

CHAPTER 215**(HB 625)**

AN ACT relating to worker's compensation.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:

Section 1. KRS 342.122 is amended to read as follows:

- (1) (a) For calendar year 1997 and for each calendar year thereafter, for the purpose of funding and prefunding the liabilities of the special fund, financing the administration and operation of the Kentucky Workers' Compensation Funding Commission, and financing the expenditures for all programs in the Labor Cabinet, except the Division of Employment Standards, Apprenticeship and Training and the Office of Labor-Management Relations and Mediation, as reflected in the enacted budget of the Commonwealth and enacted by the General Assembly, the funding commission shall impose a special fund assessment rate of nine percent (9%) upon the amount of workers' compensation premiums received on and after January 1, 1997, through December 31, 1997, by every insurance carrier writing workers' compensation insurance in the Commonwealth, by every group of self-insurers operating under the provisions of KRS 342.350(4), and against the premium, as defined in KRS 342.0011, of every employer carrying his or her own risk.
- (b) The funding commission shall, for calendar year 1998 and thereafter, establish for the special fund an assessment rate to be assessed against all premium received during that calendar year which, when added to the coal severance tax appropriated to the special fund in accordance with paragraph (c) of this section, shall produce enough revenue to amortize on a level basis the unfunded liability of the special fund as of September 1 preceding January 1 of each year, for the period remaining until December 31, 2018. The interest rate to be used in this calculation shall reflect the funding commission's investment experience to date and the current investment policies of the commission. This assessment shall be imposed upon the amount of workers' compensation premiums received by every insurance carrier writing workers' compensation insurance in the Commonwealth, by every group of self-insurers operating under the provisions of KRS 342.350(4), and against the premium, as defined in KRS 342.0011, of every employer carrying his own risk.
- (c) In addition to the assessment imposed in paragraph (a) or (b) of this subsection, and notwithstanding and prior to the transfer of funds to the Local Government Economic Assistance Program under KRS 42.450 to 42.495, the Kentucky Revenue Cabinet shall credit nineteen million dollars (\$19,000,000) in coal severance tax revenues levied under KRS 143.020 to the benefit reserve fund within the Kentucky Workers' Compensation Funding Commission each year beginning with fiscal year 1998 and all fiscal years thereafter. The annual transfer of nineteen million dollars (\$19,000,000) shall occur in four (4) equal quarterly payments. These transfers shall occur not later than the last day of each quarter of each calendar year and shall consist of four (4) equal payments of four million, seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$4,750,000).
- (d) All assessments imposed by this section shall be paid to the Kentucky Workers' Compensation Funding Commission and shall be credited to the benefit reserve fund within the Kentucky Workers' Compensation Funding Commission.

- (e) The assessments imposed in this chapter shall be in lieu of all other assessments or taxes on workers' compensation premiums.
- (2) These assessments shall be paid quarterly not later than the thirtieth day of the month following the end of the quarter in which the premium is received. Receipt shall be considered timely through actual physical receipt or by postmark of the United States Postal Service. Employers carrying their own risk and employers defined in KRS 342.630(2) shall pay the annual assessments in four (4) equal quarterly installments.
- (3) The assessments imposed by this section may be collected by the insurance carrier from his insured. However, the insurance carrier shall not collect from the employer any amount exceeding the assessments imposed pursuant to this section. If the insurance carrier collects the assessment from an insured, the assessment shall be collected at the same time and in the same proportion as the premium is collected. The assessment for an insurance policy or other evidence of coverage providing a deductible may be collected in accordance with this chapter on a premium amount that equates to the premium that would have applied without the deductible. Each statement from an insurance carrier presented to an insured reflecting premium and assessment amounts shall clearly identify and distinguish the amount to be paid for premium and the amount to be paid for assessments. No insurance carrier shall collect from an insured an amount in excess of the assessment percentages imposed by this chapter. The assessment for an insurance policy or other evidence of coverage providing a deductible may be collected in accordance with this chapter on a premium amount that equates to the premium that would have applied without the deductible. The percentages imposed by this chapter for an insurance policy issued by an insurance company shall be those percentages in effect on the annual effective date of the policy, regardless of the date that the premium is actually received by the insurance company.
- (4) A group self-insurance association may elect to report its premiums and to have its assessments computed in the same manner as insurance companies. This election may not be rescinded for at least ten (10) years, nor may this election be made a second time for at least another ten (10) years, ***except that the board of directors of the funding commission may, at its discretion, waive the ten (10) year ban on a case-by-case basis after formal petition has been made to the funding commission by a group self-insurance association.***
- (5) The funding commission, as part of the collection and auditing of the special fund assessments required by this section, shall annually require each insurance carrier and each group self-insurer to provide a list of employers which it has insured or which are members and the amount collected from each employer. Additionally, the funding commission shall require each entity paying a special fund assessment to report the SIC code for each employer and the amount of premium collected from each SIC code. An insurance carrier or group self-insurer may require its insureds or members to furnish the SIC code for each of their employees. However, the failure of any employer to furnish said codes shall not relieve the insurance carrier or group self-insurer from the obligation to furnish same to the funding commission. The Department for Employment Services, Cabinet for Workforce Development is hereby directed to make available the SIC codes assigned in its records to specific employers to aid in the reporting and recording of the special fund assessment data.
- (6) Each self-insured employer, group self-insurer, or insurance carrier shall provide any information and submit any reports the Revenue Cabinet or the funding commission may require to effectuate the provisions of this section. In addition, the funding commission may

enter reciprocal agreements with other governmental agencies for the exchange of information necessary to effectuate the provisions of this section.

- (7) The special fund shall be required to maintain a central claim registry of all claims to which it is named a party, giving each such claim a unique claim number and thereafter recording the status of each claim on a current basis. The registry shall be established by January 26, 1988, for all claims on which payments were made since July 1, 1986, or which were pending adjudication since July 1, 1986, by audit of all claim files in the possession of the special fund.
- (8) The fund heretofore designated as the subsequent claim fund is abolished, and there is substituted therefor the special fund as set out by this section, and all moneys and properties owned by the subsequent claim fund are transferred to the special fund.
- (9) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section or this chapter to the contrary, the total amount of funds collected pursuant to the assessment rates adopted by the funding commission shall not be limited to the provisions of this section.
- (10) All assessment rates imposed for periods prior to January 1, 1997, under KRS 342.122 shall forever remain applicable to premiums received on policies with effective dates prior to January 1, 1997, by every insurance carrier writing workers' compensation insurance in the Commonwealth, by every group of self-insurers operating under the provision of KRS 342.350(4), and against the premium, as defined in KRS 342.0011, of every employer carrying his own risk.

Approved April 5, 2002