

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 1991

CHAPTER 894  
HOUSE BILL 1392

AN ACT TO REQUIRE EMPLOYERS TO REPORT AT LEAST ANNUALLY ON FATALITIES AND SERIOUS INJURIES IN THE WORKPLACE, TO REQUIRE THE REPORTING OF CERTAIN SAFETY DATA TO THE COMMISSIONER OF LABOR BY VARIOUS AGENCIES, AND TO ENSURE, WHERE APPROPRIATE, THE CONFIDENTIALITY OF DATA RELEASED TO THE COMMISSIONER.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. G.S. 95-143 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 95-143. Record keeping and reporting.**

(a) Each employer shall make available to the Commissioner, or his agents, in such manner as the Commissioner shall require, copies of the same records and reports regarding his activities relating to this Article as are required to be made, kept, or preserved by section 8(c) of the Federal Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-596) and regulations made pursuant thereto.

(b) Each employer shall make, keep and preserve and make available to the Commissioner such records regarding his activities relating to this Article as the Commissioner may prescribe by regulation as necessary and appropriate for the enforcement of this Article or for developing information regarding the causes and prevention of occupational accidents and illnesses. In order to carry out the provisions of this section such regulations may include provisions requiring employers to conduct periodic inspections. The Commissioner shall also issue regulations requiring that employers, through posting of notices or other appropriate means, keep the employees informed of their protections and obligations under this Article, including the provisions of applicable standards. The Commissioner shall prescribe regulations requiring employers to maintain accurate records of, and to make ~~periodic~~ reports at least annually on, work-related deaths, injuries and illnesses other than minor injuries requiring only first-aid treatment and which do not involve medical treatment, loss of consciousness, restriction of work or motion, or transfer to another job.

(c) The Commissioner shall issue regulations requiring employers to maintain accurate records of employee exposure to potentially toxic materials of [or] harmful physical agents which are required to be monitored or measured under this Article. Such regulations shall provide employees or their representatives with an opportunity to observe such monitoring or measuring, and to have access to the records thereof. Such regulations shall also make appropriate provisions for each employee or former employee to have access to such records as will indicate his own exposure to toxic

materials or harmful physical agents. Each employer shall promptly notify any employee who has been or is being exposed to toxic materials or harmful physical agents in concentrations or at levels which exceed those prescribed by an applicable safety and health standard promulgated under this Article and shall inform any employee who is being thus exposed of the corrective action being taken.

(d) Any information obtained by the Commissioner or his duly authorized agents under this Article shall be obtained with a minimum burden upon employers, especially those operating small businesses. Unnecessary duplication of efforts in obtaining information shall be reduced to the maximum extent feasible."

Sec. 2. G.S. 97-81 reads as rewritten:

**"§ 97-81. Blank forms and literature; statistics; safety provisions; accident reports; studies and investigations and recommendations to General Assembly; to cooperate with other agencies for prevention of injury.**

(a) The Commission shall prepare and cause to be printed, and upon request furnish, free of charge to any employee or employer, such blank forms and literature as it shall deem requisite to facilitate or prompt the efficient administration of this Article.

(b) The Commission shall tabulate the accident reports received from employers in accordance with G.S. 97-92 and shall publish the same in the annual report of the Commission and as often as it may deem advisable, in such detailed or aggregate form as it may deem best. The name of the employer or employee shall not appear in such publications, and the employers' reports shall be private records of the Commission, and shall not be open for public inspection except for the inspection of the parties directly involved, and only to the extent of such ~~interest~~-interest, and except for inspection by the Department of Labor and other State or federal agencies pursuant to subsections (d) and (e) of this section. These reports shall not be used as evidence against any employer in any suit at law brought by any employee for the recovery of damages.

(c) The Commission shall make studies and investigations with respect to safety provisions and the causes of injuries in employments covered by this Article, and shall from time to time make to the General Assembly and to employers and carriers such recommendations as it may deem proper as to the best means of preventing such injuries.

(d) In making such studies and investigations the Commission ~~is authorized~~ shall:

- (1) ~~To cooperate~~ Cooperate with any agency of the United States charged with the duty of enforcing any law securing safety against injury in any employment covered by this Article, or with any State agency engaged in enforcing any laws to assure safety for employees, and
- (2) ~~To permit~~ Permit any such agency to have access to the records of the Commission.

In carrying out the provisions of this section the Commission or any officer or employee of the Commission is authorized to enter at any reasonable time upon any premises, tracks, wharf, dock, or other landing place, or to enter any building, where an employment covered by this Article is being carried on, and to examine any tool, appliance, or machinery used in such employment.

(e) The Commission shall, upon written request from the Commissioner of Labor, provide from the Commission's records the following information from claims filed by employees, and from employer reports of injury to an employee required by G.S. 97-92:

- (1) Name and business address of the employer;
- (2) Type of business of the employer;
- (3) Date the accident, illness, or injury occurred;
- (4) Nature of the injury or disease reported; and
- (5) Whether compensation for disability or medical expenses was paid to the injured employee.

Information provided to the Commissioner of Labor pursuant to this subsection, and to other State and federal agencies pursuant to subsection (d) of this section, shall be private and exempt from public inspection to the same extent that records of the Commission are so exempt."

Sec. 3. G.S. 97-92(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) The records of the Commission, insofar as they refer to accidents, injuries, and settlements shall not be open to the public, but only to the parties satisfying the Commission of their interest in such records and the right to inspect ~~them~~. them, and to State and federal agencies pursuant to G.S. 97-81."

Sec. 4. Chapter 58 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 58-36-16. Bureau to share information with Department of Labor.**

The Bureau shall provide to the Department of Labor information from the Bureau's records indicating each employer's experience rate modifier established for the purpose of setting premium rates for workers' compensation insurance and the name and business address of each employer whose workers' compensation coverage is provided through the assigned-risk pool pursuant to G.S. 58-36-1. Information provided to the Department of Labor with respect to experience rate modifiers shall include the name of the employer and the employer's most current intrastate or interstate experience rate modifier. The information provided to the Department under this section shall be confidential and not open for public inspection. The Bureau shall be immune from civil liability for erroneous information released by the Bureau pursuant to this section, provided that the Bureau acted in good faith and without malicious or wilful intent to harm in releasing the erroneous information."

Sec. 5. Chapter 58 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

**"§ 58-2-230. Commissioner to share information with Department of Labor.**

The Commissioner shall provide or cause to be provided to the Department of Labor, on an annual basis, the name and business address of every employer that is self-insured for workers' compensation. Information provided or caused to be provided by the Commissioner to the Department of Labor under this section is confidential and not open for public inspection under G.S. 132-6."

Sec. 6. G.S. 130A-385 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(e) In cases where death occurred due to an injury received in the course of the decedent's employment, the Chief Medical Examiner shall forward to the Commissioner of Labor a copy of the medical examiner's report of the investigation, including the location of the fatal injury and the name and address of the decedent's employer at the time of the fatal injury. The Chief Medical Examiner shall forward this report within 30 days of receipt of the information from the medical examiner."

Sec. 7. This act is effective upon ratification.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 8th day of July, 1992.

James C. Gardner  
President of the Senate

Daniel Blue, Jr.  
Speaker of the House of Representatives