

Social Media and Workers' Compensation Claims – a Bad Combination!

Would you be surprised if I told you that those photos you uploaded to Facebook, or that video of your child's basketball game now playing on YouTube, or even your restaurant "check-in" on Yelp could cost you thousands of dollars and seriously undermine your workers' compensation case? Unfortunately all of these things have happened to men and women pursuing work injury claims in Georgia.

If you did not realize this already, understand that privacy in the United States is pretty much dead. If you participate in social media like:

- Facebook
- My Space
- Yelp
- Tumblr
- Wordpress (blogging)
- Blogger
- Pinterest
- YouTube
- Twitter
- and many more

Information about your life can be available to anyone who is looking. And you can bet that insurance adjusters and insurance defense lawyers are looking. While private eye surveillance is still used, insurance defense adjusters also run searches for you on various social media platforms. If they see you running, jumping, lifting or doing anything inconsistent with your claimed injury, they will use that video, photograph or post as grounds to cut off your benefits.

A colleague of mine tells the story of a client of his who decided to video her son's high school wrestling match and thereafter uploaded to YouTube. At one point the video shows the claimant climbing bleachers, then jumping up and down to cheer her son. Unfortunately this woman was asserting a job injury to her hips and lower back that she claimed was disabling. When confronted with the video, she insisted that the wrestling match was a one-time event and that she ended up in bed for a week thereafter. The workers' compensation judge did not accept this argument and upheld the insurance company's termination of benefits. A case that could have settled for \$50,000 to \$75,000 ended up settling for nuisance value of less than \$5,000.

Don't let this happen to you. If you are pursuing Georgia workers' compensation benefits, close or suspend your social media activities until your case is over.

Watch related video here: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rX33k6_Hpk&feature=player_embedded