



Does Worker's Comp Cover Unpaid Trainees?

Q:

Our association hires some of our members to function as clinic group leaders several weekends a year. They receive wages and expense reimbursement, and they are covered by worker's compensation and liability insurance. While they are being trained for this work, their expenses are reimbursed, but they do not receive wages. At a recent national meeting of officials from associations of our type, an official

from another association said that it was their understanding that employees would not be covered by worker's compensation insurance unless they were receiving wages.

My question is: Are employees covered by worker's compensation insurance when they are being trained if they receive expense reimbursement but no wages? Does the answer to this question apply to all states in the Midwest or only to certain states?

*Edward R. Murray, Executive Director
Professional Ski Instructors of America—Central
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin*

is a matter of state law, or in some cases, a state agency or state court interpretation of the law. Therefore, the answer could be quite different in neighboring states. If you have uncertainty about the law in other states, the simplest solution is to contact the state agency responsible for worker's compensation matters and ask to talk to a worker's compensation specialist. In most cases, the specialist can give you the answer over the phone and will send you the applicable provisions of the law. Obviously, another option is to contact a lawyer specializing in worker's compensation in each state for which this issue is important to your association.

*D. Benson Tesdahl, Esq.
Powers, Pyles, Sutter & Verville,
Attorneys at Law
1275 Pennsylvania Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20004-2404*

Nonprofit World • Volume 16, Number 6 November/December 1998
Published by the Society for Nonprofit Organizations
6314 Odana Road, Suite 1, Madison, WI 53719 • (800) 424-7367

A:

Worker's compensation laws vary from state to state. The answer to your question

in Wisconsin where your association is headquartered is "yes," worker's compensation insurance is available to those being trained, even if they receive no wages. I would stress, however, that this

As a member of the Society for Nonprofit Organizations, you are invited to send in, every month, one question which you or your organization would like answered. You will receive a written response from one of our panel of experts—professionals located throughout the country. Selected questions and answers will be published in each issue of *Nonprofit World*. If you prefer that your question appear anonymously, please let us know. Send questions to: Ask the Experts, *Nonprofit World*, 6314 Odana Rd., Suite 1, Madison, WI. 53719. Include your name, address, phone number, and Society membership number.

COMING UP IN **NONPROFIT WORLD**

- Play to your strengths: using outsourcing to manage human resources
- Do you need a proposal writer?
- Keeping staff members loyal
- Give your organization a tune-up
- Helping board members understand their role
- You've got to know when to hold them, know when to fold them: how to let go of your services at the right time
- Getting the most from your Internet use
- Why ethics tools don't work
- Bring the world to your door: tapping international volunteers
- What is a search engine, and how can you make it work for you?
- Telling the story: exploring your clients' lives
- And much more!