

To: Texas Workers' Compensation System Participants

From: Kara Mace, Deputy Commissioner, Legal Services

Date: May 17, 2021

RE: Changes to Hearing Notices, Orders, and Other Correspondence

On April 19, 2021, the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) issued Commissioner's Bulletin [#B-0012-21](#) to inform system participants that DWC Austin headquarters will move to the Austin Capitol Complex in the summer of 2022. The move will require us to update correspondence (such as hearing notices, official action orders, and complaints and investigation letters) to use a new letterhead and mailing address. We will also modernize correspondence for plain language, font size, and other changes.

### **Hearing Notices**

DWC updated these hearing notices in December 2020 for plain language and to provide information about how to attend the online proceeding:

- DR01, *Benefit Review Conference (BRC) Set Notice*;
- DR02, *Contested Case Hearing (CCH) Set Notice*;
- DR03, *CCH Decision and Order Cover Letter*;
- DR04, *BRC or CCH Cancellation Notice*; and
- DR05, *BRC or CCH Reschedule Notice*.

We are making more changes to these notices **beginning June 1, 2021**, to improve automated processing and further modernize them. The changes include:

- Modifying the DR02 and DR05 notices to reflect the DWC office location for in-person CCHs scheduled or rescheduled on or after Monday, August 2, 2021. See the April 15, 2021, Commissioner's Memo about resuming in-person CCHs at [www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/information/coronavirus.html](http://www.tdi.texas.gov/wc/information/coronavirus.html).
- Modifying the DR01 and DR05 notices to reflect the DWC office location or information about how to attend the BRC.
- Providing a Spanish version of the notice only to the injured employee or beneficiaries.
- Discontinuing the copy of the letter mailed to the insurance carrier's corporate address. DWC will continue to mail a copy to the insurance carrier representative

who will attend the proceeding if they have been identified before the notice has been sent.

- Modifying the font type and size to 12-point Segoe for readability.
- Other minor grammar and editorial changes for clarity.

There will be no change to secure file transfer protocol (SFTP) naming or delivery to the insurance carrier Austin representative SFTP boxes. Injured employee identifying information will continue to be displayed on the first page of each notice in the upper right corner.

Contact DWC Hearings at 512-804-4010 for issues with individual notices. Email [eFiling-Help@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:eFiling-Help@tdi.texas.gov) or call Hugo Salazar at 512-804-4385 for issues with delivery of Hearings notices to insurance carrier Austin representative SFTP boxes.

### **High-volume Automated Notices, Orders, and Correspondence**

Over the next year, DWC will be working on an automation project to update claim-specific notices, orders, and correspondence produced from TXCOMP, our automated claims management system, mostly for letterhead, font, and address updates. Examples of these types of correspondence include:

- notice of injury for the injured employee;
- notice of vocational rehabilitation services;
- orders for designated doctor examination;
- orders for required medical examination;
- orders to change an injured employee's treating doctor;
- orders for an injured employee's advance of income benefits; and
- workers' compensation health care network verification requests.

The project will also include modernization of other notices and letters produced from COMPASS, DWC's automated dispute system, for letterhead, mailing address, plain language, and other changes. Examples of these types of correspondence include:

- orders for attorney fees;
- orders for first quarter supplemental income benefit determinations; and
- Appeals Panel decision letters.

DWC will give system participants as much notice as possible before changes are made to these automated notices, orders, and correspondence letters to allow stakeholders to make adjustments to their business processes. We will update you on the progress of these automation projects as more information is available.

### **Other Notices, Orders, and Correspondence**

DWC program areas such as Compliance and Investigations, Office of the Medical Advisor, and Medical Fee Dispute Resolution will also update and modernize manually-produced correspondence. Contact the specific program area with any concerns about changes to their correspondence.

For questions or other information, contact Jeff Nelson, director of External Relations, at 512-804-4405 or [jeff.nelson@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:jeff.nelson@tdi.texas.gov).