

No. **2026-9810**

**Official Order
of the
Texas Commissioner of Workers' Compensation**

Date: 2/20/2026

Subject Considered:

Fort Bend County
301 Jackson Street
Richmond, Texas 77469-3108

Consent Order
DWC Enforcement File No. 38293

General remarks and official action taken:

This is a consent order with Fort Bend County (Respondent). The commissioner of the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) considers whether DWC should take disciplinary action against Respondent.

Waiver

Respondent acknowledges that the Texas Labor Code and other applicable laws provide certain rights. Respondent waives all of these rights, and any other procedural rights that apply, in consideration of the entry of this consent order.

Findings of Fact

1. Respondent is a self-insured governmental entity that provides workers' compensation benefits to its employees in accordance with Tex. Lab. Code Ch. 504.
2. Respondent was not selected to be tiered in any year's Performance Based Oversight (PBO) assessments.

Failure to Comply with a DWC Order

3. [REDACTED] Respondent received Medical Fee Dispute Resolution (MFDR) Findings and Decision Order No. M4-25-1626-01 requiring Respondent to pay [REDACTED] plus accrued interest to a health care provider (HCP) by [REDACTED].
4. On [REDACTED], Respondent paid [REDACTED] to the HCP 98 days late.
5. However, Respondent did not fully comply with the MFDR Order until it paid [REDACTED] in accrued interest on [REDACTED], which was 115 days late.

Assessment of Sanction

1. Failure to timely comply with DWC orders for payment of medical bills is not cost-effective, increases the likelihood of disputes, and causes economic harm. Further, non-compliance with a DWC order interferes with DWC's ability to regulate and diminishes faith in the Texas workers' compensation system.
2. In assessing the sanction for this case, DWC fully considered the following factors in Tex. Lab. Code § 415.021(c) and 28 Tex. Admin. Code § 180.26(e):
 - the seriousness of the violation, including the nature, circumstances, consequences, extent, and gravity of the prohibited act;
 - the history and extent of previous administrative violations;
 - the violator's demonstration of good faith, including actions it took to rectify the consequences of the prohibited act;
 - the penalty necessary to deter future violations;
 - whether the administrative violation had a negative impact on the delivery of benefits to an injured employee;
 - the history of compliance with electronic data interchange requirements;
 - to the extent reasonable, the economic benefit resulting from the prohibited act; and
 - other matters that justice may require, including, but not limited to:
 - PBO assessments;
 - prompt and earnest actions to prevent future violations;
 - self-report of the violation;
 - the size of the company or practice;
 - the effect of a sanction on the availability of health care; and

- evidence of heightened awareness of the legal duty to comply with the Texas Workers' Compensation Act and DWC rules.
3. DWC found the following factors in Tex. Lab. Code § 415.021(c) and 28 Tex. Admin. Code § 180.26(e) to be aggravating:
 - a. the seriousness of the violation, including [REDACTED] in medical payments and interest delivered up to 115 days late in violation of a DWC order, which is a priority violation under Tex. Lab. Code § 402.0235;
 - b. Respondent's history of previous administrative violations, including two prior actions involving late medical bill payments;
 - c. the penalty necessary to deter future violations; and
 - d. to the extent reasonable, the economic benefit resulting from the prohibited act.
 4. DWC found the following mitigating factor pursuant to Tex. Lab. Code § 415.021(c) and 28 Tex. Admin. Code § 180.26(e): Respondent's status as a self-insured governmental entity.
 5. Respondent acknowledges communicating with DWC about the relevant statute and rule violations alleged; that the facts establish that the administrative violation(s) occurred; and that the proposed sanction is appropriate, including the factors DWC considered under Tex. Lab. Code § 415.021(c) and 28 Tex. Admin. Code § 180.26(e).
 6. Respondent acknowledges that, in assessing the sanction, DWC considered the factors in Tex. Lab. Code § 415.021(c) and 28 Tex. Admin. Code § 180.26(e).

Conclusions of Law

1. The commissioner has jurisdiction over this matter pursuant to Tex. Lab. Code §§ 402.001, 402.00114, 402.00116, 402.00128, 414.002, and 414.003.
2. The commissioner has the authority to dispose of this case informally pursuant to Tex. Gov't Code § 2001.056, Tex. Lab. Code §§ 401.021 and 402.00128(b)(6)-(7), and 28 Tex. Admin. Code § 180.26(h) and (i).
3. Respondent has knowingly and voluntarily waived all procedural rights to which it may have been entitled regarding the entry of this order, including, but not limited

to, issuance and service of notice of intent to institute disciplinary action, notice of hearing, a public hearing, a proposal for decision, a rehearing by the commissioner, and judicial review.

4. Pursuant to Tex. Lab. Code § 413.055, the commissioner may enter an interlocutory order for the payment of all or part of medical benefits. The order may address accrued benefits, future benefits, or both accrued benefits and future benefits.
5. Pursuant to Tex. Lab. Code § 415.021, the commissioner may assess an administrative penalty against a person who commits an administrative violation.
6. Pursuant to Tex. Lab. Code §§ 415.0035(e) and 415.021(a), an insurance carrier commits an administrative violation if it violates, fails to comply with, or refuses to comply with a DWC order.
7. Pursuant to Tex. Lab. Code § 415.002(a)(17), an insurance carrier or its representative commits an administrative violation if it fails to pay an order awarding benefits.
8. Pursuant to Tex. Lab. Code § 415.002(a)(22), an insurance carrier or its representative commits an administrative violation each time it fails to comply with a provision of the Texas Workers' Compensation Act.
9. Respondent violated Tex. Lab. Code §§ 415.002(a)(17) and (22); 415.021(a); and 415.0035(e) by failing to comply with a MFDR order.

Order

It is ordered that Fort Bend County must pay an administrative penalty of \$800 within 30 days from the date the Commissioner signs the order.

After receiving an invoice, Fort Bend County must pay the administrative penalty by electronic transfer using the State Invoice Payment Service, company check, cashier's check, or money order and make it payable to the "State of Texas." Mail the administrative penalty to the Texas Department of Insurance, Attn: DWC Enforcement Section, MC AO-9999, P.O. Box 12030, Austin, Texas 78711-2030.



Jeff Nelson
Commissioner
TDI, Division of Workers' Compensation

Approved Form and Content:



Connor Ambrosini
Staff Attorney, Enforcement
Compliance and Investigations
Division of Workers' Compensation

Unsworn Declaration

STATE OF Texas §
§
COUNTY OF Fort Bend §

Pursuant to the Tex. Civ. Prac. and Rem. Code § 132.001(a), (b), and (d), my name is Kara Sepulveda. I hold the position of President and am the authorized representative of Fort Bend County. My business address is:
6240 Lake Osprey Dr., Sarasota, Sarasota, FL, 34240.
(Street) (City) (County) (State) (ZIP Code)

I am executing this declaration as part of my assigned duties and responsibilities. I declare under penalty of perjury that the facts stated in this document are true and correct.



Declarant

Executed on January 22, 2026.