

ITF (Industry Task Force) Association

*Effecting positive change and ensuring sustainability of the workers' compensation system
through the views of Alberta employers*

Duration of Disability Working Group

The group met on April 9th to discuss process mapping and key performance indicators/metrics that would best support reduction in claim duration. WCB reports Q1 average duration was 62 days and continues to decline, but noted the stat is based on a 12-month rolling average so it will take time for sizeable reductions to be seen.

The process mapping discussion focused on claim transfers as one priority area. Examples where transfers to case assistants and vis versa were problematic were raised and alternate approaches suggested. Ownership of a claim file, triggers for a claim continuing with a case manager and check in points with employers were also discussed. WCB will review processes and discussion will continue in June. Regarding metrics, additional data gathering will be done to identify potential metrics that are meaningful and focus on effectiveness and outcomes.

Psychological Injury Working Group (PIWG)

The PIWG met on April 15th and psychological injury data for the first quarter of 2025 was reviewed. WCB continues to see gains in terms of psych injury experience.

The PIWG discussed priorities for 2025 and two project teams were struck. The first will focus on modified work and the challenges affecting timely return to work. A metric to monitor modified work is being researched. A second team will focus on making data regarding psychological injuries readily available to all employers.

ITF has not heard from Minister Jones' office regarding the request for a meeting in follow-up to the announcement regarding presumptive coverage being introduced for RNs and RPNs for psychological injuries related to post-traumatic stress disorder and other traumatic mental health injuries. WCB feels claim acceptance rates should not be significantly impacted by this change. Minister Jones has been invited to the June 4th ITF meeting.

ELP Working Group

The ELP Working Group met on April 23rd. WCB provided statistics for the first quarter of 2025 and a reduction in new ELP claims as well as ELP costs through fewer 0-based ELP determinations was noted. The group then discussed the pilot involving workers over the age of 50 which launched 1 April. There have been 14 claims

flagged as meeting pilot criteria, but the new process has not had time to be tested yet. WCB will work on a process overview and incorporate the work assessment program framework into the new approach in the coming months.

Access to Information Working Group

The group met on April 25th. WCB continues to see volume increases related to ATI requests which are driven in part by ICP repolling as well as an increasing volume of appeals. WCB is experiencing resource challenges and is looking at options to support more consistently meeting service delivery targets. The ATI escalation process was also reviewed and WCB has introduced a process change and additional level of review when a file is being heavily redacted. WCB advised they are waiting for the new Regulations replacing the FOIP Act before their group meets to revisit their current redaction protocol.

Bill 47 – Automobile Insurance Act

Bill 47 contains a new provision for joint decision making to cover situations where a person is receiving compensation under either this new Act or the Workers' Compensation Act and, because of another bodily injury, the person becomes entitled to compensation under the other legislation. Bill 47 proposes the insurer and WCB agree on and formally document a joint decision distinguishing responsibility of each party. WCB is assessing the implications of this new provision.

Upcoming ITF Association meetings

The next guest presentation webinar is confirmed for May 28th, starting at 9:30 am. The Appeals Commission will provide their biannual update and the Employer Appeals Advisor Office will share information on current trends and specific services available to employers. Dr. Monique Gignac with the Institute for Work & Health will present on workplace disclosure specific to chronic illness and mental health, and the Job Demands & Accommodation Planning tool. Dr. Keith Dobson will then present on moral injury. The webinar will close with a member open forum discussion. Please let Melanie know if you have suggested topics for the open forum.

The next quarterly meeting is on Wednesday June 4th. The meeting starts at 8:30 am. The in-person meeting is at the Holiday Inn Edmonton Airport in Nisku.

April 2025

Additional information can be found on the ITF website - <http://www.itfassociation.ca>