

STATE OF NEW YORK

2537

2025-2026 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 21, 2025

Introduced by Sens. RAMOS, BRISPORT, JACKSON, MAYER -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Labor

AN ACT to amend the workers' compensation law, in relation to eligibility for classification as permanent total disability

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

1 Section 1. Subdivision 1 of section 15 of the workers' compensation
2 law, as amended by chapter 675 of the laws of 1977, is amended to read
3 as follows:
4 1. Permanent total disability. In case of total disability adjudged to
5 be permanent sixty-six and two-thirds per centum of the average weekly
6 wages shall be paid to the employee during the continuance of such total
7 disability. Loss of both hands, or both arms, or both feet, or both
8 legs, or both eyes, or of any two thereof, or inability to perform the
9 full range of sedentary work, or approval for federal social security
10 disability benefits as a result of a compensable accident or occupa-
11 tional disease shall, in the absence of conclusive proof to the contra-
12 ry, constitute permanent total disability. In all other cases permanent
13 total disability shall be determined in accordance with the facts.
14 Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, an injured employee
15 disabled due to the loss or total loss of use of both eyes, or both
16 hands, or both arms, or both feet, or both legs, or of any two thereof
17 shall not suffer any diminution of [~~his~~] such employee's compensation by
18 engaging in business or employment provided [~~his~~] such employee's earn-
19 ings or wages, when combined with [~~his~~] such employee's compensation,
20 shall not be in excess of the wage base on which the maximum weekly
21 compensation benefit is computed under the law in effect at time of such
22 earning; further provided, that if the combination exceeds such wage
23 base, the compensation shall be diminished to an amount which, together
24 with [~~his~~] such employee's earnings or wages, shall equal the wage base;

EXPLANATION--Matter in italics (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [~~-~~] is old law to be omitted.

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1 and further provided that the application of this subdivision shall not
2 result in reduction of compensation which an injured employee who is
3 disabled due to the loss or total loss of use of both eyes, or both
4 hands, or both arms, or both feet, or both legs or of any two thereof,
5 would otherwise be entitled to under any other provision of this
6 section.

7 For the purposes of this section, inability to perform the
8 full range of sedentary work shall mean the inability to exert up to ten
9 pounds of force occasionally or up to one-third of the workday, or the
10 inability to exert a negligible amount of force frequently to lift,
11 carry, push, pull, or otherwise move objects, including the home body,
12 and examples of the inability to perform the full range of sedentary
13 work shall include but not be limited to the inability to sit for at
14 least six hours in an eight-hour day and occasionally walk or stand for
15 no more than two hours in an eight-hour day. In circumstances where the
16 inability to perform the full range of sedentary work involves the
17 performance of unskilled sedentary work, related activities of a non-e-
18 xertional nature such as seeing, hand-manipulation, and understanding,
19 remembering, and carrying out simple instructions shall be considered.

20 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to inju-
21 ries subject to the provisions of the workers' compensation law arising
on and after the effective date of this act.