

ITF (Industry Task Force) Association

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

Government Engagement

ITF has written to the Honorable Joseph Schow, who is the new Minister of Jobs, Economy, Trade, and Immigration. In addition to congratulating him on his appointment, the letter introduced the ITF Association and requested a meeting with the ITF Executive to discuss priority issues in greater detail. We also extended an invitation to the September or December quarterly membership meeting.

Duration of Disability Working Group

The working group met on June 19th. WCB reported average duration continues to decrease for both current and prior year claims. The group discussed WCB's analysis of modified work outcomes for claimants being paid temporary disability (TD02) benefits. The transfer process from case manager to case assistant was also reviewed. WCB outlined criteria for transfer to a case assistant and process changes include requirement of a more comprehensive file transfer note. The case manager is also now required to attempt to resolve any employer concerns before a file is transferred. Appropriateness of benefit payment codes was also discussed. WCB outlined their longstanding quality assurance process which involves a review of appropriate benefit payment after TD01 ends. The standard is 90% or higher confirmation of benefit correctness after TD01. WCB continues to meet this standard, but there is a recognized error rate. Questions or anomalies should be escalated through the standard process. This group will meet again in September.

Review of the Case Assistant Model

Following up on discussion at the June 4th meeting, ITF has written to Sara Schmidt, WCB's Vice President Client Services and Disability Management. We proposed hosting a focus group of ITF members with Sara and her team to discuss in greater detail the challenges and benefits of the current model and the role of case assistants. To date the review of the case assistant model has only involved discussions with WCB staff. If you would like to participate in this focus group let Melanie know.

ELP Working Group

The working group met on June 23rd and discussed early observations from the case conference pilot involving workers over the age of 50. The pilot commenced April 1st

and to date there have been 25 cases flagged as meeting the pilot criteria. The merits of having an early case conference if there is no fitness for work yet was discussed. The Working Group agreed this case conference helps build a relationship and expand thinking around potential return to work. The pilot will continue to the end of September and the current plan is to evaluate outcomes in the fall.

Psych Injury Working Group (PIWG) Employer Reporting Project Team

This project team met on June 24th. Responses to the PIWG and Association member surveys were reviewed and the team decided to pursue two avenues as part of this project. Reporting available to individual employers through the Employer portal will be enhanced to make psych injury data for their own claims more readily available. Additional information is being gathered on desired portal reporting enhancements. In addition, Industry specific reporting will be developed based on survey feedback to better facilitate comparison to overall psych injury data.

Access to Information

The Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Acts were both effective June 11th. In anticipation of future discussion with WCB on redaction of information released to employers, ITF has reengaged with CACE. Specifically we have asked for their opinion on the impact of this new legislation on employer access to WCB claim file information.

Upcoming ITF Association meetings

The next guest presentation webinar is scheduled for September 4th starting at 9:30 am. Presentations will include: an overview of the new psychologist contract, what employers can now expect and provider standards; and the role of Industry Specialists and the value they offer employers, along with an orientation to the Employer Portal and how to best use the information available. The third session is still being confirmed.

The next quarterly meeting and AGM will be held on Wednesday September 10th starting at 8:30. The in-person meeting is at the Manufacturers Health & Safety Association in Rocky View.

June 2025

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