

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 46th Legislature (1997)

HOUSE BILL NO. 2003

By: Bastin

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to drive-away operations; amending 85 O.S. 1991, Section 3, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 363, O.S.L. 1996 (85 O.S. Supp. 1996, Section 3), which relates to the Workers' Compensation Act; exempting certain persons from the definition of "employee"; adding a definition; amending 47 O.S. 1991, Section 1128, as amended by Section 2, Chapter 93, O.S.L. 1993 (47 O.S. Supp. 1996, Section 1128), which relates to motor vehicles; requiring certain persons to file for in-transit license plates; clarifying language; and providing an effective date.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 85 O.S. 1991, Section 3, as last amended by Section 1, Chapter 363, O.S.L. 1996 (85 O.S. Supp. 1996, Section 3), is amended to read as follows:

Section 3. As used in the Workers' Compensation Act:

1. "Administrator" means the Administrator of workers' compensation as provided for in the Workers' Compensation Act;
2. "Court" means the Workers' Compensation Court;

3. "Employer", except when otherwise expressly stated, means a person, partnership, association, limited liability company, corporation, and the legal representatives of a deceased employer, or the receiver or trustee of a person, partnership, association, corporation, or limited liability company, departments, instrumentalities and institutions of this state and divisions thereof, counties and divisions thereof, public trusts, boards of education and incorporated cities or towns and divisions thereof, employing a person included within the term "employee" as herein defined;

4. "Employee" means any person engaged in the employment of any person, firm, limited liability company or corporation covered by the terms of the Workers' Compensation Act, and shall include workers associating themselves together under an agreement for the performance of a particular piece of work, in which event such persons so associating themselves together shall be deemed employees of the person having the work executed; provided, that if such associated workers shall employ a worker in the execution of such contract, then as to such employed worker, both the associated employees and the principal employer shall at once become subject to the provisions of the Workers' Compensation Act relating to independent contractors. Sole proprietors, members of a partnership, members of a limited liability company who own at least ten percent (10%) of the capital of the limited liability company or any stockholder-employees of a corporation who own ten percent (10%) or more stock in the corporation are specifically excluded from the foregoing definition of "employee", and shall not be deemed to be employees as respects the benefits of the Workers' Compensation Act. Provided, a sole proprietor, member of a partnership, member of a limited liability company who owns at least ten percent (10%) of the capital of the limited liability company or any stockholder-employee of a corporation who owns ten percent (10%) or more stock in the

corporation who does not so elect to be covered by a policy of insurance covering benefits under the Workers' Compensation Act, when acting as a subcontractor, shall not be eligible to be covered under the prime contractor's policy of workers' compensation insurance; however, nothing herein shall relieve the entities enumerated from providing workers' compensation insurance coverage for their employees. Sole proprietors, members of a partnership, members of a limited liability company who own at least ten percent (10%) of the capital of the limited liability company or any stockholder-employees of a corporation who own ten percent (10%) or more stock in the corporation may elect to include the sole proprietors, any or all of the partnership members, any or all of the limited liability company members or any or all stockholder-employees as employees, if otherwise qualified, by endorsement to the policy specifically including them under any policy of insurance covering benefits under the Workers' Compensation Act. When so included the sole proprietors, members of a partnership, members of a limited liability company or any or all stockholder-employees shall be deemed to be employees as respects the benefits of the Workers' Compensation Act. "Employee" shall also include any person who is employed by the departments, instrumentalities and institutions of this state and divisions thereof, counties and divisions thereof, public trusts, boards of education and incorporated cities or towns and divisions thereof. "Employee" shall also include a member of the Oklahoma National Guard while in the performance of duties only while in response to state orders and any authorized voluntary or uncompensated worker, rendering services as a fire fighter, peace officer or civil defense worker. Provided, "employee" shall not include any other person providing or performing voluntary service who receives no wages for the services other than meals, drug or alcohol rehabilitative therapy, transportation, lodging or reimbursement for incidental expenses.

"Employee" shall also include a participant in a sheltered workshop program which is certified by the United States Department of Labor.

"Employee" shall not include a person, commonly referred to as an owner-operator, who owns or leases a truck-tractor or truck for hire, if the owner-operator actually operates the truck-tractor or truck and if the person contracting with the owner-operator is not the lessor of the truck-tractor or truck. Provided however, an owner-operator shall not be precluded from workers' compensation coverage under the Workers' Compensation Act if the owner-operator elects to participate as a sole proprietor. "Employee" shall not include a person engaged in drive-away operations;

5. "Drive-away operations" include every person engaged in the business of transporting and delivering new or used vehicles by driving, either singly or by towbar, saddle mount or full mount method, with or without the use of a privately owned tow vehicle, or any combination thereof;

6. "Employment" includes work or labor in a trade, business, occupation or activity carried on by an employer or any authorized voluntary or uncompensated worker rendering services as a fire fighter, peace officer or civil defense worker;

~~6.~~ 7. "Compensation" means the money allowance payable to an employee as provided for in the Workers' Compensation Act;

~~7.~~ 8. a. "Injury" or "personal injury" means only accidental injuries arising out of and in the course of employment and such disease or infection as may naturally result therefrom and occupational disease arising out of and in the course of employment as herein defined. Provided, only injuries having as their source a risk not purely personal but one that is reasonably connected with the conditions of

employment shall be deemed to arise out of the employment.

b. "Injury" or "personal injury" includes heart-related or perivascular injury, illness or death if resultant from stress in excess of that experienced by a person in the conduct of everyday living. Such stress must arise out of and in the course of a claimant's employment.

c. "Injury" or "personal injury" shall not include mental injury that is unaccompanied by physical injury;

~~8.~~ 9. "Wages" means the money rate at which the service rendered is recompensed under the contract of hiring in force at the time of the injury, including the reasonable value of board, rent, housing, lodging, or similar advantage received from the employer;

~~9.~~ 10. "Insurance carrier" shall include stock corporations, reciprocal or interinsurance associations, or mutual associations with which employers have insured, and employers permitted to pay compensation, directly under the provisions of paragraph 4 of subsection A of Section 61 of this title;

~~10.~~ 11. "Occupational disease" means only that disease or illness which is due to causes and conditions characteristic of or peculiar to the particular trade, occupation, process or employment in which the employee is exposed to such disease;

~~11.~~ 12. "Permanent impairment" means any anatomical or functional abnormality or loss after reasonable medical treatment has been achieved, which abnormality or loss the physician considers to be capable of being evaluated at the time the rating is made. Except as otherwise provided herein, any examining physician shall only evaluate impairment in accordance with the latest publication of the American Medical Association's "Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment" in effect at the time of the injury. The Physician Advisory Committee may, pursuant to Section 201.1 of this

title, recommend the adoption of a method or system to evaluate permanent impairment that shall be used in place of or in combination with the American Medical Association's "Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment". Such recommendation shall be made to the Administrator of the Workers' Compensation Court who may adopt the recommendation in part or in whole. The adopted method or system shall be submitted by the Administrator to the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate within the first ten (10) legislative days of a regular session of the Legislature. Such method or system to evaluate permanent impairment that shall be used in place of or in combination with the American Medical Association's "Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment" shall be subject to disapproval in whole or in part by joint or concurrent resolution of the Legislature during the legislative session in which submitted. Such method or system shall be operative one hundred twenty (120) days after the last day of the month in which the Administrator submits the adopted method or system to the Legislature if the Legislature takes no action or one hundred twenty (120) days after the last day of the month in which the Legislature disapproves it in part. If adopted, permanent impairment shall be evaluated only in accordance with the latest version of the alternative method or system in effect at the time of injury. All evaluations shall include an apportionment of injury causation. However, revisions to the guides made by the American Medical Association which are published after January 1, 1989, and before January 1, 1995, shall be operative one hundred twenty (120) days after the last day of the month of publication. Revisions to the guides made by the American Medical Association which are published after December 31, 1994, may be adopted in whole or in part by the Administrator following recommendation by the Physician Advisory Committee. Revisions adopted by the Administrator shall be submitted by the Administrator to the Speaker of the House of

Representatives and the President Pro Tempore of the Senate within the first ten (10) legislative days of a regular session of the Legislature. Such revisions shall be subject to disapproval in whole or in part by joint or concurrent resolution of the Legislature during the legislative session in which submitted. Revisions shall be operative one hundred twenty (120) days after the last day of the month in which the Administrator submits the revisions to the Legislature if the Legislature takes no action or one hundred twenty (120) days after the last day of the month in which the Legislature disapproves them in part. The examining physician shall not follow the guides based on race or ethnic origin. The examining physician shall not deviate from said guides or any alternative thereto except as may be specifically provided for in the guides or modifications to the guides or except as may be specifically provided for in any alternative or modifications thereto, adopted by the Administrator of the Workers' Compensation Court as provided for in Section 201.1 of this title. These officially adopted guides or modifications thereto or alternative system or method of evaluating permanent impairment or modifications thereto shall be the exclusive basis for testimony and conclusions with regard to permanent impairment with the exception of paragraph 3 of Section 22 of this title, relating to scheduled member injury or loss; and impairment, including pain or loss of strength, may be awarded with respect to those injuries or areas of the body not specifically covered by said guides or alternative to said guides;

~~12.~~ 13. "Permanent total disability" means incapacity because of accidental injury or occupational disease to earn any wages in any employment for which the employee may become physically suited and reasonably fitted by education, training or experience, including vocational rehabilitation; loss of both hands, or both feet, or both legs, or both eyes, or any two thereof, shall constitute permanent total disability;

~~13.~~ 14. "Permanent partial disability" means permanent disability which is less than total and shall be equal to or the same as permanent impairment;

~~14.~~ 15. "Maximum medical improvement" means that no further material improvement would reasonably be expected from medical treatment or the passage of time;

~~15.~~ 16. "Independent medical examiner" means a licensed physician authorized to serve as a medical examiner pursuant to Section 17 of this title;

- ~~16.~~ 17. a. "Certified workplace medical plan" means an organization of health care providers or any other entity, certified by the Commissioner of Health pursuant to Section 14.3 of this title, that is authorized to enter into a contractual agreement with a self-insured employer, group self-insurance association plan, an employer's workers' compensation insurance carrier or an insured, which shall include any member of an approved group self-insured association, policyholder or public entity, regardless of whether such entity is insured by the State Insurance Fund, to provide medical care under the Workers' Compensation Act. Certified plans shall only include such plans which provide medical services and payment for services on a fee-for-service basis to medical providers and shall not include other plans which contract in some other manner, such as capitated or pre-paid plans.
- b. If any insurer except, the State Insurance Fund, fails to contract with or provide access to a certified workplace medical plan, an insured, after sixty (60) days' written notice to its insurance carrier, shall

be authorized to contract independently with a plan of his or her choice for a period of one (1) year, to provide medical care under the Workers' Compensation Act. The insured shall be authorized to contract, after sixty (60) days' written notice to its insurance carrier, for additional one-year periods if his or her insurer has not contracted with or provided access to a certified workplace medical plan.

c. If the State Insurance Fund fails to contract with at least three certified workplace medical plans, each covering at least fifty counties, then the insured, after sixty (60) days' written notice to the State Insurance Fund, shall be authorized to contract independently with a plan of his or her choice for a period of one (1) year to provide medical care under the Workers' Compensation Act. The insured shall be authorized to contract, after sixty (60) days' written notice to the State Insurance Fund, for additional one-year periods if the State Insurance Fund has not contracted with or fails to continue contracts with at least three certified workplace medical plans covering at least fifty counties; and

~~17.~~ 18. "Treating physician" or "attending physician" means the licensed physician who has provided or is providing medical care to the injured employee.

SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 47 O.S. 1991, Section 1128, as amended by Section 2, Chapter 93, O.S.L. 1993 (47 O.S. Supp. 1996, Section 1128), is amended to read as follows:

Section 1128. A. Every person manufacturing or having a contract to sell new vehicles in this state shall file a verified application for a general distinctive number for all new vehicles owned or controlled by the manufacturer or dealer; provided, the

Oklahoma Tax Commission shall issue a license to sell such new motor vehicles only for those types of new vehicles for which the applicant has a sales contract or franchise; provided, further, that no license shall be issued to any applicant that has not complied with the provisions of Sections 561 through 568 of this title and does not hold a current license issued by the Oklahoma Motor Vehicle Commission pursuant thereto. A separate manufacturer's or dealer's license shall be required for each separate county within which such manufacturer or dealer has an established place of business and upon payment of a license fee of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) there shall be assigned and issued to such manufacturer or dealer a Certificate of Registration and one license plate which shall be displayed upon each vehicle of such manufacturer or dealer when same is operated, driven, or displayed on any street, road, or highway, in the same manner as hereinbefore provided for vehicles owned by other persons. Such a manufacturer or dealer in new vehicles may obtain as many additional license plates as may be desired, upon the payment of the sum of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) for each additional plate; provided that no such license plate issued to any manufacturer or dealer shall be used or displayed upon any secondhand or used vehicle, or upon any new vehicle which is used for a service car, or private use, or for hire. Any person, with consent of the dealer, may operate a motor vehicle, with the dealer's tag affixed, while contemplating purchase, so long as this intent is limited to a consecutive seventy-two-hour period, or a weekend. An individual holding a valid salesman's license issued by the Oklahoma Motor Vehicle Commission shall not be subject to this limitation. If such person also buys and sells used vehicles, he shall, after obtaining his new motor vehicle dealer's license from the Oklahoma Motor Vehicle Commission, also obtain a used motor vehicle dealer's license, from the Used Motor Vehicle and Parts Commission, the cost of which shall be as prescribed in Section 1101 et seq. of this title.

B. Each dealer and used motor vehicle dealer shall keep a record of the purchase and sale of each motor vehicle he buys or sells, which shall show the name of the seller or buyer as the case may be, and a complete description of the vehicle purchased or sold, and such other information as the Commission may prescribe.

C. Application for manufacturer's or dealer's license must show that such dealer or manufacturer has not violated any of the provisions of this section; and such license shall be nonassignable; and any such license may be suspended temporarily or revoked by the Commission for violation or failure to comply with this section, provided, the holder of such license shall be given ten (10) days' notice of hearing to suspend or cancel such license. If any such person subject to any of the licenses required in this section fails to obtain it when due, a penalty of twenty-five cents (\$0.25) per day on each such license shall be charged in the same manner as is now provided on delinquent motor vehicle registrations, and after a period of thirty (30) days such penalty shall be equal to the license fee. It shall be the duty of every person licensed to sell new or used motor vehicles to advise each purchaser in writing about his title requirements and payment of any taxes due. Each used motor vehicle must display a proper Oklahoma license plate or a used dealer's license plate. Dealers failing to comply with provisions of this section shall be responsible for all taxes due on such sales or on such vehicles.

D. Every person engaged in the business of transporting and delivering new or used vehicles by driving, either singly or by towbar, saddle mount or full mount method, engaging in drive-away operations as defined in Section 3 of Title 85 of the Oklahoma Statutes, or any combination thereof, from the manufacturer or shipper to the dealer or consignee and using the public highways of this state shall file with the Commission a verified application for in-transit license plates to identify such vehicles. The application

shall provide for a general distinctive number for all vehicles so transported. Upon payment of a license fee of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) there shall be assigned and issued to such person one in-transit plate. Such in-transit plate shall be used by such person only on vehicles when so transported. Such person may obtain as many additional in-transit plates as desired upon payment of a fee of Ten Dollars (\$10.00) for each additional plate. Provided, a used motor vehicle dealer shall use a used dealer license plate in lieu of the in-transit license plate for transporting a used motor vehicle and, in such cases, shall be exempt from making application for an in-transit license plate. Provided further, only a person who possesses a certificate issued by the Interstate Commerce Commission or the Corporation Commission to engage in the business of transporting and delivering manufactured homes for hire may use the in-transit license plates obtained by them as herein authorized for transporting new or used manufactured homes from one location to another location within Oklahoma or from a point in another state to a point in this state. Nothing contained in this section shall relieve any person from the payment of license fees otherwise provided by law. When the Commission deems it advisable and in the public interest, it may require the holder of any in-transit license, or any person making application therefor, to file a proper surety bond in any amount it deems proper, not to exceed Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00).

E. The Oklahoma Tax Commission shall issue dealer licenses to new and used manufactured home dealers, new and used travel trailer dealers and new and used commercial trailer dealers.

F. All licenses provided for in this section shall expire on December 31 of each year.

SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 1997.

