

Workers' Comp Doesn't Cover Police Officer's PTSD



A police sergeant sought workers' comp benefits for the PTSD he said was caused as a result of witnessing a woman detained for public intoxication suffer stroke while in police lock-up. She died in a hospital a few days later. The WCAT denied the claim because his PTSD wasn't an acute reaction to a traumatic event. The sergeant didn't actually see the woman die and he had only limited involvement in the case, the WCAT reasoned. The sergeant appealed but the Court of Appeal said the WCAT's ruling was 'intelligible' and reasonable and refused to overturn it [*Henderson v Nova Scotia (Workers' Compensation Appeals Tribunal)*, 2018 NSCA 59 (CanLII), July 6, 2018].

Editor's Note: *The sergeant would have likely won if, as in some jurisdictions, Nova Scotia had a presumption that PTSD a policeman suffers while on duty is compensable, i.e., covered by workers' comp.*