

IDAHO INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION



STRATEGIC PLAN

Fiscal Years

2021 to 2024

Revised August 28, 2020

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction, Agency Mission, and Vision.....	1
Values and External Factors.....	3
Core Department Functions.....	4
Agency Goal 1.....	5
Agency Goal 2.....	6
Agency Goal 3.....	7
Agency Goal 4.....	8
Agency Goal 5.....	9
Agency Goal 6.....	10
Crime Victims Compensation Program.....	11
Crime Victims Goal 1.....	12
Cybersecurity Addendum.....	13
Red Tape Reduction Act Addendum.....	13

LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

OUR MISSION

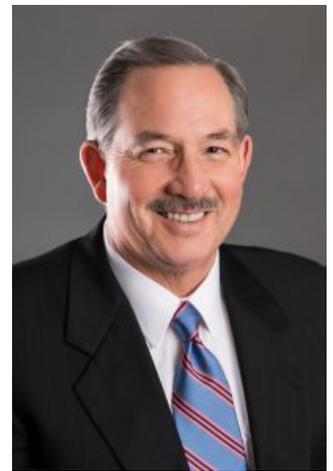
Fairly administer the Idaho Workers' Compensation Law.



Commissioner, Chairman
Thomas P. Baskin



Commissioner
Aaron White



Commissioner
Thomas E. Limbaugh

In March of 2020, SARS-CoV-2 abruptly interrupted the activities of every person, business entity, and organ of government. The Idaho Industrial Commission was not exempted from these impacts, and we expect that the pandemic will continue to affect the Worker's Compensation system, as claims, with their impact on costs and premium, work their way through the system.

As of August 20, 2020, 441 worker's compensation claims have been filed in the state by Idaho workers who contend they have contracted the virus in the course of employment. Not surprisingly, most claims have come from first responders, and hospital and long-term care facility workers. About 35% of claims filed have been denied by employers. As of August 20, 2020, approximately \$240,000 in medical benefits have been paid on accepted claims, and \$130,000 in indemnity benefits. There has been one reported fatality. The question of the compensability of infection in a particular case has not yet been litigated before the Commission.

Although the virus will continue to disrupt costs and the assessment of risk in the workers compensation system, it has nevertheless had some salutary effects on the way the Commission delivers services. In January of 2020, the Commission upgraded its computer operating systems from Windows 7 to Windows 10. This enabled the use of collaborative software such as Microsoft Teams, SharePoint and OneDrive, which have been integral to our ability to carry on business remotely. With the March 25, 2020 shut down, the Commission was able to provide all necessary services through employees working from home. We are extremely grateful to those of our employees who stepped into unknown territory and found a way to juggle the vagaries of the new normal with the need to continue to meet the expectations of our constituents.

The need to enable electronic filing of documents was always one of the drivers of our modernization project. However, in March of 2020, and over a year before its intended roll out, the Commission initiated electronic filing for all pleadings in litigated cases as part of the Commission's emergency response to the pandemic. All lump sum settlements are now processed electronically, and this critical work of the Commission has not been impeded by the pandemic. Our modernization project, approved last year by the legislature, is still the Commission's highest priority, and will give the Commission the ability to electronically store and manage the documents we now receive by email. The Commission has issued an invitation to negotiate to identify a technology integrator to adopt an off the shelf product (Microsoft Dynamics) to meet our needs.

This has been an exciting year, and it is barely half over. As set forth in this strategic plan, the Industrial Commission will meet core business needs and continue with planned modernization, notwithstanding the uncertainties created by the current crisis.

OUR VISION

Cultivate an Idaho Workers' Compensation system that is cooperative, supportive, and equitable for workers and employers in addressing the effects of workplace injuries and illnesses.

VALUES AND EXTERNAL FACTORS

Ethical Practices & Behavior

- We conduct our daily business per local, state and federal laws and the Idaho Code of Judicial Conduct
- We are committed to maintaining neutrality in all interactions with our constituents and reviewing each situation objectively
- We encourage our employees to take pride in their work and promote professional, respectful behavior

Quality Customer Service

- We strive to provide prompt service and accurate information
- In addition to our main administrative office in Boise, we maintain 10 field offices throughout the state, so our customers have convenient access to services
- We continuously review our website to ensure that content is informative, current, and accessible

Challenging & Positive Work Environment

- Our employees are our most valuable resource; we encourage mutual respect, teamwork, innovation, and progressive leadership

Effective & Efficient Operations

- We use our resources responsibly, keeping in mind the “big picture” of the agency’s goals
- We strive to streamline our processes to improve efficiency and serve Idahoans effectively

Key External Factors

- COVID-19 pandemic
- Changes to the economy and population affecting employment in Idaho
- Recruitment and retention of employees in a competitive labor market
- Idaho Supreme Court decisions
- Insurance industry business practices
- Loss of critical institutional knowledge through retirement and turnover
- Historical reliance on paper records

CORE DEPARTMENT FUNCTIONS

Adjudication Division

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; and hears appeals from determinations made by the Crime Victims Compensation Program.

(Title 72, Chapters 1-13, Idaho Code)

Compensation Division

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

(Title 72, Chapters 1-8, Idaho Code)

Rehabilitation Division

Assists injured workers by facilitating an early return to employment, which is as close to the workers' pre-injury wage and status that can be obtained.

(Title 72, Chapter 5, Idaho Code)

Crime Victims Compensation Program

Provides financial assistance to victims of crime for medical expenses, funeral costs, and lost wages that are incurred as a result of criminally injurious conduct. The program also pays for sexual assault forensic examinations.

(Title 72, Chapter 10, Idaho Code)

AGENCY GOAL 1:

Enforce the statutory and regulatory requirements of the Idaho Workers' Compensation Law

Objectives:

1. Ensure all workers in the state are afforded the coverage required by law.
2. Ensure that all insurance carriers and self-insured employers authorized in Idaho maintain adequate security deposits to protect injured workers.
3. Ensure the prompt and accurate payment of benefits to injured workers.
4. Establish statutes and rules that set reasonable fees for quality, timely, and accessible medical services provided to Idaho's injured workers.
5. Review Change of Status notices, Summaries of Payment, and Second Report of Injury maintenance type code final transactions in a timely manner.
6. Conduct periodic audits to ensure compliance with the Idaho Workers' Compensation Law.
7. Review and update as necessary reciprocity agreements with surrounding states.

Performance Measures:

1. Number of employers who obtained insurance as a result of Employer Compliance investigation
Benchmark: 1,700 employers¹
2. Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) filing submissions are successfully transmitted by June 30, 2022
Benchmark: 95%¹
3. Surety audits meet Commission Audit Guidelines
Benchmark: 100%¹

¹ This performance measurement is based on internal agency targets.

AGENCY GOAL 2:

Provide timely dispute resolution arising from workers' compensation, unemployment appeals, and crime victims compensation cases

Objectives:

1. Issue workers' compensation decisions promptly.
2. Resolve workers compensation claims through mediation when requested.
3. Complete pending unemployment insurance appeals within the time frame set by the U.S. Department of Labor.
4. Resolve medical fee disputes between payers and providers.
5. Develop and refine an electronic process for the approval of lump sum settlements.

Performance Measures:

1. Average number of days to issue a decision following the date a case is fully submitted
Benchmark: 90 days²
2. Percentage of successful mediated workers' compensation claims
Benchmark: 90%²
3. Average number of days to resolve medical fee disputes
Benchmark: < 90 days²
4. Number of days to process completed lump sum settlements
Benchmark: < 7 days²
5. Average age of pending unemployment insurance appeals
Benchmark: < 40 days³

² The agency is committed to expediting judicial matters, so we have set the worker's compensation, mediation, and medical fee dispute benchmarks accordingly.

³ The U.S. Dept. of Labor sets the unemployment insurance appeal benchmark of fewer than 40 days.

AGENCY GOAL 3:

Recruit and retain highly qualified employees

Objectives:

1. Reward high performers with merit-based bonuses and provide short-term merit increases during periods of increased responsibility.
2. Continually provide targeted training and developmental opportunities for employees to enhance their skills related to agency positions.
3. Target salary savings and CEC disbursement on classifications where the agency is experiencing the highest turnover, key personnel, and on those employees with low compa-ratios.
4. Monitor turnover rates monthly to identify trends and develop internal strategies and budgetary requests.
5. Conduct presentations to students and program directors in state educational programs on the employment opportunities available within the Industrial Commission.
6. In May of each year, managers will develop individual career growth plans for all of their employees to incorporate into their departmental training budgets.

Performance Measures:

1. Percentage of employee turnover
Benchmark: <20%⁴

⁴ The agency set this benchmark as an internal goal due to the high turnover rate the agency has experienced in the past couple years.

AGENCY GOAL 4:

Modernize the exchange of information with agency stakeholders

Objectives:

1. The IRIS (Industrial Commission Redesigned Information Systems) modernization project team will select a technology integrator from the Invitation to Negotiate by December 31, 2020.
2. Configure and implement a technology solution to meet the future vision of the agency.
3. Establish a record retention policy and storage solution to meet agency business requirements.
4. Implement process improvements and procedural changes to streamline workflows to provide reliable and accurate operations and consistent customer support.
5. Upgrade EDI Claims 3.0 to 3.1 in conjunction with IRIS.

Performance Measures:

1. Streamline business processes and customer interactions through new and improved technology solutions delivered through an agile methodology
Benchmark: <42 Months
2. Update agency record retention policies to reflect the implementation of a digitized storage solution
Benchmark: <42 Months
3. Upgrade EDI Claims 3.0 to 3.1
Benchmark: July 1, 2022

AGENCY GOAL 5:

Provide educational and outreach opportunities to agency stakeholders

Objectives:

1. Provide training and outreach programs on the insurance requirements of Idaho's Workers' Compensation Law in all areas of the state.
2. Educate medical providers and their personnel on the impact and importance of their role in the workers' compensation system, including proper billing and payment practices.
3. Enhance relationships with sureties and claims administrators through regular meetings and education.
4. Develop an electronic delivery method for the presentation of CIWCS instruction and materials.
5. Utilize webinar broadcasting whenever practical to reach all areas of the state.

Performance Measures:

1. Percentage of trainees that successfully certify as an Idaho Workers' Compensation Specialist
Benchmark: 75%

AGENCY GOAL 6:

Provide vocational rehabilitation services focused on restoring injured workers to gainful employment and minimizing loss for employers

Objectives:

1. Initiate contact with the injured worker early in the medical recovery process to provide vocational services with the time-of-injury employer and utilize transitional return to work planning.
2. Where return to work with the time of injury employer is not possible, assist injured workers to return to new employment by providing quality vocational services that minimize loss and restore the injured worker to as close as possible to their pre-injury status and salary.
3. Provide timely case management documentation throughout the vocational process to keep parties to the case informed.
4. Broaden educational outreach efforts to all referral sources, including, employers, medical providers, attorneys, and sureties.

Performance Measures:

1. Median number of days from referral to eligibility determination
Benchmark: <5 days⁵
2. Percentage of rehabilitation cases returned to their pre-injury employer in their original or modified duty position
Benchmark: >65%⁵
3. Percentage of rehabilitated workers maintaining their pre-injury status and wage
Benchmark: >90%⁵
4. Median number of days for completed case management documentation
Benchmark: <30 days⁵
5. Percentage of employer referrals for rehabilitation services
Benchmark: >15%⁵

⁵All performance measurements are based on internal targets established to ensure service delivery. The results are reflected in the Rehabilitation Division goal-oriented performance report and the agency performance measurement report.

CRIME VICTIMS COMPENSATION PROGRAM

OUR MISSION

Ensure eligible victims are provided appropriate financial assistance to aid in recovery from the traumatic effects of crime.

The CVCP funding comes from fines and penalties assessed on criminal convictions in Idaho, the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) Federal Grant Award, and restitution from offenders. The program provides financial assistance for reasonable expenses which are a direct result of a crime including:

- Payments for physician and hospital services, medicine, and other approved treatment
- Mental health treatment
- Counseling benefits for family members of victims
- Wage loss
- Dependent death benefits
- Funeral expenses
- Sexual assault forensic examinations (\$300,000 is appropriated by the Idaho General Fund to pay for adult forensic examinations)

Key External Factors

- Impact of COVID-19 work restrictions affects the program's ability to process applications and claims to meet the needs of crime victims.
- Uncertainty related to state funding streams through the criminal and civil court systems as statewide closures and service restriction limit court activity due to COVID-19.
- Potential changes to federal regulations that will impact federal grant funding and service delivery for crime victims nationally.
- Increases in sexual assault examination claims, resulting from recent statutory changes for payment of exams and funding.
- Continual increases in demand on state funding mechanisms to meet the service needs of crime victims and rising costs for services.
- Potential changes to protocols and standards of care, and funding sources for child sexual abuse forensic examinations.

CVCP GOAL:

Administer benefits to crime victims efficiently and responsibly

Objectives:

1. Provide timely payments for crime related expenses.
2. Provide case management to ensure eligible victims understand the benefits that are available to them.
3. Ensure sexual assault and abuse victims are not billed for forensic exams.
4. Inform victims of eligibility requirements.
5. Review restitution collections and financial reports monthly to monitor spending and collections to ensure the program stays within budget.
6. Provide education and assistance to mental health treatment providers on the new treatment plan and policy changes related to the elimination of the requirement to submit session notes for payment of mental health claims, to ensure efficient and timely payment of claims.
7. Manage federal grants to ensure continued funding levels and provide input to the Office of Victims of Crime to enhance federal funding and benefits to victims.
8. Provide outreach and training to sexual assault nurse examiners, examination providers, and child sexual abuse forensic interviewers to ensure accurate and timely payment of sexual assault exams.

Performance Measures:

1. Number of days to determine eligibility of crime victims' application form receipt of required documentation
Benchmark: <30 days⁶
2. Number of days to make the first payment from receipt of application for compensation
Benchmark: <120 days⁶
3. Number of days to make payment for sexual assault forensic examinations from receipt of Sexual Assault Examination Reimbursement Form
Benchmark: < 45 days⁷

⁶All benchmark targets are identified as objectives for this goal. These targets have been identified by the Crime Victims Compensation Bureau as internal production goals. The results are reported to the Office of Victims of Crime annually and are reflected in the agency performance measurement report.

⁷This benchmark target is established as a production goal after legislative changes were made in FY19 regarding how adult sexual assault forensic examinations are processed

CYBERSECURITY ADDENDUM:

Agency Progress on Executive Order 2017-02

As a technology customer of the Office of Information Technology Services (ITS) in the Governor's Office, we are using the cybersecurity systems and technical expertise in ITS to fulfill requirements related to Executive Order 2017-02. Staff from ITS were briefed on the NIST Core Framework, CIS Controls 1-5, and their plan for adoption of the NIST Cybersecurity Framework. We participate in DHR and ITS administered cybersecurity training, as awareness is a critical component of an effective cybersecurity program. As briefed by ITS staff, implementation of the CIS Controls 1-5 will be their responsibility for the systems they operate and, as technological tools applied to the computer systems, largely invisible to us as a customer. ITS, working through the multi-agency Incident Response Task Force, has developed an Incident Response Program in support of our agency.

RED TAPE REDUCTION ACT ADDENDUM:

Agency Progress on Executive Order 2019-02

The Industrial Commission undertook a comprehensive review of the rules because of the unique legislative landscape of 2019. The Commission's goal was to consolidate, clarify, and modernize the rules the agency and its stakeholders use. The Red Tape Reduction Act review resulted in three new re-numbered chapters that are easier to use, with centralized definitions and abbreviations for consistency, and modernized language for increased clarity.

- 13 Chapters were combined into a new total of 3 chapters
- 31,273 words were reduced to 19,858 words
- 506 restrictions were reduced to 403 restrictions
- 65 pages were reduced to 51 pages