

TEXAS COMP

UPDATE

Inside this newsletter:



Scam alert for Texas workers

DWC warns the public of a nationwide scam. Learn how to spot the signs of fraud.



On-demand CompCourses

Earning continuing education credit is now easier and more convenient than ever. Learn how DWC is expanding access to free, high-quality training.



Join us September 1-2!

The Texas Workers' Compensation Conference is right around the corner. Get a preview of featured topics and speakers.

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

A MESSAGE FROM

Workers' Compensation Commissioner Jeff Nelson

Greetings,

At DWC, we are committed to keeping our system participants informed and prepared for what's ahead. In this edition of our newsletter, I'm sharing updates on several key initiatives that will shape our work over the coming months.

1. Return-to-Work Guidelines

We were recently informed of a significant change in the business model of the publisher of MDGuidelines. This change may substantially increase access costs and could limit availability for some health care providers. In response, DWC is evaluating a transition to the Official Disability Guidelines (ODG) by Milliman Care Guidelines. Using ODG would allow system participants to rely on a single subscription instead of two separate products. We are assessing the

impact of this potential change, and any updates would need to be finalized by October 1, 2026.

2. Attorney Fees

DWC recently requested input on possible changes to attorney fee rates, which have not been updated in nearly a decade. Now is an appropriate time to reassess whether the current rates remain adequate. In the coming month, you can expect to see an informal rule proposal reflecting the feedback we received. This will provide another opportunity for stakeholder input as we determine whether to move forward with a formal rule change.

3. Designated Doctor Program Report

DWC recently released a study analyzing the performance of designated doctors (DDs) from 2020 through 2024. The report evaluates metrics such as appointment rescheduling,

report timeliness, and other DD responsibilities. Overall, the findings were positive, including an increase in the number of DDs, more than 98% of reports being upheld, and strong performance-based oversight (PBO) scores. However, the report identifies a high number of rescheduled exams, which DWC will be reviewing to identify opportunities for improvement.

Thank you for staying engaged with the work we're doing. I look forward to working together as we advance these initiatives in the months ahead.

Thank you,



Jeff Nelson

Commissioner of Workers' Compensation

Coming soon: online medical fee disputes

Disputes over payment for non-network or approved out-of-network workers' compensation health care are resolved through the medical fee dispute resolution (MFDR) process. Since 2021, health care providers and injured employees have been able to file [DWC Form-060, Medical Fee Dispute Resolution Request](#), by email, fax, and secure file transfer protocol (SFTP).

Starting this fall, parties will be able to submit medical fee

disputes and upload supporting documents—such as medical bills, explanation of benefits, and other medical records—directly through [TXCOMP](#). Online filers will receive an MFDR tracking number immediately instead of waiting several days for a response letter by mail.

Both the filer and the insurance carrier will be able to check dispute status online instead of contacting DWC's MFDR team for updates.





Scam alert for Texas workers

DWC is warning the public about a growing scam where individuals impersonate DWC officials or court personnel in an attempt to take money from Texas workers. Reports show the scam is increasingly targeting Spanish-speaking workers, where scammers are exploiting language barriers and trust in government institutions.

Scammers are contacting workers by phone, email, and video calls, falsely claiming that payment is required to receive workers' compensation benefits or settle a claim. Some have used made-up titles such as "judge" or "attorney" to appear legitimate. These communications are fraudulent. Workers in Texas are never required to pay to get their workers' compensation benefits.

How the scam works

Scammers have been reported to:

- Pose as representatives of DWC or the courts.
- Claim that benefits or settlements will be withheld unless immediate payment is made.
- Request money through bank transfers or peer-to-peer payment apps.
- Use high-pressure tactics to create a false sense of urgency.

Important reminders

- DWC and insurance carriers **never** request payment to release workers' compensation benefits.
- DWC and insurance carriers **never** ask for money through wire transfers, payment apps, or other similar services.
- Legitimate government officials **do not** pressure people to act immediately or provide financial information on the spot.
- Any unexpected request for money or personal information should be treated with caution and verified through official channels.

What to do if you suspect fraud

Anyone who believes they have been contacted by a scammer or who has questions about the legitimacy of a communication are encouraged to contact DWC directly at 800-252-7031.

Help us spread the word

The workers' compensation industry plays a critical role in protecting workers. To support our outreach efforts, you can download and share our scam alert flyer—available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

Upcoming events

June 5-6 – DD and certifying doctor required certification training

June 9 – Health care provider boot camp part two begins

June 19 – DD extent of injury webinar

July 13 – DD case-based webinar series begins

July 15 – Essentials for new safety professionals: preparing for an OSHA inspection webinar

July 22 – Virtual quarterly stakeholder meeting

August 5 – CompCourses: workers' comp 101 webinar

August 14 – DD musculoskeletal examination workshop

September 1-2 – Texas Workers' Compensation Conference

September 4 – DD 101 workshop

September 18-19 – DD and certifying doctor required certification training

[See all events](#)



New on-demand CompCourses in 2026

DWC has introduced a major upgrade to professional training in the workers' compensation system: **on-demand CompCourses**. After listening to feedback from stakeholders who asked for more learning options, we created a way to access previously recorded webinars and earn free continuing education (CE) credit through a streamlined self-study process.

This new format is already proving popular—more than 200 self-study CE credits have been processed since our launch, signaling strong demand for flexible, accessible training options across the industry.

More flexibility for workers' compensation professionals

The self-study format allows professionals to complete training on their own schedule, without waiting for a live session. Participants can access a growing library of recorded courses covering essential topics in the Texas workers' compensation system.

Each on-demand course includes:

- A one-hour pre-recorded CompCourses webinar.
- A short quiz to test your knowledge.
- One hour of Texas Department of Insurance self-study CE credit upon successful completion.

The process is simple. Participants select a course from the CompCourses [webpage](#), watch the one-hour webinar on YouTube, and take a quiz. CE credit is processed in Sircon, typically within several weeks.

Expanding access to high-quality training

On-demand learning broadens access for workers' compensation professionals who may not be able to attend live webinars due to hearings, caseload demands, and other scheduling conflicts.

Since launching live CompCourses webinars in 2024, DWC has already delivered more than 1,400 CE credits to stakeholders. The

addition of on-demand courses builds on that success by offering even more ways to participate, learn, and stay current in the Texas workers' compensation system.

Our on-demand catalog includes eight courses, with more being added throughout the year. Topics range from dispute resolution to return to work to OSHA violations, giving participants multiple options to strengthen their knowledge and meet CE requirements.

Get started today

On-demand CompCourses are available now, and we will continue to add new sessions. Live CompCourses webinars will continue as well, giving learners the option to participate in real-time training with subject-matter experts.

Explore the full catalog and begin earning CE credit on our CompCourses [webpage](#).



YOUR MAP TO WORKERS' COMP MASTERY STARTS HERE!

Join us at the **2026 Texas Workers' Compensation Conference** and explore new routes to better outcomes, smoother processes, and stronger expertise.

ATTEND SESSIONS ON:

- ✕ Key updates from DWC.
- ✕ Navigating EDI compliance.
- ✕ Comparing the 4th and 6th editions of the AMA Guides.
- ✕ The rise of boutique pharmaceuticals.
- ✕ And more!

Learn more:



CHART YOUR COURSE EARLY AND SAVE!

EARLY BIRD PRICING: \$550
ENDS JUNE 30

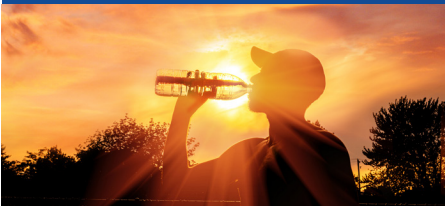
TDI | Division of Workers' Compensation

Health and safety resources



June – National Trench Safety Month

- [Excavation and trenching safety training program.](#)



July – Summer safety

- [Summer safety tips for workers fact sheet.](#)
- [Heat illness and injury prevention fact sheet.](#)
- [Heat stress safety training program.](#)



August – OSHA Safe + Sound Week (August 10-16)

- [DWC's safety and health publications library.](#)
- [DWC's safety and health video library.](#)

Staff spotlight

Meet DWC's Safety Training and Inspections Manager **Raymond Provencio**.

Growing up in Arizona, Ray learned the value of hard work from his father, who spent long days in a copper mine. As a teenager, Ray took whatever jobs he could find—cleaning construction sites and changing tires at the old Western Auto Store. He saw how proud his father and others were of their work, but also the risks they faced daily.

"I remember my father cleaning car parts with no gloves or eye protection, just his bare hands," Ray recalls. "That image stayed with me."

Ray's understanding of safety deepened during his time in the U.S. Air Force, where he supervised a crew. One day in England, while rushing to finish an aircraft repair before a cookout, he made a choice he'll never forget.

"We needed to remove a fuel tank from the wing, and part of the process was draining leftover fuel. I decided to skip that step. Some crew members spoke up, but I didn't listen—and I wasn't wearing the right safety gear," he says.

When the tank came off, fuel splashed into Ray's eyes. Quick action by his team got him to an eyewash station and the base clinic, but the incident nearly cost him his sight.

"That moment changed how I think about safety," Ray says. "It's not just a checklist. It's a way of working that starts with leadership and doing the right thing, even when it's inconvenient."



Turning lessons learned into safer workplaces

Today, Ray leads a team of safety professionals that delivers OSHA-authorized courses and customized safety training to Texas workplaces—on your jobsite or at a DWC location. His trainers, with backgrounds in industries like construction, manufacturing, and energy, share real-world experiences and solutions that help teams work safer, prevent injuries, and protect the bottom line.

"When safety becomes part of your culture, it saves lives, prevents downtime, and cuts costs," Ray explains. "It's the right thing to do, and it's smart business."

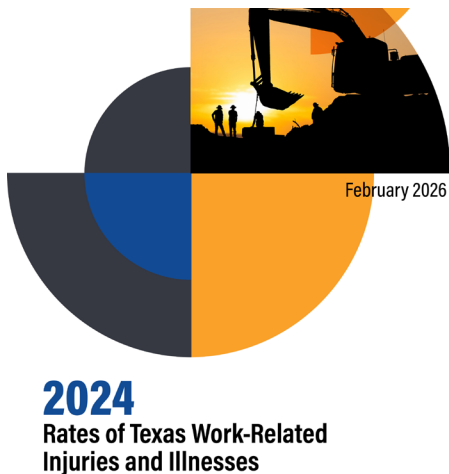
Get started today

Ray's team offers affordable, customized training and other workplace safety resources to meet your organization's needs. Contact DWC safety training specialists today to create a safer workplace, improve operations, and protect your most valuable asset: your people.

Learn more on DWC's workplace safety [webpage](#).

RECENT RESEARCH

2024 RATES OF TEXAS WORK-RELATED INJURIES AND ILLNESSES



About the report

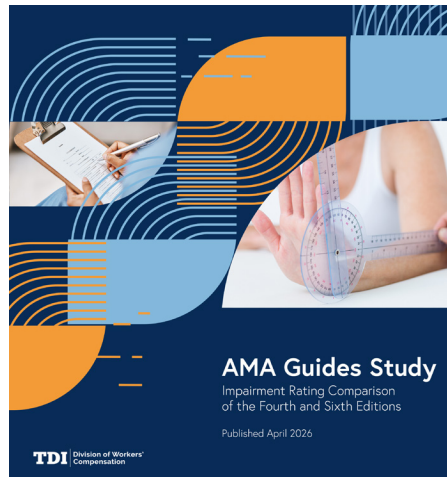
DWC gathers statistical data on nonfatal injuries and illnesses from a sample of private Texas employers based on their North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) codes. This Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII) is done each year in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Key findings

According to estimates from the 2025 SOII, private industry employers reported 172,800 recordable nonfatal cases in 2024. This represents an incidence rate of 1.7 cases per 100 equivalent full-time employees in Texas—the lowest rates in the last 10 years. The national rate is 2.3.

[Download the report.](#)

AMA GUIDES STUDY



About the report

The Texas Workers' Compensation Research and Evaluation Group (REG) compared impairment ratings (IRs) assigned by doctors using the 4th versus 6th editions of the AMA Guides. To understand how a transition to the 6th edition might impact system participants, the REG conducted a comparative analysis by randomly selecting 375 proportionally representative cases to be assigned a new IR using the AMA Guides 6th edition.

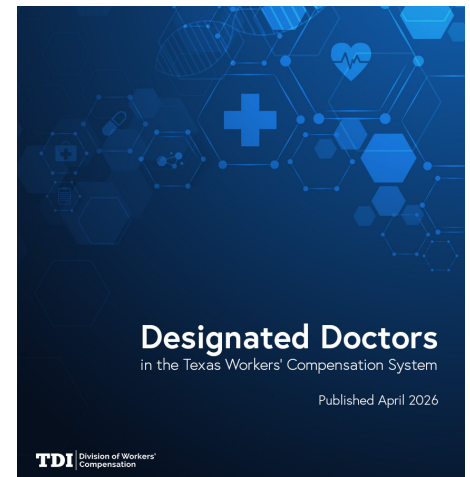
Key findings

From the 375 cases reviewed, 363 produced IRs under both editions. REG found that:

- 59% of cases received a lower IR when evaluated using the 6th edition.
- The average IR was 3.8% under the 6th edition.
- Overall, average IRs decreased by 1.6 percentage points when using the 6th edition.

[Download the report.](#)

DESIGNATED DOCTORS REPORT



About the report

REG analyzed DD performance in the Texas workers' compensation system between 2020 and 2024. The report evaluates key metrics such as rescheduled appointments, timeliness of reports, and other DD responsibilities.

Key findings

REG found that in 2024:

- There were 304 DDs: 209 working with an agent and 95 working independently.
- There were more than 13,000 appointment reschedule requests: 84% of these requests were due to DD unavailability.
- Over 98% of all DD IRs were upheld.
- Over 94% of DDs received a high or average PBO rating.

[Download the report.](#)

DWC Form-045

REQUEST TO SCHEDULE, RESCHEDULE, OR CANCEL A BENEFIT REVIEW CONFERENCE

The DWC Form-045 begins the Texas workers' compensation dispute resolution process. If parties can't agree about a claim, they can ask for a benefit review conference (BRC) using this form. Making sure to timely and accurately file this form is essential for efficient dispute resolution.

- Make sure you are using the correct form. Using the wrong form (such as DWC Form-045M or DWC Form-049) will delay processing.
- Clearly indicate whether you are scheduling, rescheduling, or canceling the BRC (Part 1). Select only one option. This ensures timely scheduling or cancellation of a BRC.
- Complete all required sections. Every part matters—missing or incomplete sections are a leading cause of delays.

- Clearly identify why you need the BRC (Part 4). Select only the issues that are truly in dispute. Provide enough detail so DWC understands the disagreement. Avoid selecting unnecessary issues or using "Other" if a listed option applies.
- Remember to complete Part 5 if you are requesting to reschedule or cancel a BRC. Provide sufficient information to explain your request and attach any supporting documentation. If sufficient information isn't provided, DWC will deny the request.
- Document efforts to resolve the dispute (Part 6). You must show what efforts were made to resolve the dispute before filing. Include specific details and attach supporting documentation such as emails,



letters, or call logs. Missing documentation will delay or prevent processing.

- Remember to sign and date the form. Unsigned forms are one of the most common reasons a DWC-045 cannot be processed.

ON YOUR RADAR

EARLY-BIRD REGISTRATION ENDS JUNE 30



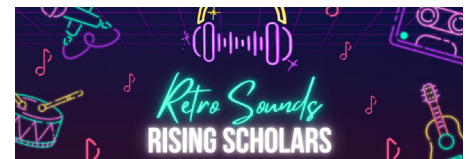
Chart your course early and save \$50! This year's conference, "Navigating the Path: From Basics to Mastery," offers a dual-track format designed to support newcomers and seasoned professionals alike. Register now on DWC's [website](#).

QUARTERLY STAKEHOLDER MEETING



Mark your calendars! Our next virtual quarterly stakeholder meeting is on July 22, 2026. [Sign up](#) to our email list to be notified of upcoming DWC events.

KIDS' CHANCE OF TEXAS FUNDRAISING CONCERT



Support Kids' Chance of Texas at their 1980s-themed fundraising concert after day one of our Texas Workers' Compensation Conference. Proceeds from the event will fund scholarships for the children of catastrophically or fatally injured workers. Learn more on KCTX's [website](#).