

BEFORE THE ARKANSAS WORKERS' COMPENSATION COMMISSION

CLAIM NO. F604149

ANDREW E. REEVES, EMPLOYEE	CLAIMANT
GEORGIA PACIFIC CORPORATION, EMPLOYER	RESPONDENT
INDEMNITY INSURANCE COMPANY OF NORTH AMERICA, CARRIER	RESPONDENT

OPINION FILED DECEMBER 20, 2006

Hearing before ADMINISTRATIVE LAW JUDGE ELIZABETH W. HOGAN on December 20, 2006, at Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas.

Claimant and his attorney the HONORABLE Philip M. Wilson failed to appear at the hearing.

Respondents represented by the HONORABLE Susan Fowler, Attorney at Law, Little Rock, Arkansas.

ISSUES

A hearing was conducted to determine whether or not this claim should be dismissed for failure to prosecute pursuant to Dillard v. Benton County Sheriff's Office, 87 Ark. App. 379, 192 S.W.3d 287 (2004).

After review of the Commission's file, I find the Motion should be granted.

STATEMENT OF THE CASE

The claimant filed an AR-C on April 19, 2006 and June 12, 2006 alleging a head injury on January 28, 2006. A review of the Commission's file shows the claimant refused to participate in Discovery and there has been no activity in the file since April 2006.

_____The respondents filed a Motion to Dismiss this claim for lack of prosecution with a certificate of service to claimant's counsel. The claimant's counsel filed a letter indicating he had no objection to the Motion.

A hearing notice was sent to the claimant and his attorney by certified mail setting this case for a dismissal hearing.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

A review of the evidence shows the claimant has had ample opportunity to pursue this case but has failed to respond to Discovery and failed to appear at the scheduled hearing.

There are two provisions for dismissal of claims:

Ark. Code Ann. §11-9-702(a)(4):

If within six (6) months after the filing of a claim for compensation, no bona fide request for a hearing has been made with respect to the claim, the claim may, upon motion and after hearing, be dismissed without prejudice to the refiling of the claim within limitation periods specified in subdivisions (a)(1)-(3) of this section.

Rule 13:

The Commission may, in its discretion, postpone or recess hearings at the instance of either party or on its own motion. No case set for hearing shall be postponed except by approval of the Commission or Administrative Law Judge

In the event neither party appears at the initial hearing, the case may be dismissed by the Commission or Administrative Law Judge, and such dismissal order will become final unless an appeal is timely taken therefrom or a proper motion to reopen is filed with the Commission within thirty (30) days from receipt of the order.

Upon meritorious application to the Commission from either party in an action pending before the Commission, requesting that the claim be dismissed for want of prosecution, the Commission may, upon reasonable notice to all parties, enter an order dismissing the claim for want of prosecution.

(Effective March 1, 1982)

After review, I make the following findings of fact:

1. The Arkansas Workers' Compensation Commission has jurisdiction of this claim.
2. The claimant failed to appear at the initial hearing pursuant to Rule 13.

I find the claimant has had adequate time to investigate this claim and respond to the Notices.

At the request of the respondents, this case is hereby dismissed with prejudice for failure to prosecute pursuant to Rule 13 of the Arkansas Workers' Compensation Commission.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

ELIZABETH W. HOGAN
Administrative Law Judge