

NEWS RELEASE



Financial Services
Commission of Ontario

Commission des services
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FINANCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION OF ONTARIO RELEASES LATEST SET OF DESIGNATED ASSESSMENT CENTRE GUIDELINES

TORONTO (September 20, 2000) - The Financial Services Commission of Ontario (FSCO) has released the fourth in a series of guidelines designed to ensure fairness in the Designated Assessment Centre (DAC) system.

DACs were established across Ontario in 1994 to provide insurance companies and injured claimants with a neutral third-party opinion about injuries sustained in a motor vehicle accident.

The new guidelines, which are approved by the Minister's Committee on the Designated Assessment Centre system, will ensure that all assessments for medical treatment and rehabilitation are consistent with the requirements of the *Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule*.

The *Statutory Accident Benefits Schedule* is part of every automobile insurance policy in Ontario and sets out the benefits that apply when someone is injured in a motor vehicle accident. Assessments carried out under the new guidelines will be comprehensive, well supported, documented and useful to the parties in helping resolve disputes. The guidelines also set out a universal protocol for intake assessment and reporting functions.

FSCO has also released the roster of 35 Medical and Rehabilitation DACs. These DACs have sufficient physical and human resources to provide an opinion on the most commonly prescribed medical and/or rehabilitation treatment required by a claimant as a result of a motor vehicle accident. As well, DAC assessors must also now demonstrate five years of relevant assessment experience in addition to experience treating relevant patient populations. The new minimum experience requirement is an increase from the three years previously required.

Earlier this year, FSCO released new guidelines covering Residual Earning Capacity and Disability Assessments, which were developed by the DAC Committee. FSCO will release a Guide for Attendant Care Assessments in the near future.

These new guidelines are in addition to previously announced directives designed to ensure fairness in the system. These directives included claimants being assessed at the closest qualified DAC; a prohibition of a claimant being assessed by someone who had previously examined him or her unless agreed to by all parties; and no pre or post assessment contact of the claimant by the DAC.

A complete copy of all of the guidelines are available on FSCO's website (www.fSCO.gov.on.ca)

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