

Section Title: Benefits Administration - Healthcare Services  
Subject: Elective Surgical Procedures  
Effective Date: June 1, 1990

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## **POLICY PURPOSE**

Under *The Workers Compensation Act* (the Act), the WCB is responsible for the supervision and control of medical aid to injured workers. The WCB believes that elective surgery should be subject to prior review to ensure that the requested surgery is appropriate. This policy clarifies the circumstances when the WCB will accept responsibility for the costs associated with elective surgery and the worker's recovery.

## **A. POLICY**

1. The WCB will accept responsibility for the costs associated with elective surgery and the worker's subsequent recovery if
  - a) the surgery is required as a result of a compensable injury; and
  - b) prior approval has been received from the WCB.
2. If elective surgery is undertaken without prior approval, the WCB may accept responsibility if prior approval would have been granted had it been requested.
3. If the elective surgery has not been authorized, the WCB will be responsible for only those benefits that the worker would have been entitled to receive if he or she had not received the surgery.
4. Decisions of the WCB regarding the authorization of elective surgery may be reconsidered and appealed in accordance with the normal process prescribed by the Act.

## **B. REFERENCES**

*The Workers Compensation Act*, sections 22, 27(10), and 60.1  
WCB Policy 44.10.30.60, *Co-operation and Mitigation in Recovery*

## **History:**

1. Policy regarding authorization of elective surgical procedures established by Board Order 8/90, effective June 1, 1990.
2. Policy amended by Board Order 07/96 retroactive to June 1, 1990, to clarify that decisions regarding elective surgery are subject to the regular process of reconsideration and appeal, and rewritten for inclusion in the Policy Manual as Policy 42.10.10.
3. Minor formatting and wording changes were made to the policy and departmental names were updated, June 27, 2012.
4. October 2019 - Minor wording changes were made and the title of policy 44.10.30.60 was updated.