

ITF (Industry Task Force) Association

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

Psych Injury Working Group (PIWG) Employer Reporting Subcommittee

WCB agreed to work with ITF on design of a new report that would provide employers with more meaningful information on psychological injuries. Members of the ITF psych injury subcommittee met on September 8th to further refine priorities and desired reporting changes we would like to see prioritized. It was recognized some IT system changes will take longer to implement, but a number of enhancements were shared with WCB that could be introduced more quickly.

Psych Injury Working Group (PIWG)

The PIWG also met on September 8th and reviewed psych injury metrics for the first 6 months of 2025. There have been no significant changes compared to 2024 Q2 and psych injury experience seems to have stabilized. Although some targets were not met, there are no areas of concern. The acceptance rate of 44% is influenced by a higher than typical volume of chronic onset claim reports, which typically have a higher denial rate.

The group then discussed progress made by the two project teams, and priorities for completion prior to the end of the year. The modified work subcommittee has completed a review of the process maps for psychological injuries and training on changes is being rolled out. A modified work form specific to psychological injuries is being developed, along with a summary of cognitive demands to be used primarily for communicating with service providers. This work should be completed in 2025. WCB is looking at making changes to some reports in the employer portal as requested by the project team and will be making information contained in the ITF reports more generally available to employers. Further reporting changes will likely not be completed until 2026.

Review of the Case Assistant (CA) Model

ITF representatives met with WCB on September 15th to discuss the case assistant model. A good, robust, and thoughtful discussion of the issues and concerns took place over the afternoon. Several practical solutions were made by the ITF members in attendance. WCB appeared to be quite receptive to many of the proposed changes and overall ITF representatives were cautiously optimistic we will see positive changes. WCB noted that in many ways ITF concerns mirrored those brought forward by the CA's themselves. ITF received a follow-up email from

Sara Schmidt indicating she found the conversations very productive and candid, and she thanked ITF for participating in the review.

WCB Policy Consultation

Following up on discussion at the September 10th meeting, the ITF subcommittee met on September 22nd. The group reviewed the additional information provided by WCB in response to our requests and finalized the content of the ITF policy consultation submission.

There were no further changes to the submissions regarding Housekeeping & Home Maintenance or Policy Interpretation and Application that were shared with members in the September 10th agenda package.

With respect to policies recommended for inclusion in the next policy plan cycle, the group agreed to recommend that Policy 05-02 Part II Application 3 (Cost Relief for back injuries) be reviewed to assess the merits of maintaining a separate policy specific to back injuries. ITF proposed rescinding Application 3 and having back injuries considered under Application 1, as any other pre-existing or concurrent physical or psychiatric / psychological condition, as an option that should be evaluated. Other policies proposed for review are Economic Loss Payments, Access and Privacy, and the Funding Policy.

Duration of Disability Working Group

The working group met on September 24th. The average duration, which is a 12-month rolling average, has stabilized at around 61 days however recent monthly duration is showing more significant reductions. WCB also provided an update on several of their initiatives introduced in 2025 that are aimed at improving return to work outcomes. Opportunities to expand the pilot project were also discussed. The next meeting will focus on assessment of the impact on duration in 2025 and 2026 working group priorities.

Upcoming ITF Association meetings

The next guest presentation webinar is scheduled for November 26th starting at 9:30 am.

The next quarterly meeting will be held on Wednesday December 3rd starting at 8:30. The in-person meeting is at the Holiday Inn Edmonton Airport in Nisku.

September 2025