

Workers compensation in NSW: a briefing for public bodies

Eight sourced figures on the NSW scheme, and how agencies, councils and Primary Health Networks can work with our network of providers.

What WorkCover Hub is

WorkCover Hub is a network of providers working inside the NSW workers compensation and CTP schemes every day. Doctors and allied health providers across the network, including physiotherapists and psychologists, treat injured workers and complete the scheme's paperwork as routine work.

Treatment is billed to the insurer on accepted claims. WorkCover Hub is independent: it is not part of SIRA, icare or any government body.

Who this pack is for

- Policy and program staff in NSW government agencies
- Councils, including depots, outdoor crews and customer counters
- Primary Health Networks supporting general practices
- People-and-culture and WHS teams in public-sector workplaces

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Every figure in this pack comes from a primary public source and carries its citation. If you reuse a number, cite the original source rather than WorkCover Hub.

Who the scheme covers

NSW runs Australia's largest defined-benefit workers compensation scheme. These four figures describe its reach in FY 2023-24.

How to read these figures

Figures are FY 2023-24 unless marked. SIRA data is used for scheme-wide NSW coverage; icare data is used for claim costs paid and for Nominal Insurer figures, because icare operates the Nominal Insurer. Each figure shows the citation used in our report, The 2026 State of Workers Compensation in NSW, and the numbered sources are listed at the foot of each page.

4.9 million

Jobs insured under the SIRA-regulated NSW workers compensation scheme

FY 2023-24. The largest defined-benefit workers compensation scheme in Australia.

SOURCE SIRA NSW · FY 2023-24^[1]

3.6 million

Workers under the icare Nominal Insurer (private sector)

Across approximately 326,000 employer policies.

SOURCE icare NSW · Current^[3]

125,474

NSW workers supported with income replacement and medical payments

FY 2023-24. Covers all NSW scheme workers: the Nominal Insurer, self-insurers and specialised insurers.

SOURCE SIRA NSW · FY 2023-24^[1]

92,000+

Workers with injuries supported by icare

FY 2023-24. Workers under active case management through the Nominal Insurer during the year.

SOURCE icare NSW · FY 2023-24^[2]

Sources on this page

- [1] SIRA NSW · FY 2023-24. SIRA Annual Report 2023-24 (State Insurance Regulatory Authority NSW, CC BY 4.0). www.sira.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1336999/SIRA_Annual-Report-2023-24.pdf
- [2] icare NSW · FY 2023-24. 2024 annual report: icare reports reform progress in year of continued change. www.icare.nsw.gov.au/news-and-stories/2024/2024-annual-report---icare-reports-reform-progress-in-year-of-continued-change
- [3] icare NSW · Current. The NSW workers compensation system. www.icare.nsw.gov.au/practitioners-and-providers/gps-and-treating-doctors/understanding-workers-compensation/the-nsw-workers-compensation-system

Citations match the source lines in our report, The 2026 State of Workers Compensation in NSW (workcoverhub.com.au/state-of-workers-compensation-nsw-2026). NSW agency data (SIRA, icare, NSW Government) is used with attribution.

Cost and recovery

Claim costs paid across the scheme, and how psychological injury compares with physical injury on cost and return to work.

\$5.3 billion

NSW workers compensation claim costs paid (icare)

FY 2023–24. Up from \$4.4 billion in FY 2022–23: +20.5% year on year, a \$900 million increase.

SOURCE icare NSW · FY 2023–24^[2]

12% / 38%

Psychological injury: share of NSW claim volume / share of total NSW claim costs

FY 2024–25, the most recent NSW Government figure.

SOURCE NSW Government · Mar 2025^[4]

\$288,542

Average cost of a NSW psychological injury claim, FY 2024–25

Up from \$146,000 in FY 2019–20, a 97.6% increase in five years.

SOURCE NSW Government · Mar 2025^[4]

40%

One-year return to work for psychological injury claims in NSW

For context, 88% of physical injury claimants return within 13 weeks. A later May 2025 release cites 50% for psychological claims; we report the more conservative 40%.

SOURCE NSW Government · Mar 2025^{[4][5]}

Live return-to-work figures

SIRA publishes live 4, 13, 26, 52 and 104-week return-to-work rates on its Open Data dashboard, and those figures change monthly. For current numbers, use the SIRA dashboard directly.^[7]

Sources on this page

- ^[2] icare NSW · FY 2023–24. 2024 annual report: icare reports reform progress in year of continued change. www.icare.nsw.gov.au/news-and-stories/2024/2024-annual-report---icare-reports-reform-progress-in-year-of-continued-change
- ^[4] NSW Government · Mar 2025. Workers Compensation Ministerial Statement (NSW Treasurer, CC BY 4.0). www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/workers-compensation-ministerial-statement
- ^[5] NSW Government · May 2025. Protecting Workers Compensation for Future Generations (CC BY 4.0). www.nsw.gov.au/ministerial-releases/protecting-workers-compensation-for-future-generations
- ^[7] SIRA NSW · Live. Open Data Analytics Tool: System Overview & Return to Work Rates. www.sira.nsw.gov.au/open-data/system-overview

Citations match the source lines in our report, The 2026 State of Workers Compensation in NSW (workcoverhub.com.au/state-of-workers-compensation-nsw-2026). NSW agency data (SIRA, icare, NSW Government) is used with attribution.

What a public body can do with us

Four ways to work with our network of providers. There is nothing to sign up to.

SESSIONS

Staff sessions for public-sector workplaces

Short sessions for agency teams, managers and people-and-culture staff: the first steps after a workplace injury, what a manager does when an injury is reported, including telling the insurer within 48 hours, and how a claim moves from notification to treatment.

PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORKS

Practice education for general practices

How NSW workers compensation runs from the treating doctor's side, including the SIRA Certificate of Capacity and how consultations are billed to the insurer on accepted claims. Led by doctors across our network.

MATERIALS

Printable workplace materials

Posters, wallet cards, a toolbox talk and a manager's checklist for lunchrooms, depots and counters. Download or order printed copies at workcoverhub.com.au/partners/toolkit. Our posters sit next to your workplace's official notice; they do not replace it.

BRIEFINGS

Briefings for policy and program staff

A walk-through of how the NSW scheme works in practice, built on the figures in this pack. If you only have a question, call or write; no session is needed.

How reporting works

- **Aggregate only.** If you want to know what a program reached, we report totals such as sessions run and materials requested.
- **No individual data.** We never report on individual staff, patients or workers, and we do not ask you for their details.
- **No implied endorsement.** We will not name your organisation, use your logo or describe working together as an endorsement.
- **No inducements.** Nothing is paid or offered to anyone for access to your staff. Your procurement and gifts policies still apply.

Talk to us about a session or briefing

Call WorkCover Hub

(02) 7238 7379

Or email info@workcoverhub.com.au



Scan for our page for
government, councils
and PHNs

Sources for the scheme process on this page (48-hour insurer notice; Certificate of Capacity)

- [6] SIRA NSW. Workers compensation claims guide. www.sira.nsw.gov.au/workers-compensation-claims-guide
- [3] icare NSW · Current. The NSW workers compensation system. www.icare.nsw.gov.au/practitioners-and-providers/gps-and-treating-doctors/understanding-workers-compensation/the-nsw-workers-compensation-system