CHAPTER 97

ARTICLE 1 - WORKERS' COMPENSATION ACT

N.C.G.S. § 97-31.

(Effective until July 1, 2027) Schedule of injuries; rate and period of compensation.

SOURCE	LAST AMENDMENT IN THIS TEXT	RETRIEVED	SOURCE FINGERPRINT
General Statutes of North Carolina, as published by the General Assembly	S.L. 2026-14, s. 2(b) — seventeenth act in the lineage	21 September 2026, 04:01 UTC	efa4da7374aab6d3a9f936c9 - 0b092c39c7a9a4d3eb2270b1 - 71fab375f8612fdc

In cases included by the following schedule the compensation in each case shall be paid for disability during the healing period and in addition the disability shall be deemed to continue for the period specified, and shall be in lieu of all other compensation, including disfigurement, to wit:

For the loss of a thumb, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 75 weeks.

For the loss of a first finger, commonly called the index finger, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 45 weeks.

For the loss of a second finger, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 40 weeks.

For the loss of a third finger, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 25 weeks.

For the loss of a fourth finger, commonly called the little finger, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 20 weeks.

The loss of the first phalange of the thumb or any finger shall be considered to be equal to the loss of one half of such thumb or finger, and the compensation shall be for one half of the periods of time above specified.

The loss of more than one phalange shall be considered the loss of the entire finger or thumb: Provided, however, that in no case shall the amount received for more than one finger exceed the amount provided in this schedule for the loss of a hand.

For the loss of a great toe, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 35 weeks.

For the loss of one of the toes other than a great toe, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 10 weeks.

The loss of the first phalange of any toe shall be considered to be equal to the loss of one half of such toe, and the compensation shall be for one half of the periods of time above specified.

The loss of more than one phalange shall be considered as the loss of the entire toe.

For the loss of a hand, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 200 weeks.

For the loss of an arm, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 240 weeks.

For the loss of a foot, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 144 weeks.

For the loss of a leg, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 200 weeks.

For the loss of an eye, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 120 weeks.

The loss of both hands, or both arms, or both feet, or both legs, or both eyes, or any two thereof, shall constitute total and permanent disability, to be compensated according to the provisions of G.S. 97-29. The employee shall have a vested right in a minimum amount of compensation for the total number of weeks of benefits provided under this section for each member involved. When an employee dies from any cause other than the injury for which he is entitled to compensation, payment of the minimum amount of compensation shall be payable as provided in G.S. 97-37.

For the complete loss of hearing in one ear, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 70 weeks; for the complete loss of hearing in both ears, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 150 weeks.

Total loss of use of a member or loss of vision of an eye shall be considered as equivalent to the loss of such member or eye. The compensation for partial loss of or for partial loss of use of a member or for partial loss of vision of an eye or for partial loss of hearing shall be such proportion of the periods of payment above provided for total loss as such partial loss bears to total loss, except that in cases where there is eighty-five per centum (85%), or more, loss of vision in any eye, this shall be deemed "industrial blindness" and compensated as for total loss of vision of such eye.

The weekly compensation payments referred to in this section shall all be subject to the same limitations as to maximum and minimum as set out in G.S. 97-29.

In case of serious facial or head disfigurement, the Industrial Commission shall award proper and equitable compensation not to exceed twenty thousand dollars ($20,000). In case of enucleation where an artificial eye cannot be fitted and used, the Industrial Commission may award compensation as for serious facial disfigurement.

In case of serious bodily disfigurement for which no compensation is payable under any other subdivision of this section, but excluding the disfigurement resulting from permanent loss or permanent partial loss of use of any member of the body for which compensation is fixed in the schedule contained in this section, the Industrial Commission may award proper and equitable compensation not to exceed ten thousand dollars ($10,000).

For the total loss of use of the back, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 300 weeks. The compensation for partial loss of use of the back shall be such proportion of the periods of payment herein provided for total loss as such partial loss bears to total loss, except that in cases where there is seventy-five per centum (75%) or more loss of use of the back, in which event the injured employee shall be deemed to have suffered "total industrial disability" and compensated as for total loss of use of the back.

In case of the loss of or permanent injury to any important external or internal organ or part of the body for which no compensation is payable under any other subdivision of this section, the Industrial Commission may award proper and equitable compensation not to exceed twenty thousand dollars ($20,000). (1929, c. 120, s. 31; 1931, c. 164; 1943, c. 502, s. 2; 1955, c. 1026, s. 7; 1957, c. 1221; c. 1396, ss. 2, 3; 1963, c. 424, ss. 1, 2; 1967, c. 84, s. 3; 1969, c. 143, s. 3; 1973, c. 515, s. 3; c. 759, s. 3; c. 761, ss. 1, 2; 1975, c. 164, s. 1; 1977, c. 892, s. 1; 1979, c. 250; 1987, c. 729, ss. 7, 8.)

§ 97-31. (Effective July 1, 2027) Schedule of injuries; rate and period of compensation.

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For the loss of a thumb, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 75 weeks.

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For the loss of a second finger, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 40 weeks.

For the loss of a third finger, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 25 weeks.

For the loss of a fourth finger, commonly called the little finger, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 20 weeks.

The loss of the first phalange of the thumb or any finger shall be considered to be equal to the loss of one half of such thumb or finger, and the compensation shall be for one half of the periods of time above specified.

The loss of more than one phalange shall be considered the loss of the entire finger or thumb: Provided, however, that in no case shall the amount received for more than one finger exceed the amount provided in this schedule for the loss of a hand.

For the loss of a great toe, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 35 weeks.

For the loss of one of the toes other than a great toe, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 10 weeks.

The loss of the first phalange of any toe shall be considered to be equal to the loss of one half of such toe, and the compensation shall be for one half of the periods of time above specified.

The loss of more than one phalange shall be considered as the loss of the entire toe.

For the loss of a hand, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 200 weeks.

For the loss of an arm, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 240 weeks.

For the loss of a foot, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 144 weeks.

For the loss of a leg, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 200 weeks.

For the loss of an eye, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 120 weeks.

The loss of both hands, or both arms, or both feet, or both legs, or both eyes, or any two thereof, shall constitute total and permanent disability, to be compensated according to the provisions of G.S. 97-29. The employee shall have a vested right in a minimum amount of compensation for the total number of weeks of benefits provided under this section for each member involved. When an employee dies from any cause other than the injury for which he is entitled to compensation, payment of the minimum amount of compensation shall be payable as provided in G.S. 97-37.

For the complete loss of hearing in one ear, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 70 weeks; for the complete loss of hearing in both ears, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 150 weeks.

Total loss of use of a member or loss of vision of an eye shall be considered as equivalent to the loss of such member or eye. The compensation for partial loss of or for partial loss of use of a member or for partial loss of vision of an eye or for partial loss of hearing shall be such proportion of the periods of payment above provided for total loss as such partial loss bears to total loss, except that in cases where there is eighty-five per centum (85%), or more, loss of vision in any eye, this shall be deemed "industrial blindness" and compensated as for total loss of vision of such eye.

The weekly compensation payments referred to in this section shall all be subject to the same limitations as to maximum and minimum as set out in G.S. 97-29.

In case of serious facial or head disfigurement, the Industrial Commission shall award proper and equitable compensation not to exceed forty thousand dollars ($40,000). In case of enucleation where an artificial eye cannot be fitted and used, the Industrial Commission may award compensation as for serious facial disf-igurement.

In case of serious bodily disfigurement, where there may be a rational connection to employability or earning capacity and for which no compensation is payable under any other subdivision of this section, but excluding the disfigurement resulting from permanent loss or permanent partial loss of use of any member of the body for which compensation is fixed in the schedule contained in this section, the Industrial Commission may award proper and equitable compensation not to exceed twenty thousand dollars ($20,000).

For the total loss of use of the back, sixty-six and two-thirds percent (66⅔%) of the average weekly wages during 300 weeks. The compensation for partial loss of use of the back shall be such proportion of the periods of payment herein provided for total loss as such partial loss bears to total loss, except that in cases where there is seventy-five per centum (75%) or more loss of use of the back, in which event the injured employee shall be deemed to have suffered "total industrial disability" and compensated as for total loss of use of the back.

In case of the loss of or permanent injury to any important external or internal organ or part of the body for which no compensation is payable under any other subdivision of this section, the Industrial Commission may award proper and equitable compensation not to exceed forty thousand dollars ($40,000).

END OF SECTION TEXT

APPARATUS FOLLOWS — DERIVED, NOT ENACTED

APPARATUS I
17 ACTS

Amendment lineage

The State prints this history as a single parenthetical at the foot of the section. It is reproduced verbatim in the colophon and unpacked below in order of enactment.

TICK HEIGHT = ACTS IN THAT YEAR   DASHED = RECODIFICATION, NOT AMENDMENT

№	YEAR	ACT	CHARACTER
01	1929	c. 120, s. 31	ENACTED
02	1931	c. 164	AMENDED

03	1943	c. 502, s. 2	AMENDED
04	1955	c. 1026, s. 7	AMENDED
05	1957	c. 1221	AMENDED
06	1957	c. 1396, ss. 2, 3	AMENDED
07	1963	c. 424, ss. 1, 2	AMENDED
08	1967	c. 84, s. 3	AMENDED
09	1969	c. 143, s. 3	AMENDED
10	1973	c. 515, s. 3	AMENDED
11	1973	c. 759, s. 3	AMENDED
12	1973	c. 761, ss. 1, 2	AMENDED
13	1975	c. 164, s. 1	AMENDED
14	1977	c. 892, s. 1	AMENDED
15	1979	c. 250	AMENDED
16	1987	c. 729, ss. 7, 8	AMENDED
17	2026	S.L. 2026-14, s. 2(b)	AMENDED

APPARATUS II
2 AUTHORITIES

Authorities referenced

Every G.S. cross-reference appearing in the text of this section, in order of first appearance. Nothing is characterized; the operative language is quoted from the section itself.

REFERENCE	APPEARS IN	OPERATIVE LANGUAGE IN THIS SECTION
G.S. 97-29	(null)(17)	*"compensated according to the provisions of"*
G.S. 97-37	(null)(17)	*"shall be payable as provided in"*

APPARATUS III

Citation

FULL SECTION

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 97-31 (2026).

Pinpoint keys are set in the left margin of the text rather than line numbers: subsection designators are stable across editions and paper sizes, line numbers are not.

COLOPHON

Provenance

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This is not the official text. The official text is published by the General Assembly of North Carolina.

HISTORY PARENTHETICAL, AS PRINTED BY THE STATE

(1929, c. 120, s. 31; 1931, c. 164; 1943, c. 502, s. 2; 1955, c. 1026, s. 7; 1957, c. 1221; c. 1396, ss. 2, 3; 1963, c. 424, ss. 1, 2; 1967, c. 84, s. 3; 1969, c. 143, s. 3; 1973, c. 515, s. 3; c. 759, s. 3; c. 761, ss. 1, 2; 1975, c. 164, s. 1; 1977, c. 892, s. 1; 1979, c. 250; 1987, c. 729, ss. 7, 8; 2026-14, s. 2(b).)

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