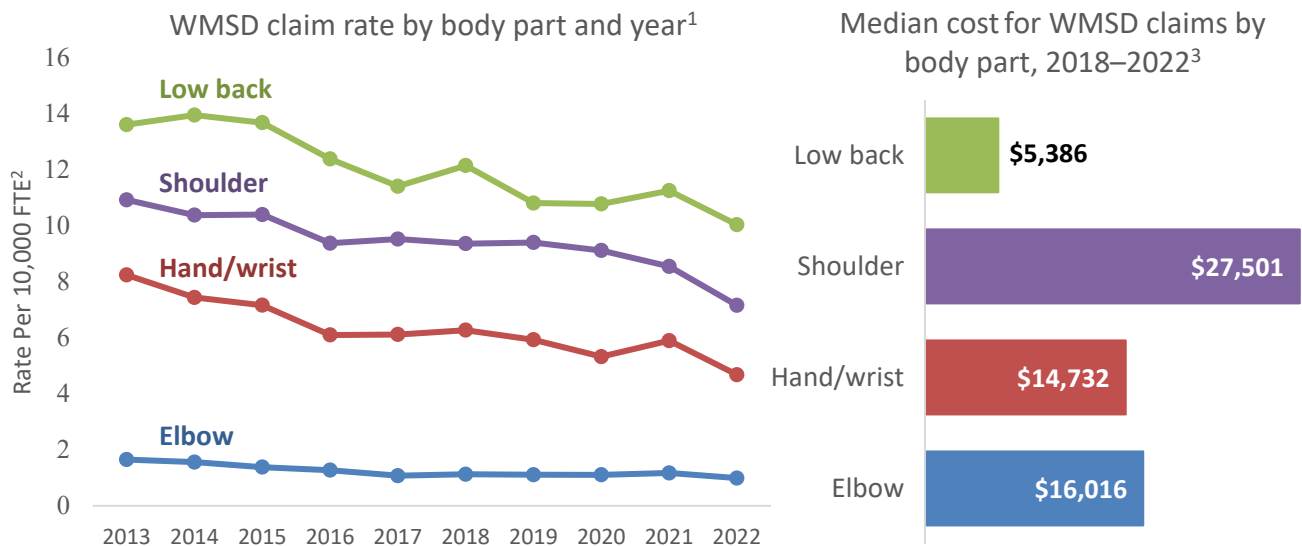


Declines in Work-Related Musculoskeletal Disorders (WMSDs)

WA State Workers' Compensation Compensable Claims, 2013–2022



- The overall WMSD claim rate significantly declined by an estimated 4.7% annually during 2013–2022.⁴ This was similar to the previous trend for WMSD claims overall reported during 1999–2013.⁵
- Claim rate trends for all body parts—low back, shoulder, hand/wrist and elbow—decreased at a similar rate to the overall annual decline. However, trends for 1999–2013 indicated significant differences in WMSD claim rate trends by body part.
- WMSD claims of the low back are the most common, with the highest rates, and have the lowest median cost per claim.
- Of the four body parts analyzed here, shoulder WMSD claims have the highest median cost per claim and a relatively high rate.
- WMSD claims for elbow and hand/wrist have a similar median cost per claim.

1. Report is limited to compensable claims (those involving wage replacement after a three calendar day waiting period following the date of injury, permanent disability, worker kept on salary or fatality). State Fund and self-insured claims are included.

2. One Full Time Equivalent (FTE) = 2,000 reported hours.

3. Paid to date costs (medical and indemnity) calculated for State Fund as of 04-02-2025.

4. Trends evaluated using negative binomial modeling for count distributions, $\alpha = 0.05$.

5. Marcum J, Adams D. Work-related musculoskeletal disorder surveillance using the Washington state workers' compensation system: Recent declines and patterns by industry, 1999–2013. *Am J Ind Med*. 2017;9999:1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajim.22708>