or more	Over 25 minutes	2052A (Level 3) \$78.19

Re-evaluations

Depending on the amount of clinical complexity and services rendered, an E/M code may better capture the level of service performed during a re-evaluation.

If a re-evaluation of a patient meets the CPT® criteria for **established patient** E/M, the provider may bill the appropriate E/M code instead of a chiropractic care local code (**2050A**, **2051A**, or **2052A**). See the <u>Chiropractic evaluation and management (E/M) services</u> payment policy for additional details.

Services that aren't covered

CPT® chiropractic manipulative treatment (CMT) codes 98940-98943 aren't covered.

Instead of using CMT codes, L&I collaborated with the Washington State Chiropractic Association and the University of Washington to develop local codes that can be billed for **chiropractic care visits** (see Services that can be billed, above).

Treatment of chronic migraine or chronic tension-type headache with chiropractic manipulation/manual therapy isn't a covered benefit.



Link: The <u>L&I coverage decision</u> for treatment of Chronic Migraine or Chronic Tension-type Headache is available online.

Payment limits

Only one chiropractic care visit per day is payable.

Extra-spinal manipulations aren't billed separately from each other (all extremities are considered to be one **body region**).

Providers may not bill an **established patient** E/M code and a chiropractic care local code (2050A, 2051A, or 2052A) for the same date of service.

Examples of chiropractic care levels of complexity

These examples are for illustration only and aren't clinically prescriptive:

Level 1:	Straightforward clinical decision-making (billing code 2050A)		
Patient	26 year old male.		
Cause of injury	Lifted a box at work.		
Symptoms	Mild, low back pain for several days.		
Treatment	Manipulation or adjustment of the lumbar region, anterior thoracic mobilization, and lower cervical adjustment.		
Level 2:	Low complexity clinical decision-making (billing code 2051A)		
Patient	55 year old male, follow-up visit.		
Cause of injury	Slipped and fell on stairs while carrying heavy object at work.		
Symptoms	Ongoing complaints of neck and low back pain. New sensation of periodic tingling in right foot. Two days off work.		
Treatment	Discuss need to minimize lifting and getting assistance when carrying heavier objects. Five minutes of myofascial release prior to adjustment of the cervical, thoracic, and lumbar regions.		
Level 3:	Moderate complexity clinical decision-making (billing code 2052A)		
Patient	38 year old female, follow-up visit.		
Cause of injury	Moved heavy archive boxes at work over the course of three days.		
Symptoms	Low back pain with pain at the sacrococcygeal junction, pain in the sacroiliac regions, and right-sided foot drop. Obesity and borderline diabetes. Tried light-duty work last week, but unable to sit for very long, went home. Tried prescribed stretching from last visit, but worker couldn't continue and didn't stretch because of pain.		
Treatment	Review MRI report with the worker. Discussed obesity and diabetes impact on recovery, 10 minutes. 10 minutes of moist heat application, 10 minutes of myofascial work, and manipulation/ adjustment to the lumbar, sacroiliac, and sacrococcygeal regions.		

Payment policy: Chiropractic consultations

General information

Consultations are requested by the attending provider. A chiropractic consultant may render a second opinion for any conservative management of musculoskeletal conditions even if the attending provider isn't a chiropractor.

Prior authorization

While chiropractic consultations don't require prior authorization, consultations do require prior notification (by electronic communication, letter, or phone call) to the department or self-insurer per <u>WAC 296-23-195</u>.

Who must perform these services to qualify for payment

Only an L&I-approved chiropractic consultant can perform office consultation services to qualify for payment.

Services that can be billed

Approved consultants may bill all levels of CPT® office consultation codes.

Additional information: Chiropractic consultations

L&I periodically publishes:

- A policy on consultation referrals, and
- A list of approved chiropractic consultants.



Link: More information about <u>consultations</u>, how to <u>become a chiropractic consultant</u>, and a list of <u>approved chiropractic consultants</u> is available online.

Payment policy: Chiropractic evaluation and management (E/M) services

Prior authorization

Prior authorization is required when billing for:

- More than 20 office visits, or
- Visits that occur more than 60 days after the first date you treat the worker.

Link: For more information, see <u>WAC 296-20-030(1)</u> and <u>WAC 296-20-03001(1)</u>.

Services that can be billed

Case management services

Codes and billing instructions for case management services telephone calls, team conferences, and secure email can be found in the Case management services section of <u>Chapter 10: Evaluation and Management</u>. These codes may be billed in addition to other services performed on the same day.

Office visits

Chiropractic physicians may bill all levels of office visit codes for **new and established patients**.

For complete code descriptions, definitions, and guidelines, refer to a CPT® book.



Link: Fees appear in the Professional Services Fee Schedule.

Payment limits

A new patient E/M office visit code is payable only once for the initial visit.

An established patient E/M office visit code isn't payable on same day as a new patient E/M.

Modifier -22 isn't payable with E/M office visit codes or chiropractic care services.

For follow-up visits, E/M office visit codes aren't payable when performed on the same day as L&I **chiropractic care visit** codes. Refer to the <u>Chiropractic care visits</u> section of this chapter for policies about the use of E/M office visit codes with L&I codes for **chiropractic care visits**.

Chiropractic E/M office visits are only payable on the same date as a **chiropractic care visit** when all of the following are met:

- It is the first visit on a new claim, and
- The E/M service is a significant, separately identifiable service (it goes beyond the usual pre- and post-service work included in the chiropractic care visit), and
- Modifier -25 is added to the E/M code, and
- The patient's record contains supporting documentation describing both the E/M and the chiropractic care services.



Link: Additional E/M information is available in <u>Chapter 10: Evaluation and Management</u> <u>Services.</u>



Payment policy: Chiropractic independent medical exams (IMEs) and impairment ratings

Prior authorization

Prior authorization is only required when an IME is scheduled. To get prior authorization for claims that are:

- State Fund, use L&I's secure, <u>online Claim & Account Center</u> to see if an IME is scheduled.
- Self-Insured, contact the <u>self-insured employer (SIE) or their third party administrator</u> (<u>TPA</u>).
- Crime Victims, call 1-800-762-3716.

Who must perform these services to qualify for payment

Only an L&I-approved IME examiner can perform IMEs or impairment ratings to qualify for payment.

For an impairment rating, an attending chiropractic physician may:

- Perform the rating on their own patients if the physician is an approved IME examiner, or
- Refer to an approved IME examiner.



Link: For more information, see: Chapter 12: Impairment Rating Services

Services that can be billed

Use the CPT® codes, local codes, and the payment policy for IMEs described in <u>Chapter 13:</u> <u>Independent Medical Exams</u>.

Additional information: Becoming an approved IME examiner

To apply for approval, chiropractic physicians must complete:

- Two years as an approved chiropractic consultant, and
- Impairment rating course approved by the department.



Payment policy: Chiropractic radiology services (Xrays)

Prior authorization

Medically necessary x-rays performed as part of the initial evaluation don't require prior authorization. All subsequent x-rays require prior authorization.

Who must perform these services to qualify for payment

Chiropractic physicians in the network may bill for radiographs taken as allowed under their license. It is required that a written x-ray report of radiologic findings and impressions be included in the patient's chart.

Only chiropractic physicians on L&I's list of approved radiological consultants may bill for X-ray consultation services. A chiropractic physician must be a Diplomat of the American Chiropractic Board of Radiology and must be approved by L&I to become an approved radiological consultant.

Services that can be billed

Chiropractic physicians must bill diagnostic X-ray services using CPT® radiology codes and the Requirements and Payment limits described in <u>Chapter 26: Radiology Services</u>.

Diagnostic ultrasounds performed by the chiropractor are bundled into the E/M service. See <u>Chapter 26: Radiology Services</u> for additional details on ultrasounds and documentation requirements.

Services that aren't covered

Dynamic Spinal Visualization

Dynamic Spinal Visualization (DSV) refers to several imaging technologies for the purpose of assessing spinal motion, including videofluoroscopy, cineradiology, digital motion x-ray, vertebral motional analysis and spinal x-ray digitization.

DSV isn't a covered benefit. Procedure code **76496** shouldn't be used to the bill the insurer for these services.



Link: For more information about DSV, see the <u>Dynamic Spinal Visualization coverage</u> <u>decision</u>.

Payment policy: Complementary and preparatory services, and patient education or counseling

General information

Patient education or counseling includes discussing or providing written information about:

- Lifestyle, or
- Diet, or
- Self-care and activities of daily living, or
- Home exercises.

The application of heat or cold is an example of a complementary and preparatory service.

Payment limits

The following services are bundled into the E/M or chiropractic local codes and aren't separately payable:

- Complementary and preparatory services, or
- Patient education or counseling.

Payment policy: Physical medicine treatment

Services that can be billed

Local code **1044M** for physical medicine modalities or procedures (including the use of traction devices) may only be billed by an attending provider who isn't board certified/qualified in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R).

Link: For more information, see Chapter 25: Physical Medicine Services.

Services that aren't covered

CPT® physical medicine codes (97001-97799) aren't payable to chiropractic physicians.

Requirements for billing

Documentation of the visit must support billing for local code 1044M.

Payment limits

Local code **1044M** is limited to six units per claim, except when the attending provider practices in a remote location where no licensed physical therapist is available.

After six units, the patient must be referred to a licensed physical or occupational therapist, or physiatrist for such treatment except when the attending provider practices in a remote location. (Refer to <u>WAC 296-21-290</u> for more information.)

Only one unit of the appropriate billing code will be paid per visit, regardless of the length of time the treatment is applied.

Low-level laser therapy

For details on coverage of this treatment modality, see <u>Chapter 25: Physical Medicine</u> <u>Services</u>.

Powered traction devices

The insurer won't pay any additional cost when powered traction devices are used. This policy applies to all FDA-approved powered traction devices.

Published literature hasn't substantially shown that powered traction devices are more effective than other forms of traction, other conservative treatments, or surgery. Powered traction devices are covered as a physical medicine modality under existing physical medicine payment policy. When powered traction is a proper and necessary treatment, the insurer may pay for powered traction therapy administered by a qualified provider under code **1044M**.



Link: For additional information, see powered traction therapy in <u>Chapter 25: Physical Medicine</u> Services.

Payment policy: Telehealth for chiropractic services

General information

The insurer reimburses telehealth at parity with in-person appointments.

Objective medical findings are required for time loss and other claim adjudication decisions. Inperson visits are preferred for gathering objective medical findings; however, **telehealth** may be an appropriate alternative in certain situations where objective medical findings can be gathered via a two-way audio and visual connection.

The provider is expected to make arrangements for in-person evaluation and intervention for certain circumstances. See <u>Services that must be performed in person</u> for additional information.

Telehealth services must occur either from a medical or vocational **origination site** or the worker's home. Services may not be delivered from either the employer's worksite or any location owned or controlled by the employer that isn't operated by a Medical Provider Network practitioner. The employer or their designee may not direct or require the worker to use a specific medical provider.

A medical or vocational origination site may be:

- A clinic, or
- A hospital, or
- A nursing home, or
- An adult family home.

Per <u>WAC 296-20-065</u>, the selection of a provider is the worker's choice by law. The provider performing **telehealth** services must be licensed in the state where the worker is receiving **telehealth** services. Only vocational rehabilitation counselors are exempt from this requirement.

Services that must be performed in person

In-person services are required when:

- The provider has determined the worker isn't a candidate for **telehealth** either generally or for a specific service, *or*
- The worker doesn't want to participate via telehealth, or
- The worker has an emergent issue such as re-injury, new injury, or worsening status, or
- When the service to be performed requires a hands-on component, or
- A worker files a reopening application, or
- It is the first visit of the claim, or

- Restrictions or changes are anticipated (the Activity Prescription Form [APF] requires an update), *or*
- Consultations requested to determine if continued conservative care is appropriate (including but not limited to 60 and 120 day consults), *or*
- A worker requests a transfer of attending provider.

System requirements

Telehealth services require an interactive telecommunication system consisting of special twoway audio and video equipment that permits real time consultation between the worker and provider. Providers are responsible for ensuring complete confidentiality and protecting the privacy of the worker at all times.

No payment shall be made to the worker or provider for obtaining or maintaining equipment for a **telehealth** appointment.

Prior authorization

The prior authorization requirements listed in this chapter apply regardless of how the service is rendered to the worker, either in person or via **telehealth**.

Teleconsultations

Teleconsultations are **consultations** requested by the attending provider, department, selfinsurer, or authorized department representative that are performed via **telehealth**. Per <u>WAC</u> <u>296-20-051</u>, providers may not bill **consultation** codes for **established patients**.

The insurer covers teleconsultations when the following conditions have been met:

- The telehealth provider must be an approved chiropractic consultant, and
- The referring provider must be one of the following: MD; DO; ND; DPM; OD; DMD; DDS; DC; ARNP; PA; or PhD clinical psychologist, *and*
- The consulting provider must note the name of the provider who referred the worker, and
- The **telehealth** provider must submit a written report that meets all in-person consultation and **telehealth** documentation requirements to the referring provider, and must send a copy to the insurer.



Links: Learn more about coverage of these services in <u>WAC 296-20-045</u>, <u>WAC 296-20-051</u>, and <u>WAC 296-20-01002</u>.

Services that can be billed

Telehealth procedures and services that are covered include most services that don't require a hands-on component. The worker must be present at the time of the **telehealth** service and the evaluation and/or treatment of the worker must be under the control of the **telehealth** provider.

Originating site and store and forward fees are covered, when applicable.

Originating Site Fee (Q3014)

The insurer will pay an **originating site** fee to a provider when they allow the worker to use their telecommunications equipment for a **telehealth** service with a provider at another location. To bill for the **originating site** fee, use HCPCS code **Q3014**. **Q3014** is payable to the **originating site** provider when no other billable service is rendered concurrently to the same patient.

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Note: If the **distant site** and the **originating site** are owned or rented by the same entity, **Q3014** is payable as long as billing and documentation requirements are met.

Q3014 isn't covered when:

- The originating site provider performs any service during the telehealth visit, or
- The worker is at home, or
- Billed by the **distant site** provider, except when the same payee owns both sites and the worker is using their equipment for the **telehealth** service, *or*
- The provider uses an audio-only connection.

The worker won't be reimbursed for using their home as an **originating site** or for any other **telehealth** related services.

When Q3014 is the only code billed, documentation is still required to support the service. When a provider bills Q3014 on the same day they render in-person care to a worker, separate documentation is required for both the in-person visit and the Q3014 service. The originating site provider billing Q3014 must submit separate documentation indicating who the distant site provider is and that the service is separate from the in-person visit that occurred on the same day.

Because **Q3014** is payable to the **originating site**, any provider employed by the **originating site** may bill for this service, so long as they sign the documentation supporting the **Q3014** service.

Q3014 billing example

A worker attends an in-person Evaluation and Management (E/M) appointment at their attending provider's office. The attending provider documents all necessary information as part of this visit and bills for the E/M service. The **originating site** (attending provider's

office) also arranges a secure and private space for the worker to participate in a consultation with their cardiologist at another location (**distant site** provider). The **originating site** provider separately documents the use of their space as part of their bill for **Q3014**.

How to bill for this scenario

The **originating site** provider may bill the insurer **Q3014** for allowing the worker to use their space for their **telehealth** visit with the **distant site** provider. The **distant site** provider bills for the services they provide; they can't bill **Q3014**.

For this telehealth visit:

- The distant site provider would bill the appropriate CPT® E/M code with modifier –GT.
- The originating site provider would bill Q3014.

Note: For Evaluation and Management Services refer to <u>Chapter 10: Evaluation and</u> <u>Management (E/M) Services</u>.

Store and Forward

G2010 is covered for patient-to-provider store and forward of images or video recordings, including interpretation and follow up when it isn't part of an E/M visit. Follow up must occur within 24 business hours of receiving the images or video recordings. Follow up may occur by phone, **telehealth**, or in-person, and isn't separately payable. **G2010** isn't covered if the patient provides the image or video recording as follow-up from an E/M visit in the prior 7 days, nor if the provider's evaluation of the image or video recording leads to an E/M service within the next 24 hours or soonest available appointment. Providers are required to document their interpretation of the image or video recording. Chart notes that don't state the interpretation by the provider are insufficient.

Services that aren't covered

Telephone calls aren't an appropriate replacement for in-person or **telehealth** services. The insurer won't pay for audio-only evaluation or treatment billed using modifier **-93** (audio only).

Telehealth procedures and services that aren't covered include:

- The same services that aren't covered in this chapter,
- The services listed under "Services that must be performed in person",
- Services that require physical hands-on and/or attended treatment of a patient,
- Completion and filing of any form that requires a hands-on physical examination (such as Report of Accident or Provider's Initial Report), *and*
- Home health monitoring.

The purchase, rental, installation, transmission, or maintenance of telecommunication equipment or systems isn't covered.

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Note: Completion of APFs can't occur via **telehealth** when the update will take the worker off work or the provider increases the worker's restrictions. In these situations the visit must be in-person.

Requirements for billing

For services delivered via telehealth, bill the applicable codes as if delivering care in person.

Bill using the -GT modifier to indicate telehealth.

Distant site providers must use place of service **02** to denote the **telehealth** visit when the worker isn't located in their home and will be reimbursed at the facility rate. **Distant site** providers must use place of service **10** to denote the **telehealth** visit when the worker is located in their home and will be reimbursed at the non-facility rate.

Documentation requirements

For the purposes of this policy, the following must be included in the documentation submitted by the **distant site** provider in addition to the documentation and coding requirements for services billed:

- A notation of the worker's originating site, and
- Documentation of the worker's consent to participate in **telehealth** services. This must be noted for each **telehealth** visit.

If treatment is to continue via **telehealth**, the evaluation report must include a detailed plan for implementing **telehealth** as agreed upon in a collaborative manner between the provider and worker.

Chart notes must contain documentation that justifies the level, type, and extent of services billed. See this chapter and other applicable MARFS chapter(s) for the type of service rendered and the documentation requirements.

Payment limits

The same limits noted in this chapter apply regardless of how the service is rendered to the worker.

Links to related topics

If you're looking for more information about	Then see…
Administrative rules for physical medicine	Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 296-21-290
Becoming an Chiropractic Consultant	Become a Chiropractic Consultant on L&I's website
Becoming an L&I provider	Become A Provider on L&I's website
Billing instructions and forms	Chapter 2: Information For All Providers
Chiropractic Services including Industrial Insurance Chiropractic Advisory Committee, practice, training, consultation resources	IICAC website
Dynamic Spinal Visualization coverage decision	Dynamic Spinal Visualization coverage decision
Fee schedules for all healthcare professional services (including chiropractic)	Fee schedules on L&I's website
Payment policies for case management services	Chapter 10: Evaluation and Management Services
Payment policies for diagnostic X-ray services	Chapter 26: Radiology Services
Payment policies for durable medical equipment (DME)	Chapter 9: Durable Medical Equipment
Payment policies for IMEs	<u>Chapter 13: Independent Medical Exams</u> (IMEs)
Payment policies for impairment ratings	Chapter 12: Impairment Rating Services
Payment policies for physical medicine treatment or powered traction therapy	Chapter 25: Physical Medicine Services
Payment policies for supplies	Chapter 28: Supplies, Materials, and Bundled Services

Need more help?

Email L&I's Provider Hotline at <u>PHL@Lni.wa.gov</u>. If you would prefer a phone call, please email us your name and contact number.