

Firm News

LOOKING AHEAD A Message from the Partners

Smith, Born, Leventis, Taylor & Vega, LLC was founded in February 2023 by a group of lawyers formerly associated with Chappell, Smith & Arden, P.A. We are an established group of Workers' Compensation and Personal Injury attorneys, with over 100 years of combined experience. While our name has changed, our practice and passion for helping those that have been injured has and will not. Our firm will continue to represent and help injured people throughout the State of South Carolina and Georgia.

Our thriving workers' compensation practice will continue to grow as our new law firm pushes forward into the future. Bill Smith, Peter Leventis, George Taylor, Danny Vega, Jim Sproat, and Lawton Harper will continue representing injured workers throughout the State of South Carolina. Our litigation practice will remain unchanged as we move forward. Jacob Born, Jamie George, and Jim Sproat will continue to represent injured people and their families throughout South Carolina in wrongful death, motor vehicle collision, trucking wrecks, nursing home negligence, and premises and product liability cases. Jacob Born will also continue his litigation practice in the State of Georgia. Our dedication to helping those in need will remain the focal point of our law firm as we head into the future. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to give us a call.

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Mileage - The Most Overlooked Benefit in Workers' Compensation

Written by: George Taylor



Injured workers are entitled to reimbursement for travel expenses. In my experience, injured workers are seldom informed of this benefit by their claims adjusters, resulting in significant savings for the insurance providers and financially hampering injured workers who are already facing tremendous economic strain from their accident.

Reimbursable travel expenses include mileage to and from medical providers that are more than 5 miles away from home (i.e. 10 miles round trip). The current mileage reimbursement rate, effective January 1st, 2023 is 65.5 cents per mile. For unpaid mileage in 2022, the rate of reimbursement is 62.5 cents. Mileage reimbursement is

not limited to doctors' offices, but also includes physical therapy, pharmaceutical visits, and other authorized medical attention.

I highly recommend all injured workers maintain a mileage log that is updated in real time and turned in on a regular basis. The mileage log should include: (1) the date of the medical treatment; (2) the facility or practice visited; and (3) the total distance traveled. For those traveling more frequently and greater distances, you may want to turn in your mileage log on a bi-weekly basis; others traveling less frequently or less far, may want to report mileage every 2-3 months. If we are representing you, we are happy to provide you with blank mileage logs, and you should turn in your mileage sheets to your attorney or paralegal so we can facilitate prompt payment from the claims adjuster. If you are unsure of the dates of your medical care, call us, and we can help you get the correct travel dates recorded.

In addition to mileage reimbursement, injured workers are entitled to reimbursement for public transportation expenses, and when traveling longer distances, reimbursement for the costs of reasonable overnight lodging and meals. It is important you save your receipts for transportation, hotels and meals, and turn those in upon your return home.

Travel reimbursement is not negotiable. This reimbursement benefit is provided for in the Regulations of the South Carolina Workers' Compensation Commission. Some insurance adjusters may try to resolve unreimbursed travel expenses as part of a lump-sum settlement at the conclusion of your case. This practice is not acceptable. The better course for you is to seek reimbursement regularly as the costs are incurred. Do not accept less than 100% of what is owed to you for your travel. Travel reimbursement really adds up over time. It may seem a bit tedious and unnecessary for any particular office visit, but if your travel is not recorded, you may have forfeited thousands of dollars by the end of your claim.

If you feel your mileage benefit or any other aspect of your workers' compensation case has been overlooked, please call us for a free consultation.

Community Outreach Corner



HARVEST HOPE OUTING

Earlier this year, a small group participated in a morning of volunteering at Harvest Hope Food Bank in Columbia, South Carolina. The group spent the morning sorting donated items so that they can be packaged and used by members of the local community. We look forward to returning to Harvest Hope later this year.

Remember & Honor

HOME OF THE FREE, BECAUSE OF THE BRAVE

Monday, May 29th, is Memorial Day. Memorial Day is a great day to enjoy time with friends and family, but the holiday has a deeper meaning. On this day, we honor and remember those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedoms. We encourage you to take a moment this month, and on May 29th, to honor those who gave their lives for all of us.

GONE BUT NEVER
FORGOTTEN

Memorial Day

REMEMBER AND HONOR





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Sweet Summer Safety

Summer is a time that we at SBLTV look forward to each year. The days get longer, the sun is shining and we all enjoy spending time outdoors with our families and friends on the weekends. Like us, you may also look forward to the summer days. However, the heat can also be dangerous if you are not careful.

To avoid heat-related illness this summer, be sure to follow these simple safety tips. We hope you all enjoy this season and stay safe out there!

Staying Cool this Summer:

- Stay in an air-conditioned location as much as possible.
- Drink plenty of fluids, even if you do not feel thirsty.
- Take several breaks from the heat, especially midday when the sun is hottest.
- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing, and apply sunscreen. *Remember to reapply sunscreen throughout the day.*
- Schedule outdoor activities carefully by trying to limit outdoor activity to when it's coolest, like morning and evening hours.
- Avoid hot and heavy meals as they add heat to your body.