

FEDERAL EMPLOYERS' LIABILITY ACT

[Chapter 149 of the 60th Congress]

[As Amended Through P.L. 103-272, Enacted July 5, 1994]

【Currency: This publication is a compilation of the text of chapter 149 of the 60th Congress. It was last amended by the public law listed in the As Amended Through note above and below at the bottom of each page of the pdf version and reflects current law through the date of the enactment of the public law listed at <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/comps/>】

【Note: While this publication does not represent an official version of any Federal statute, substantial efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of its contents. The official version of Federal law is found in the United States Statutes at Large and in the United States Code. The legal effect to be given to the Statutes at Large and the United States Code is established by statute (1 U.S.C. 112, 204).】

AN ACT Relating to the liability of common carriers by railroad to their employees in certain cases.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. That every common carrier by railroad while engaging in commerce between any of the several States or Territories, or between any of the States and Territories, or between the District of Columbia and any of the States or Territories and any foreign nation or nations, shall be liable in damages to any person suffering injury while he is employed by such carrier in such commerce, or, in case of the death of such employee, to his or her personal representative, for the benefit of the surviving widow or husband and children of such employee and, if none, then of such employee's parents; and, if none, then of the next of kin dependent upon such employee, for such injury or death resulting in whole or in part from the negligence of any of the officers, agents, or employees of such carrier, or by reason of any defect or insufficiency, due to its negligence, in its cars, engines, appliances, machinery, track, roadbed, works, boats, wharves, or other equipment.

Any employee of a carrier, any part of whose duties as such employee shall be the furtherance of interstate or foreign commerce; or shall, in any way directly or closely and substantially, affect such commerce as above set forth shall, for the purposes of this Act, be considered as being employed by such carrier in such commerce and shall be considered as entitled to the benefits of this Act and of an Act entitled "An Act relating to the liability of common carriers by railroads to their employees in certain cases" (approved April 22, 1908), as the same has been or may hereafter be amended.

【45 U.S.C. 51】

SEC. 2. That every common carrier by railroad in the Territories, the District of Columbia, the Panama Canal Zone, or other possessions of the United States shall be liable in damages to any person suffering injury while he is employed by such carrier in any of said jurisdictions, or, in case of the death of such employee, to his or her personal representative, for the benefit of the surviving widow or husband and children of such employee; and, if none, then of such employee's parents; and, if none, then of the next of kin dependent upon such employee, for such injury or death resulting in whole or in part from the negligence of any of the officers, agents, or employees of such carrier, or by reason of any defect or insufficiency, due to its negligence in its cars, engines, appliances, machinery, track, roadbed, works, boats, wharves, or other equipment.

【45 U.S.C. 52】

SEC. 3. That in all actions hereafter brought against any such common carrier by railroad under or by virtue of any of the provisions of this Act to recover damages for personal injuries to an employee or where such injuries have resulted in his death, the fact that the employee may have been guilty of contributory negligence shall not bar a recovery, but the damages shall be diminished by the jury in proportion to the amount of negligence attributable to such employee: *Provided*, That no such employee who may be injured or killed shall be held to have been guilty of contributory negligence in any case where the violation by such common carrier of any statute enacted for the safety of employees contributed to the injury or death of such employee.

【45 U.S.C. 53】

SEC. 4. That in any action brought against any common carrier under or by virtue of any of the provisions of this Act to recover damages for injuries to, or the death of, any of its employees, such employee shall not be held to have assumed the risks of his employment in any case where such injury or death resulted in whole or in part from the negligence of any of the officers, agents, or employees of such carrier; and no employee shall be held to have assumed the risks of his employment in any case where the violation by such common carrier of any statute enacted for the safety of employees contributed to the injury or death of such employee.

【45 U.S.C. 54】

SEC. 4A. A regulation, standard, or requirement in force, or prescribed by the Secretary of Transportation under chapter 201 of title 49, United States Code, or by a State agency that is participating in investigative and surveillance activities under section 20105 of title 49, is deemed to be a statute under sections 3 and 4 of this Act.

【45 U.S.C. 54a】

SEC. 5. That any contract, rule, regulation, or device whatsoever, the purpose or intent of which shall be to enable any common carrier to exempt itself from any liability created by this Act, shall to that extent be void: *Provided*, That in any action brought against any such common carrier under or by virtue of any of the provi-

sions of this Act, such common carrier may set off therein any sum it has contributed or paid to any insurance relief benefit, or indemnity that may have been paid to the injured employee or the person entitled thereto on account of the injury or death for which said action was brought.

[45 U.S.C. 55]

SEC. 6. That no action shall be maintained under this Act unless commenced within three years from the day the cause of action accrued.

Under this Act an action may be brought in a circuit court of the United States, in the district of the residence of the defendant, or in which the cause of action arose, or in which the defendant shall be doing business at the time of commencing such action. The jurisdiction of the courts of the United States under this act shall be concurrent with that of the courts of the several States.

[45 U.S.C. 56]

SEC. 7. That the term "common carrier" as used in this Act shall include the receiver or receivers or other persons or corporations charged with the duty of the management and operation of the business of a common carrier.

[45 U.S.C. 57]

SEC. 8. That nothing in this Act shall be held to limit the duty or liability of common carriers or to impair the rights of their employees under any other Act or Acts of Congress, or to affect the prosecution of any pending proceeding or right of action under the Act of Congress entitled "An Act relating to liability of common carriers in the District of Columbia and Territories, and to common carriers engaged in commerce between the States and between the States and foreign nations to their employees," approved June eleventh, nineteen hundred and six.

[45 U.S.C. 58]

SEC. 9. That any right of action given by this Act to a person suffering injury shall survive to his or her personal representative, for the benefit of the surviving widow or husband and children of such employee, and, if none, then of such employee's parents; and, if none, then of the next of kin dependent upon such employee, but in such cases there shall be only one recovery for the same injury.

[45 U.S.C. 59]

SEC. 10. Any contract, rule, regulation, or device whatsoever, the purpose, intent, or effect of which shall be to prevent employees of any common carrier from furnishing voluntarily information to a person in interest as to the facts incident to the injury or death of any employee, shall be void, and whoever, by threat, intimidation, order, rule, contract, regulation, or device whatsoever, shall attempt to prevent any person from furnishing voluntarily such information to a person in interest, or whoever discharges or otherwise disciplines or attempts to discipline any employee for furnishing voluntarily such information to a person in interest, shall, upon conviction thereof, be punished by a fine of not more than \$1,000 or imprisoned for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment, for each offense: *Provided*, That nothing

herein contained shall be construed to void any contract, rule, or regulation with respect to any information contained in the files of the carrier, or other privileged or confidential reports.

If any provision of this Act is declared unconstitutional or the applicability thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, the validity of the remainder of the Act and the applicability of such provision to other persons and circumstances shall not be affected thereby.

[45 U.S.C. 60]