

(1999 Replacement Volume and 2005 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article - Labor and Employment

9-713.

(a) Except as provided in subsection (c) of this section, within 21 days [after a claim is filed with the Commission] OF THE MAILING OF THE NOTICE OF THE FILING OF A CLAIM, the employer or its insurer shall:

- (1) begin paying temporary total disability benefits; or
- (2) file with the Commission any issue to contest the claim.

(b) If the Commission finds that an employer or insurer has failed, without good cause, to begin paying temporary total disability benefits or to file issues contesting a claim within 21 days [after the claim is filed] OF THE MAILING OF THE NOTICE OF THE FILING OF A CLAIM, the Commission may assess against the employer or insurer a fine not exceeding 20% of the amount of the payment.

(c) If the employer or its insurer does not begin paying benefits or file issues within 21 days under subsection (a) of this section, within 30 days [after the claim is filed with the Commission] OF THE MAILING OF THE NOTICE OF THE FILING OF A CLAIM, the employer or its insurer shall:

- (1) begin paying temporary total disability benefits; or
- (2) file with the Commission any issue to contest the claim.

(d) If the Commission finds that an employer or insurer has failed, without good cause, to begin paying temporary total disability benefits or to file issues contesting a claim within 30 days [after the claim is filed] OF THE MAILING OF THE NOTICE OF THE FILING OF A CLAIM, the Commission may assess against the employer or insurer a fine not exceeding 40% of the payment.

(e) The Commission shall order the employer or insurer to pay a fine assessed under this section to the covered employee.

(f) Subject to § 9-714 of this subtitle, payment by an employer or its insurer before an award does not waive the right of the employer or its insurer to contest the claim.

9-714.

(a) When the Commission receives a claim, the Commission:

- (1) may investigate the claim; and
- (2) on application of any party to the claim, shall order a hearing.

(b) (1) The Commission shall make or deny an award within 30 days: