

Phantom Jobs & Empty Pockets: Executive Summary

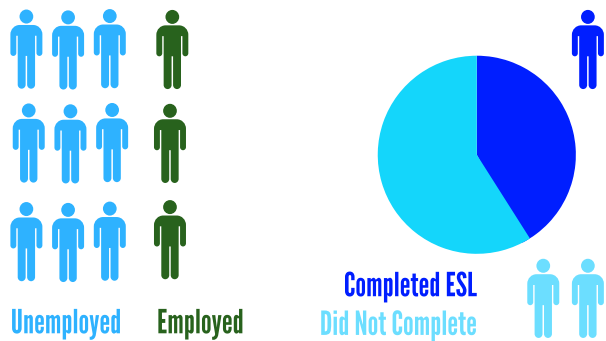
What happens to people who are injured at work? Most of the time, workers heal and they return to their regular jobs and lives. But what about those workers who don't fully recover? Some of those people are looked after by workers' compensation, but many are not. By WSIB's own statistics, **almost half of permanently injured workers have neither jobs nor workers' compensation benefits.**

Using documents acquired from the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) by a series of Freedom of Information requests, the *Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups* (ONWIG) has published a report which shows that – by WSIB's own numbers – injured workers are being forced into poverty by a practice called "deeming". **Deeming is when the WSIB pretends an injured worker has a job that they do not have, and cuts their benefits as a result.**

Deeming by the numbers

- WSIB benefits are not paid by taxpayers, but rather, by premiums charged to employers. When an injured worker's benefits are cut they can end up on welfare. Social assistance payments to injured workers cost Ontario taxpayers at least \$48 million per year – costs that should be covered by standard employer contributions.
- Deeming disproportionately affects women, poor people, low-skilled workers, those with language barriers, older workers, and Ontarians with disabilities. **The most vulnerable workers in the system are most at risk of being left without benefits and unable to find work.**
- Only 27% of workers with English language barriers secured employment after completing work transition, but most are deemed and have their benefits cut.
- Only half (53%) of workers who are referred to work transition services for assistance in returning to work are actually offered and complete plans. As far as we know, the WSIB doesn't even bother tracking what happens to the 47% who are not given retraining or who are unable to finish their programs.
- **Only 17% of workers who were told they could be cashiers were able to find jobs,** and only 49% of workers designated as customer service agents were able to secure work in their field. **Yet all of them have their benefits cut.**
- **If you endure a permanent injury at work, you have a 46% chance of spending your life in poverty.**

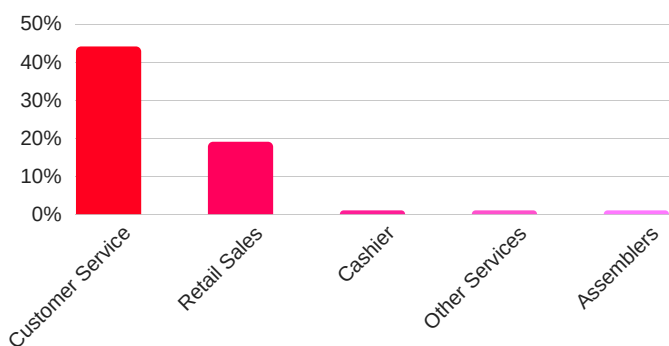
Despite the enormous hardship caused by deeming, **the Government of Ontario would only have to change one sentence of the law** to fix the problem.



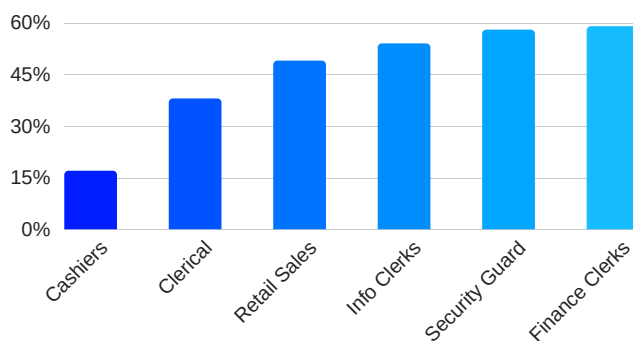
Only 27% of workers with English language barriers secured employment after completing work transition. Many students don't even finish ESL training.

WORKERS' COMP IS A RIGHT

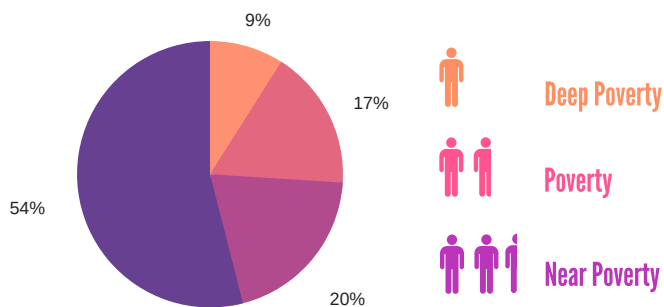
NOW MORE THAN EVER
#WorkersComplisARight



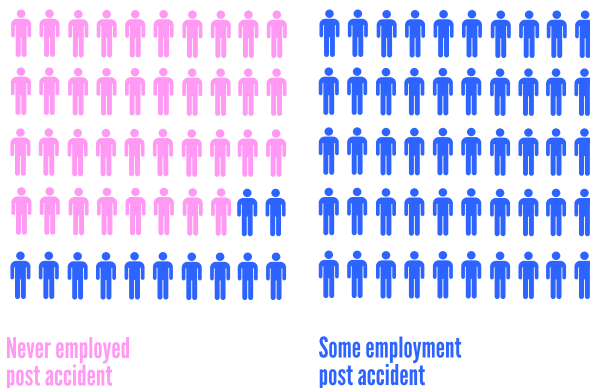
One WSIB study shows that many commonly selected jobs resulted in 0% employment for workers with language barriers. Despite this, non-English speaking workers continue to be deemed employable, and have their benefits cut.



Only 17% of workers who were told they could be cashiers were able to find jobs, and only 49% of workers designated as customer service agents were able to secure work in their field. Yet everyone's benefits are cut.



If you endure a permanent injury at work, you have a 46% chance spending your life in poverty. About the odds of a coin toss.



Of those who endure a permanent injury, many never end up working again. Of those who do, we know little about how much work they get or even how long that employment lasts.