

TEXAS COMP UPDATE

Inside this newsletter:



PAGE 2

Decoding DWC forms

Every update we will bring you tips and best practices for successfully completing and filing different DWC forms to stay in compliance.



PAGE 4

An improved system for doctors

Thanks to legislative reforms and recent DWC rule changes, it's now easier and more attractive than ever to become a workers' compensation doctor.



PAGE 5

Mark your calendars!

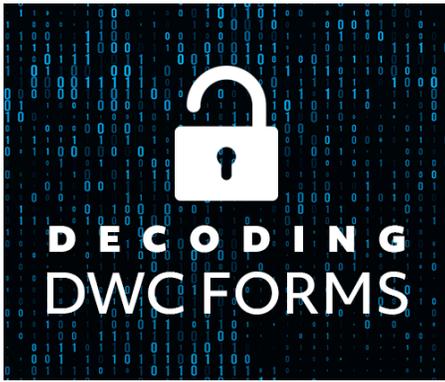
The virtual Texas workers' compensation conference is coming soon. Get a preview on conference dates, featured topics, and speakers.



A new way to connect

We are thrilled to announce the launch of the DWC **Texas Comp Update**—a way to foster communication and collaboration within our community.

DWC recognizes the importance of keeping our stakeholders informed about the latest developments, updates, and opportunities within the realm of workers' compensation. We hope this newsletter serves as a valuable resource for all those involved in ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of injured workers in Texas.



DWC Form-003

EMPLOYER'S WAGE STATEMENT

The number one employer violation DWC sees are incorrect and untimely wage statements. To make sure you're in compliance and your injured employees receive prompt benefits you need to:

- Fill out entire form. Don't leave any boxes blank! If you don't have an answer, you can fill out "N/A" or "0" where appropriate.
- Don't forget to fill out Box 7 ("First day of missed work") and Box 8 ("Returned to work on"). This information affects the amount of benefits your injured employee receives.
- Fill out wage information for the last 13 weeks of employment. If the injured employee has not worked for 13 weeks, you may use wage information for a same or similar position.
- Make sure Box 24 ("Total gross wages") is correctly calculated to equal the total gross wages.
- Make sure you fill out Box 25 ("Nonpecuniary wages") accurately, as it will affect the insurance carrier's wage calculation.
- Don't forget to certify the document by signing and dating it.

News from Hearings

Deputy Commissioner for Hearings, Allen Craddock, has announced some exciting new changes to increase engagement between DWC staff and our stakeholders.

Appeals Panel joins Hearings team

The Appeals Panel is joining Hearings with Kara Squier as the new Appeals Panel Director. Kara began her law career as an attorney representing injured workers in dispute proceedings at DWC and came to work at DWC as an administrative law judge in 2014. "It makes sense to bring the Appeals Panel under Hearings, and I'm confident it will help us streamline processes and enhance collaboration," says Craddock.

Hearings is also moving several key management positions out into the field offices. Craddock says direct interaction between managers and team members will promote



Kara Squier

stronger relationships, better communication, and enhanced services for stakeholders.

New dates for Brown Bag Series

Hearings is also hitting the road for a new series of free [Brown Bags](#) in September and October across the state. "We are excited to continue this seminar series as a platform for meaningful interaction between system participants and Hearings," says Craddock. "These Brown Bag sessions allow us to share insights about the dispute resolution process and gather valuable feedback to ensure greater transparency for everyone involved."

The agenda includes:

- Reorganization of Hearings.
- Legislative updates that may affect Hearings, including online contested case hearings.
- Status of the new BRO-I process that identifies disputes needing a presiding officer's directive (POD).
- Practices and procedure updates for the Appeals Panel.
- Proposals to create efficiencies in docketing proceedings to reduce continuances.
- Proposals to create continuity of hearings across Texas.



Deputy commissioner receives award

Deputy Commissioner of Health and Safety Mary Landrum recently received the [2024 Women in Texas Government Award for Outstanding Leadership](#). This biennial award honors women in state service who are helping to shape the future of Texas by contributing their notable talents and skills. Mary will receive her award at a ceremony on September 25, 2024.

DWC’s executive leadership team nominated Mary because

she demonstrates remarkable commitment, leadership, and a genuine passion for public service.

“Mary has accomplished so much in her nearly 16-year career with DWC,” says Commissioner Jeff Nelson. “Her leadership has been vital to major improvements at the division and to the Texas workers’ compensation system. I am thrilled her hard work has been recognized and look forward to how she will continue to impact our state government.”

Hit the greens to support Kids’ Chance of Texas

You’re invited to come out on October 28 for a day on the links that makes a tangible difference in the lives of young Texans facing adversity. The 5th annual Kids’ Chance of Texas Golf Tournament in Lewisville provides hope and opportunity for children affected by workplace tragedies.



Empowering futures through golf and giving

Each year the charity tournament raises funds and awareness for Kids’ Chance mission—to provide scholarships for kids in Texas whose parent had a catastrophic or fatal work-related injury. These scholarships help ease the financial burden of education, empowering students to pursue their dreams despite the challenges they have faced.

A new addition to the Board: Commissioner Nelson

This year Kids’ Chance of Texas appointed Workers’ Compensation Commissioner Jeff Nelson to its board of directors. “I am honored to contribute to an organization

that makes such a meaningful impact on the lives of young Texans. Education is a powerful tool for building resilience and hope, and I look forward to working alongside dedicated colleagues to advance this important mission,” says Commissioner Nelson.

How you can support

Whether through participating in the golf tournament, sponsoring a hole, or making a donation, there are numerous ways individuals and businesses can support Kids’ Chance of Texas. Every contribution, large or small, plays a crucial role in shaping the futures of deserving students.

Learn more at: www.kidschanceoftexas.org.

Form and rule updates

The following DWC rules and forms were recently adopted. The effective dates are listed below.

Rules

- [Accident prevention services](#) – 07/01/24
- [Gifts, grants, and donations](#) – 07/11/24
- [Dispute resolution through agreements and settlements](#) – 07/15/24

Forms

- [Form-052, Supplemental income benefits \(SIBs\) application](#) – 07/01/24
- [Form-105, Accident prevention services worksheet](#) – 07/01/24
- [Form-109, Accident prevention services annual report](#) – 07/01/24

Upcoming events

September 5 – [Quarterly stakeholder meeting \(in-person and online\).](#)

September 10 – [Medical fee dispute resolution webinar.](#)

September 12 – [Dispute resolution part 1 webinar.](#)

September 13 – [Designated doctor \(DD\) 101 workshop.](#)

September 13 – [Brown Bag Series begins.](#)

September 17 – [Dispute resolution part 2 webinar.](#)

October 4 – [DD extent of injury \(EOI\) webinar.](#)

October 7 – [DD case-based webinar series begins.](#)

October 22-23 – [Texas Workers' Compensation Conference: Amplify.](#)

October 25 – [DD 101 workshop.](#)

November 15 – [DD EOI webinar.](#)

[See all events](#)



Making Texas workers' compensation better for doctors

Thanks to legislative reforms and DWC's commitment to streamline processes, it's now easier and more attractive than ever to become a treating doctor or designated doctor (DD) in the workers' compensation system.

Workers' compensation can be an attractive revenue stream for treating doctors with extremely competitive reimbursement rates between 200 and 250% of Medicare.

DWC eliminated the Approved Doctors List which required treating, referral, or consulting doctors to register, train, and test to treat workers' compensation patients.

We've also made several improvements for DDs. As of May 2024, we have 306 DDs—up from 226 in April 2023—and we're hoping our new rules will keep that positive trend going.

On June 1, 2024, new [DWC rules](#) took effect to improve billing and

reimbursement for certain workers' compensation-specific services, including DD exams, required medical exams, work status reports, and maximum medical improvement evaluations and impairment rating exams done by treating and referred doctors.

New resources

Interested in becoming a Texas workers' compensation doctor? We simplified the process with a new [checklist](#) that takes you through the steps to treat workers' compensation injuries in Texas. Visit the Health Care Provider section of our [website](#) for even more resources.

Have questions? CompConnection can help.



AMPLIFY

Texas Workers' Comp Conference

Get the latest on:

- Emerging trends in workers' compensation.
- Making a good fraud case.
- Modernizing data collection with EDI 3.1.
- How stress, attitude, and behavior influence driving.
- Calculating average weekly wage.

Join us virtually

October 22-23, 2024

9 AM - 3 PM



KEYNOTE PANEL



Harnessing the Power of AI in Texas

**Rep. Giovanni
Capriglione**
Texas House of
Representatives



Eric Smith
Memorial Hermann



Phoebe Murphy
Texas Mutual



TDI | Division of Workers' Compensation

Health and safety resources



September 15-21 – National Farm Safety and Health Week

- [Farm and ranch safety audit checklist.](#)
- [Farm safety training program.](#)



October 6-12 – National Fire Prevention Week

- [Fire prevention fact sheet.](#)
- [Fire safety workplace program.](#)



November 3-9 – Drowsy Driving Prevention Week

- [Driving fatigue prevention fact sheet.](#)
- [Safe driving tips fact sheet.](#)

Commissioner receives award



Congratulations to Texas Workers' Compensation Commissioner Jeff Nelson, recipient of the [2024 NextGen Award](#) from the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions (IAIABC).

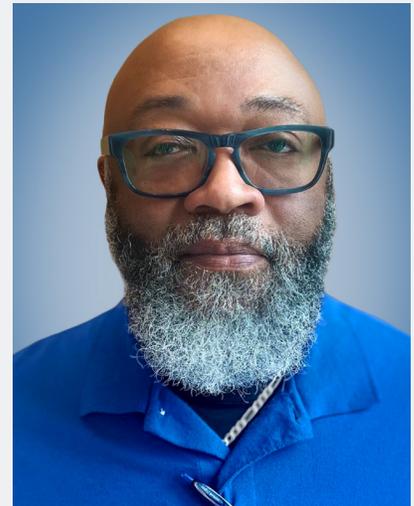
This award recognizes members of the workers' compensation industry who have set themselves apart through their professional and personal achievements, dedication, contributions, and impact.

New safety trainers

DWC welcomes two new instructors to our team of authorized OSHA 10 and 30-hour trainers. Visit our [training webpage](#) to learn more about OSHA trainings and see the event calendar.



Mario Quispe has 18 years of health, safety, and environmental (HSE) experience in facility services, manufacturing, environmental consulting, and mining. He has worked as an HSE manager, trainer, and executive safety advisor in Peru and across the United States.



Dial R. Young Jr. has 11 years of experience as an environmental, health, and safety professional. His background includes roles in safety training and regulatory compliance within the oil and gas industry across Texas, New Mexico, and Colorado.

Tyler Beverages earns fourth Lone Star Safety Award

DWC recently [recognized](#) Tyler Beverages with the Lone Star Safety Award for its exemplary workplace health and safety programs and low rates of work-related injuries and illnesses.

Tyler Beverages previously received the Lone Star Safety Award in 2016, 2019, and 2022. The company also received the Safety and Health Achievement Recognition Program (SHARP) designation from OSHA in 2019, 2021, and 2023. The Lone Star Safety Program and the SHARP award recognize small, private-sector Texas employers who demonstrate an outstanding commitment to workplace safety and can serve as role models for other companies.

"Tyler Beverages shows a strong commitment to safety by involving both management and employees



in safety rules, regular training, and careful investigations," said DWC Workplace Safety Director Chris D'Amura. "We are happy to recognize their safety efforts for the fourth time."

Do you know a company with an excellent safety program? Nominate them for the [Lone Star Safety Award](#).

ON YOUR RADAR

HYBRID QUARTERLY STAKEHOLDER MEETING



In an effort to create more networking opportunities for our stakeholders, we are hosting a hybrid [quarterly meeting](#) on September 5. Join us in Austin or on Zoom to hear updates about DWC initiatives and meet and greet with other industry stakeholders.

CONTINUING EDUCATION WEBINARS



DWC now offers continuing education (CE) credit for workers' compensation system participants through our CompCourses webinar series. Check out videos of past topics, including return to work and presiding officer directives (PODs) on our [CompCourses webpage](#).

Stay connected!

[Sign up](#) to our different email lists to get news and updates geared toward:

- Health care providers.
- Insurance carriers.
- Employers.
- First responders.
- Designated doctors.
- Attorneys.

Make sure to follow us on social media for more workers' compensation-related content.



Texas Division of Workers' Compensation



TexasDWC



Texas Division of Workers' Compensation

2024 HEALTH CARE NETWORK REPORT CARD



Workers' Compensation Research & Evaluation Group

The [Texas Workers' Compensation Research and Evaluation Group](#) will soon release their annual health care network report card. This report compares a variety of measures including medical costs, return to work rates, and health outcomes.