

# ITF (Industry Task Force) Association

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

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## **ITF Member Lunch & Learn**

The Lunch & Learn session for interested members was held on April 14<sup>th</sup>. Discussion topics included opportunity for reconsideration of decisions at the DRDRB level, arguments for a claim appeal centered on whether events were excessive or unusual for the specific occupation, and strategies to manage program referral delays in some regions. If you would like to be added to the Lunch & Learn contact list please let Melanie know.

## **CMA Policy on the Physician's Role in Return to Work**

Thank you to the members who provided comments on the draft CMA policy. ITF representatives met with CMA on April 17<sup>th</sup> to discuss the draft policy and shared ITF member perspectives and opportunities for improvement. ITF feedback was well received and we expect further enhancements. It is expected the new policy will be approved in June.

## **WCB Policy Consultation**

The policy subcommittee met on April 23<sup>rd</sup> to discuss the Funding Policy. The subcommittee recommendation is that ITF support the change to a smoothing methodology, and we restate our previous position that a 10-point target funding range (i.e. 114% to 124%) be introduced. In addition, we will seek greater clarity in policy on action to be taken when a funding deficit occurs or when the funding level drops below 114%.

A pre-consultation focus group on the ELP policy is scheduled for April 30<sup>th</sup>. The purpose of the session is to gather feedback from employers and labour on the current ELP policy and opportunities to improve outcomes. ELP policy consultation is scheduled for Q3.

## **Interim Relief Benefits**

ITF received a response to our letter on administration of this benefit. This topic will be discussed in greater detail at the June 4<sup>th</sup> guest presentation webinar.

Criteria for determining whether an arguable case exists is a procedural threshold that considers whether, assuming the arguments presented are accepted as fact,

there is reasonable probability the decision under review could change. Monitoring is event-driven, with reviews occurring when there are updates in the review or appeal process or when new information is received that may impact continued eligibility. To strengthen oversight in response to ITF concerns WCB is establishing a standardized re-qualification process for extended IRB durations, defining clearer parameters for identifying and managing delays, implementing more centralized monitoring, and introducing additional payment controls and system alerts. Once the DRDRB issues its decision, IRB directed at that level ends. If the matter proceeds to the Appeals Commission, a new IRB application must be submitted and is assessed independently by the Appeals Commission. We have asked the AC to discuss their processes at the June 4<sup>th</sup> webinar as well.

## **Industry Custom Pricing**

The ICP subcommittee will meet on May 7<sup>th</sup> to discuss options and strategies to address member concerns regarding repolling options offered for 2027. If you would like to join this discussion please let Melanie know. 2026 repolling for designated industries begins in May.

## **Upcoming ITF Association meetings**

The next Member Open Forum is on May 6<sup>th</sup> starting at 11:00. If there are topics you would like added to the agenda please let Melanie know.

The next member Lunch & Learn is on May 27<sup>th</sup>. If you have any claims/scenarios you would like to discuss, please let Melanie know.

The next guest presentation webinar is on June 4<sup>th</sup> starting at 9:30 am. The Appeals Commission will provide their biannual update. Kathleen Dobson with the Institute for Work & Health will present their recent research on mental health profiles of workers with a physically disabling injury or illness. WCB will join for a discussion of Interim Relief Benefit administration, and Occupational Health & Safety will then provide their annual update. If you have any suggested topics for future webinars please let Melanie know.

The next quarterly meeting is on Wednesday June 10<sup>th</sup> starting at 8:30. The in-person meeting is at the Holiday Inn Edmonton Airport in Nisku.

April 2026