

Idaho Industrial Commission

# Strategic Plan

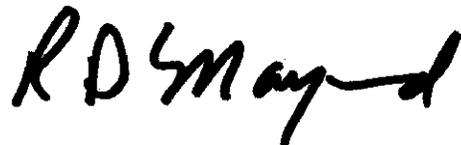
Fiscal Years Ending June 30, 2013 – June 30, 2017



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## Introduction

The Idaho Industrial Commission's strategic plan is a dynamic document that outlines the agency's top priorities and goals to effectively carry out the agency's mission. The planning process is collaborative, seeking input from Commission employees, managers and the three Commissioners that lead the agency. We recognize that circumstances change during the term of this plan, which may create a need for revised objectives, strategies, and measures. Therefore, the strategic plan is regularly reviewed and updated annually.

A strategic plan for the workers' compensation system, unemployment appeals, and crime victims compensation program is essential to ensure that all are meeting the specific needs of the people they serve. In addition to the overall agency strategic plan, many departments develop targeted strategic plans to set annual performance goals. The results of these plans are documented in a performance measurement report that is submitted to the Governor's office each September.

The Industrial Commission will continue its dedicated effort to communicate regularly with the Governor's office, constituents, industry representatives, members of the legislature, and the workers' compensation Advisory Committee as a means of ensuring the agency's goals and objectives are executed equitably, efficiently, and promptly.

## Our Mission

- To impartially and efficiently administer the Idaho Workers' Compensation Law in a manner that ensures compliance with insurance requirements, timely dispute resolution, prompt and accurate benefit payments, and quality vocational rehabilitation services for injured workers.
- To provide timely judicial review of appeals from the Department of Labor under the Employment Security Act.
- To assist innocent victims of crime recover from the devastating effects of crime by providing financial assistance in accordance with state and federal law.

## Values and Guiding Principles

Quality Customer Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Customers are our top priority, and we provide accurate information in a timely and professional manner.</li></ul>
Ethical Practices and Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•We strive to conduct our daily business in accordance with local, state and federal laws and judicial canons.</li><li>•We encourage our employees to take pride in their work and promote professional, respectful behavior.</li></ul>
Impartiality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•We are committed to maintaining neutrality in all interactions with our constituents and reviewing each situation objectively.</li></ul>
Challenging and Positive Work Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Our employees are our most valuable resource. We encourage teamwork, innovation, and progressive leadership.</li></ul>
Effective and Efficient Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•We use our resources responsibly, keeping in mind the "big picture" of the agency's goals.</li><li>•We strive to streamline our processes to save time and money, and to serve Idahoans most efficiently.</li></ul>
Accessible Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•In addition to our main administrative office in Boise, we maintain 11 field offices throughout the state so our customers have convenient access to timely and professional services and information.</li><li>•We constantly review our web site to ensure that information is current and accessible.</li></ul>

## Key External Factors and Challenges

- The slow economic recovery has had an impact on nearly every department in the agency. Some specific examples include:

The high number of unemployment insurance appeals has strained resources of our Adjudication Division;

Businesses are electing to drop workers' compensation insurance or improperly classify employees as independent contractors as a means of cutting costs;

Continued cost-cutting by insurance companies has led to more specialized and centralized claims adjusting operations, resulting in a loss of in-state authority and accountability;

Returning injured workers to work has become increasingly difficult due to decreased employment opportunities.

- Despite receiving funding for a 2% CEC merit increase and additional monies to specifically address salary equity to state peers, the Commission anticipates that it will continue to lose skilled employees to higher-paying positions in other state agencies and the private sector.
- There is growing uncertainty as to how national health care reform and Medicare as a secondary payor will impact both the Idaho's workers' compensation system and the Crime Victims Compensation Program.
- An increase in threatening behaviors has made it challenging to provide a safe and secure work environment for our employees.

## Adjudication Division

**FUNCTION:** Promotes the timely processing and resolution of disputed workers' compensation claims and medical fee disputes; provides an alternative method of resolving disputes through mediation; provides judicial review of unemployment insurance appeals from the Idaho Department of Labor; hears appeals from determinations made by the Crime Victims Compensation Program.

**GOAL 1:** *Decide disputes arising out of workers' compensation, unemployment appeals, and crime victims' compensation cases in timely fashion and pursuant to applicable law and judicial canons.*

### Strategies:

- Issue workers' compensation decisions within an average of sixty (60) days following the date a case is fully submitted.
- Successfully resolve ninety percent (90%) of mediated claims.
- Maintain an average age of pending unemployment insurance appeals of less than 40 days.
- Issue consistent and predictable decisions.
- Reduce the time between the request and the actual hearing.
- Improve system efficiency and accountability.

### Measurements:

- Monthly review of case management reports reflecting the department's performance.
- Customer feedback.
- Input from the Industrial Commission's Advisory Committee.
- Disposition of cases appealed to Idaho Supreme Court.

**GOAL 2:** *Establish statutes and rules that set reasonable fees for quality, timely and accessible medical services provided to Idaho's injured workers.*

### Strategies:

- Research studies by industry and other states to establish appropriate method for pharmacy reimbursement.
- Analyze market conditions to apply appropriate adjustments to medical fees.
- Provide outreach and education to payors and providers to ensure proper billing and payment practices.
- Participate with the Healthcare subcommittee of the Industrial Commission's Advisory Committee to develop recommendations for annual adjustments to the medical fee schedule and reduce disparity in service categories.

### Measurements:

- Average indemnity and medical costs for injured workers are maintained at the current level or are reduced.
- Workers' Compensation premiums remain stable.

- Resolve medical fee disputes within 60 days of filing.

## Compensation Division

**FUNCTION:** Evaluates insurance carriers requesting approval to write workers' compensation insurance and employers requesting approval to become self-insured; endeavors to ensure that adequate securities are on deposit with the State Treasurer's Office to cover claims liabilities; enforces the insurance requirements of the Idaho Workers' Compensation Law; ensures that workers' compensation benefits are paid properly and timely; provides educational opportunities to constituent groups; audits sureties; and resolves emergent issues between claimants and sureties on non-litigated claims.

**GOAL 1:** *Improve the exchange of information between internal and external customers.*

### Strategies:

- Implement mechanisms to gauge the usefulness of web site content.
- Update reciprocity agreements with surrounding states.
- Develop an electronic document management system for Commission records.
- Develop information sharing agreements with other state and federal agencies.
- Implement EDI Proof of Coverage Release 3 by July 1, 2013.
- Enhance coverage verification system to provide accurate claims administrator information.
- Implement a mandatory electronic record reporting requirement.
- Develop plans for implementation of EDI Claims Release 3.

### Measurements:

- Submit draft of proposed agreements to Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Utah, Wyoming and North Dakota by March 31, 2013.
- Establish links from NCCI's coverage verification system to the Industrial Commission Information System (ICIS) in order to display correct claims administrator information on website. Reduce number of incoming phone calls requesting claims administrator information.
- Implementation of EDI Proof of Coverage Release 3 results in more timely, complete claims information.
- Ensure attendance at IAIABC meetings to obtain critical information on EDI Claims Release 3.

**GOAL 2:** *Ensure all workers in the state are afforded the coverage required by law.*

### Strategies:

- Evaluate proof of coverage requirements for Professional Employer Organizations (PEO) to ensure better tracking of coverage for client companies.
- Establish a working group to evaluate and monitor efforts that are made at the state and federal level regarding misclassification of employees as independent contractors.

### Measurements:

- Complete recommendations for Commissioner review on PEO reporting requirements as well as issues regarding independent contractors.

**GOAL 3:**        *Protect injured workers by assuring the level of securities on deposit for insurance carriers and self insured employers is adequate to cover their outstanding liability for workers' compensation claims.*

**Strategies:**

- Collect annual financial statements from Self-Insured Employers to assess financial condition.
- Review claims history and risk retention levels for Self-Insured Employers through improved accountability in reporting.
- Require security deposits sufficient to cover outstanding claims awards in addition to the minimum deposit threshold for insurance companies.

**Measurements:**

- Security deposits exceed outstanding claims.
- Financial condition assessment of self-insured employers through an annual review of financial statements.
- Compliance with requests for additional securities.

**GOAL 4:**        *Enhance informational and educational opportunities for stakeholders regarding Idaho's Workers' Compensation Laws.*

**Strategies:**

- Provide training and outreach programs on the insurance requirements of Idaho's Workers' Compensation Law in all areas of the state.
- Educate medical providers and their personnel on the impact and importance of their role in the workers' compensation system.
- Continue offering the Certified Idaho Workers' Compensation Specialist (CIWCS) Program statewide.
- Conduct an annual workers' compensation seminar for workers' compensation professionals.
- Conduct training for accountants and insurance agents throughout Idaho.
- Develop a public service announcement covering the workers' compensation insurance requirements by January 1, 2013. Target newspapers and radio for communication.

**Measurements:**

- Reduction in the number of employer compliance cases referred for investigation.
- Review of training program evaluations, problem solving of issues, and implementation of solutions.
- CIWCS Program certifies eighty-five percent (85%) of participants.

## Rehabilitation Division

**FUNCTION:** Assists injured workers by supporting their medical recovery while facilitating a timely return to employment that is as close as possible to the worker's pre-injury status and wage.

**GOAL 1:** *Lessen the impact and challenges employers and injured workers face by early rehabilitation involvement.*

### Strategies:

- Implement marketing strategies to target employers that have experienced time-loss claims and could benefit from an informational appointment with a field consultant.
- Utilize current reporting data to identify and make direct contact with injured workers to educate them on rehabilitation services.
- Begin vocational planning and career exploration by utilizing available resources during the medical recovery period when time-of-injury employment is no longer an option.

### Measurements:

- The "Annual Report Breakdown by Referral Source" report will reflect the number of self-referring injured workers is increased to 10% overall and the number of employer referrals is increased to 15% overall.
- The number of rehabilitations reflecting that modified duty was implemented is increased indicating consultants are facilitating transitional work plans with employers.
- The time from injury to referral is decreased by 10% from the previous fiscal year.

**GOAL 2:** *Increase the vocational services provided to injured workers in medical recovery when it is known they will not return to work for their time-of-injury employer.*

### Strategies:

- Provide training to consultants that will further enhance their knowledge and help them to more successfully assist injured workers in returning to physically compatible employment.
- Identify individual trainers that demonstrate the highest levels of competency in communication, problem solving, vocational counseling, medical terminology, placement and marketing. Utilize their specialized skills to increase competency levels in field consultants.
- All staff will attend the Certified Idaho Workers' Compensation Specialist course.
- Utilize consultants that hold a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) to further train those who have not had actual experience in rehabilitation planning practices.
- Utilize training offered through other state agencies and community resources in topics pertinent to rehabilitation.

### Measurements:

- The Consultant Comprehensive Training Overview spreadsheet will document the training level of competency attained.
- Newer consultants (six month and one year) evaluations will reflect satisfactory or higher ratings.

- Regional Managers will note improved accuracy and proactive case management by consultants.
- Case closures will show an increase in cases where modified duty and return to work with new employers occurred.

## Crime Victims Compensation Program

**FUNCTION:** Provides financial assistance to victims of crime for health care and related expenses incurred as a result of criminally injurious conduct. The program also pays for sexual assault forensic examinations.

**GOAL 1:** *Pro-actively administer benefits in an efficient, timely and customer friendly manner.*

### Strategies:

- Quarterly quality assurance review of cases and analysis of customer satisfaction survey.
- Provide proactive services to recipients to ensure utilization of services.
- Utilize technology to streamline internal processes and increase productivity.

### Measurements:

- Review results of quality assurance reviews, take corrective action where needed and evaluate policies/procedures relating to areas of concern.
- Collect supporting documentation within forty five (45) days from receipt of application.
- Determine eligibility for benefits within thirty (30) days from receipt of supporting documentation.
- Contact and assess needs of each eligible victim within 35 days of eligibility.
- Review of monthly statistical management reports.
- Review feedback provided by customer satisfaction survey data, take appropriate action.
- Benefit utilization is maintained at seventy percent (70%).

**GOAL 2:** *Monitor funding sources to meet increased demand for services, and provide long term financial stability.*

### Strategies:

- Manage federal grants to ensure continued funding levels and provide input to the Office for Victims of Crime to enhance federal funding and benefits to victims.
- Coordinate with the Department of Probation and Parole to increase restitution collections to ensure satisfaction of court orders.
- Review budget expenditures biannually to ensure the medical fee schedule is sufficiently controlling medical and forensic exam expenditures.
- Enhance the CVCP Fund balance to ensure funding for future victims.
- Enhance recovery efforts by taking aggressive collection action against debtors.

### Measurements:

- Actively participate in the Quarterly VOCA Administrators Meetings to provide feedback that will affect future funding levels and benefit development.
- Increase communication to individual parole/probation officers regarding outstanding offender debts.

- Review benefit payments to treatment providers to ensure a twenty percent (20%) savings over billed amounts for services.
- Manage federal grant funding to maximize state dollars deposited in the Fund, increase recovery collections, and contain costs for medical services through the medical fee schedule.
- Implement monthly collections system for outstanding restitution debts.

**GOAL 3:**        *Respond effectively to increases in demand for victims' services and community education programs.*

**Strategies:**

- Enhance outreach activities and community presence. Identify alternative media to promote community/public education opportunities.

**Measurements:**

- Review of reports to evaluate timeliness of responding to requests for services.
- Distribute marketing products in public venues and locations serving victims of crime.
- Participate in statewide/local task forces, committees and projects to better understand individual community needs.