

## **Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Research Agenda Workers' Compensation Research and Evaluation Group**

### **Introduction**

Labor Code §405.0026 requires the Workers' Compensation Research and Evaluation Group (REG) to prepare a research agenda each year for the commissioner to review, approve, and publish in the *Texas Register*.

Labor Code §405.0025 requires the REG to conduct professional studies and research related to how effectively the workers' compensation system operates.

Texas Insurance Code §1305.502 requires the REG to develop and issue an informational report card each even-numbered year that objectively identifies and compares certified health care networks with each other and with claims outside of those networks.

### **Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Research Agenda**

The REG proposes the following research projects:

1. Completion and publication of the 18th Edition of the Workers' Compensation Health Care Network Report Card (required under Insurance Code §1305.502(a)(d) and Labor Code §405.0025(b)).
2. An update of medical costs and utilization in the Texas workers' compensation system.
3. An update of return-to-work outcomes for injured employees, including an examination of Texas injured employees' initial and sustained return-to-work rates and wage-recovery rates.

The REG will consider expanding the scope of the research projects or conducting more projects to accommodate stakeholder suggestions, subject to the resources and data available.

### **Request for Comments or Public Hearing**

You may submit comments on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2026 Research Agenda or request a public hearing in writing no later than 5:00 p.m., Central time, on September 15, 2025. A hearing request must be on a separate page from any written comments.

Email your comments or hearing request to [RuleComments@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:RuleComments@tdi.texas.gov) or mail them to DWC Legal Services, MC-LS, Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation, PO Box 12050, Austin, Texas 78711-2050.

Copies of the proposed research agenda are on the [TDI website](#). Please email any questions about this agenda to Botao Shi at [wcresearch@tdi.texas.gov](mailto:wcresearch@tdi.texas.gov).