



Workplace Injuries and Workers' Compensation Claim Filing: Results from the 2006 Oregon Population Survey

Department of Consumer & Business Services

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The Oregon Progress Board, in conjunction with other state agencies, surveys Oregon households to track a variety of economic, social, and demographic characteristics. The Oregon Population Survey (OPS) <http://www.oea.das.state.or.us/DAS/OEA/popsurvey.shtml> is conducted every other year by telephone. Starting in 2004, respondents were given the option of finishing a portion of the survey via the Internet. The OPS surveyed more than 4,300 Oregon households in 2006.

Since 2000, the Department of Consumer and Business Services has included questions in the OPS related to workplace injuries and workers' compensation claims. Starting in 2006, survey responses can be broken into two groups for comparison. One group represents all working Oregonians age 18 or older. The second group is a subset of the first and includes those workers covered by workers' compensation insurance. This second group excludes, among others, business partners, casual labor, some corporate officers, and private residence workers. Differences between the two groups' accident rates, claim filing rates, and number of accidents are minimal, with the second group making up a large proportion of the first group and therefore heavily influencing the results.

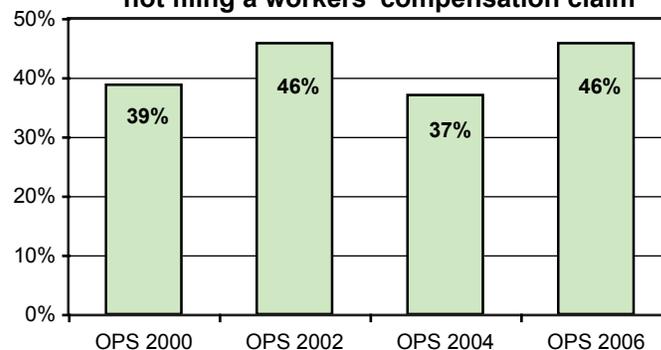
Results of the 2006 OPS indicate that for the approximately 1,654,000 Oregonians age 18 or older who worked for pay in 2005:

- Slightly more than 5 percent of all workers were injured on the job and required attention by a medical provider.
- Of this 5 percent, slightly more than 14 percent reported suffering multiple injuries or illnesses.
- Approximately 78 percent of injured workers reported missing at least one day of work due to their most recent injury or illness. Forty percent reported missing at least one month.
- Eighteen percent of all workers were employed in positions not covered by workers' compensation insurance.

Oregonians who reported being injured on the job were subsequently asked if they filed a workers' compensation claim. Forty-six percent of respondents stated they did not file. The percentage of individuals not filing a claim increased from the 2004 OPS but was at the same level as 2002.

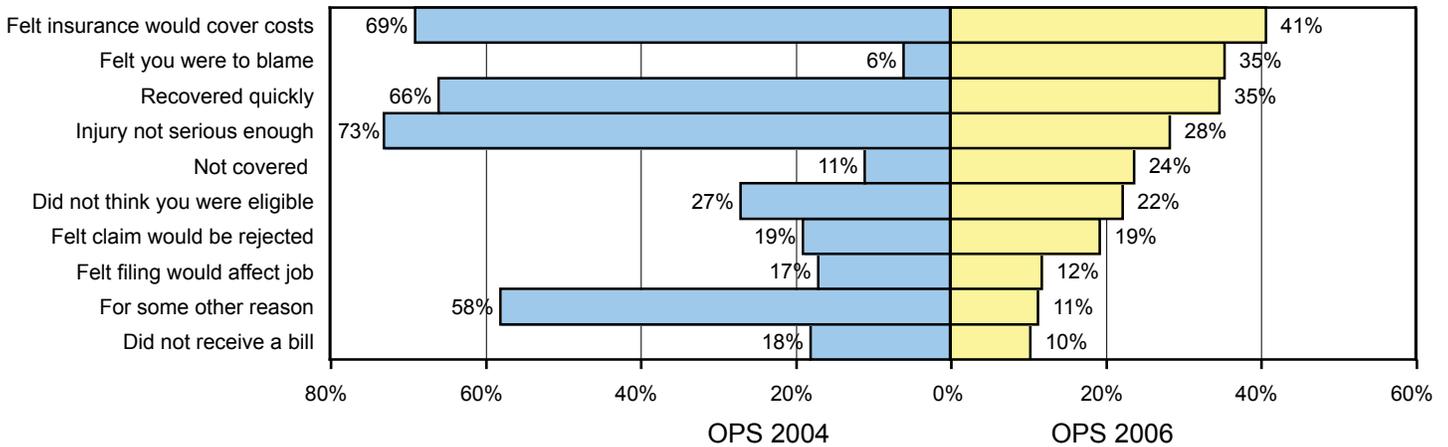
The 2006 OPS reported that approximately 38,500 Oregonians did not file a workers' compensation claim after suffering an occupational injury. Of this number, between 11,250 and 14,000 respondents were not eligible to file, while between 24,500 and 27,250 had the option of filing but did not.

Figure 1. Percentage of workers injured on the job not filing a workers' compensation claim



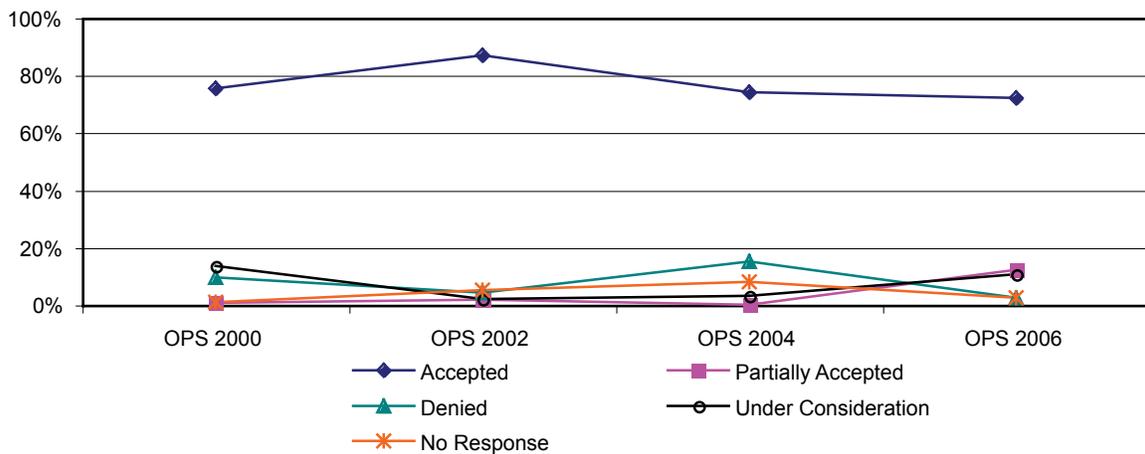
Workers who did not file a claim after an occupational injury were asked to agree or disagree with a series of statements as to why they did not file a claim. Respondents were free to agree with as many statements as they wanted. The most common reasons for not filing, as reported in the 2006 OPS, included feeling that medical costs would be covered by insurance, feeling that they were to blame for the injury or illness, and recovering quickly from the injury or illness.

Figure 2. Reported reasons for not filing



Survey respondents who reported filing a workers' compensation claim for their injury were asked about the status of their claim. Slightly more than 72 percent of 2006 OPS respondents who had suffered occupational injuries and filed a claim indicated it had been accepted. The outcomes described by the 2006 OPS are similar to the 2004 and 2000 Oregon Population Surveys but are lower than the 2002 results. Only 3 percent reported a denial and more than 12 percent reported a partial acceptance of their claim in 2006.

Figure 3. Status of last workers' compensation claim filed



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