



N.E.W

July 2002

DIRECTIONS

A Publication for Workers' Compensation Claims Pilot Employers

Workers' Compensation Division Debuts Telephonic, Internet Claims Filing Pilot Project

Workers' Compensation Division is kicking off a new pilot project that will allow employers to file injury reports over the telephone and via the Internet.

The pilot, which begins this month, is part of the Division's continuing efforts to provide superior customer service by reducing the amount of time that elapses between when an injury occurs and when a claim is received.

Historically, the average time from injury to receipt of a claim is approximately 40 days. It is the goal of the Division to reduce this number to 5 days with the new claim filing options.

"That's just too long to receive a claim," says Bureau of Employment Programs Commissioner Robert J. Smith. "To make the claims process better, we have to change the way we do business. In the past we have been processing claims; under the new system, we will now be able to manage claims."

By allowing employers to file claims electronically and over the telephone, the Division will be



Commissioner Smith encourages employers to participate in the Division's new claims pilot project.

able to issue a ruling on claims more quickly, and provide injured workers the care they need to return to work.

continued on pg. 2

Claims teams re-engineered to facilitate early return to work

Workers' Compensation Division is re-organizing its claims teams to help injured workers return to work faster.

The most notable difference in the claims team system will be the new Intake team. This team will accept claims filed via telephone on the Division's new toll-free line — (800) 926-2027 — which will be available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

At first, this team will only be available to employers who are participating in the new claims initiation pilot project. After completion of the pilot project, all employers will have the option of filing

their workers' compensation claims over the telephone. The Intake team will be supervised by Tina Strickland, district manager.

Under the new structure, all No-Lost-Time (NLT) claims will be sent to a team of managers who will expedite the NLT claims. This type of claim accounts for nearly 80 percent of all claims filed with the Division.

The remaining 20 percent of claims received by the division will be handled by its new Catastrophic Claims team, Post Award team, and its eight new Return-To-Work teams, which are organized by geographic regions.

continued on pg. 3

continued from pg. 1

Currently, claim forms are mailed between the injured employee, the medical provider, and the employer before being mailed or faxed to the Division. It often takes many weeks before the Division has the information it needs to issue a compensability ruling on a claim. Under the new system, whenever an injury occurs, the employer will have five days to file a claim with the Division. Employers will be able to go on-line or use a new toll-free telephone number to call in the claim information.

If the claim is a No-Lost-Time claim, the Division can issue a compensability ruling almost immediately. If the claim is a Lost-Time claim, it will be forwarded to the appropriate claims team and a three-point contact will be made to gather the needed information concerning the claim. Once this has been accomplished, a compensability ruling can be issued and the process of getting the injured employee the needed medical treatment to return to work can begin.

By separating the claims in this fashion, the Division will be able to manage claims more effectively, getting injured workers treated and back to work in a more timely fashion.

For questions about the pilot project, contact the Claims Information team at (800) 231-4850 or via e-mail at claimfiling@wvbep.org.

Security Not A Concern When Filing Claims Over Net

West Virginia Workers' Compensation Division is taking every precaution to assure the highest level of security for your data when filing claims electronically via the Internet.

The Division will assign employers passwords and PIN numbers to validate the identity of the person filing a claim over the telephone or on-line.

The Bureau of Employment Programs has consulted with some of the nation's leading Internet security experts to help protect sensitive data being transmitted over the Internet, according to Rob Norvell, director of Management Information Systems, while speaking at a recent employer meeting.



Who's in the Pilot Project?

The following companies and third-party administrators have agreed to participate in the Division's 90-day pilot.

Acordia (TPA)
 AEGIS Communications Group, Inc.
 AFG Industries, Inc.
 American Electric Power/Appalachian Power Co.
 Bombardier Service Corp.
 Capitol Cement Corp.
 Carr Concrete Corp.
 Charleston Area Medical Center, Inc.
 City of Clarksburg
 Comp-Trol (TPA)
 CSX Hotels, Inc., d.b.a., The Greenbrier
 Frank Gates (TPA)
 Frye Roofing
 G.A.R.M.I. (TPA)
 Greenbrier County Board of Education
 Houchens Industries, Inc.
 Perdue Farms, Inc.
 Personnel Temporary Services, Inc.
 Princeton Community Hospital Association, Inc.
 Terry Eagle Coal Co.
 United Hospital Center, Inc.
 Wal-Mart Associates, Inc.
 West Virginia Division of Highways
 WV Army National Guard
 WV Department of Health & Human Resources
 Wyoming County Board of Education

Employers Encouraged to participate in pilot program

Employers invited and who were unable to attend the previous Workers' Compensation Division's pilot project meetings can still participate in the new program.

To get involved, these employer should attend one of the upcoming meetings in which the Division will discuss the pilot program.

These meetings will be held July 10 at the Charleston Civic Center. The first meeting will run from 9 a.m. to Noon. The second meeting will be held from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more information, contact Jeannie Hensley at (304) 926-5237 or via e-mail at claimfiling@wvbep.org.

Good Bye WC-123! Hello WC-1, WC-2, WC-3

The newly designed WC-1, WC-2, and WC-3 will be replacing the old WC-123 for pilot employers when filing a report of injury. Employers participating in the pilot project will be able to order the new forms beginning July 1.

Return-To-Work Teams

Teams Under Jeannie Hensley, Associate Director, Claims

Ohio Valley Team

Betty McGhee, District Manager
Areas covered: Wood, Pleasants, Ritchie, Jackson, Wirt, Tyler, Wetzel, Brooke, Hancock, Ohio, and Marshall counties and the state of Ohio.

Logan Team

Bunny Harper, District Manager
Areas covered: Boone, Logan, Mingo, McDowell, and Wyoming counties.

Mountain Team

Evelyn Clark, District Manager
Areas covered: Upshur, Greenbrier, Monroe, Webster, Tucker, Randolph, Pocahontas, Pendleton, Braxton, and Nicholas counties and the state of Virginia.

Beckley Team

Leilani VanMeter, District Manager
Areas covered: Raleigh, Fayette, Mercer, and Summers counties.

Teams Under Connie Johnson, Associate Director, Claims

Huntington Team

Jan Tolliver, District Manager
Areas covered: Lincoln, Putnam, Mason, Wayne, and Cabell counties and the state of Kentucky

Charleston Team

Allen McKinney, District Manager
Areas covered: Kanawha, Clay, Roane, Calhoun, and Gilmer counties and non-bordering states

Eastern Panhandle Team

Paula Woodson, District Manager
Areas covered: Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Jefferson, Mineral, Morgan, and Berkeley counties and the states of Maryland and Pennsylvania

North Central Team

Theresa Jenkins, District Manager,
Areas covered: Harrison, Lewis, Marion, Monongalia, Taylor, Barbour, Preston, and Doddridge counties.

continued from pg. 1

These new teams will handle the approximately 15,000 claims filed annually that result in injured workers missing more than three days of work.

Each of the Return-To-Work teams will be supervised by district managers reporting to Associate Directors of Claims Jeannie Hensley and Connie Johnson.

The Catastrophic Claims team will be a unit of highly-experienced Deputy Claims Managers who have the necessary skills and experience to deal with these tragic injuries. Jill McCormick, district manager, will supervise this team.

The Post Awarded team will handle all claims that are closed for indemnity, and which only need authorizations for ongoing medications or treatment. Sharon Hanna, district manager, will oversee operation of the Post Award team.

Also new to the Division will be the Claims Information team supervised by Della Freshour, district manager. This team will provide customer assistance with most questions employers or claimants may have concerning their claims. The Claims Information team can be reached by calling toll free (800) 231-4850.

Safety and Loss Control Unit Can Provide Safety Consulting to Pilot Project Employers

When it comes to all aspects of putting together a comprehensive safety program, the Workers' Compensation Division's Office of Safety and Loss Control can meet all your needs.

This unit of the Division provides a broad spectrum of services, including research, education, publications, local information networks and on-site consulting. It offers expertise in industrial safety, construction, industrial hygiene and ergonomics.

The Safety and Loss Control Unit was established as a consultative service to inform, educate and assist employers in loss-prevention activities. It does not engage in enforcement of local or federal safety requirements.

The unit works to assist employers in reducing workplace accidents and injuries, and their associated costs. The Safety and Loss Control unit provides comprehensive services to assist employers in achieving outstanding safety performance.

Employers can receive a thorough assessment of technical and cultural factors; on-site consultation; identification of employer required resources; assistance in creating an appropriate, employer driven action plan; information on how to track and monitor the success of initiatives; and ongoing consultation with Division personnel.

Employers may ask for assistance with written safety programs, violence in the workplace programs, recordkeeping, and other programs that can help you improve your loss-prevention management.

The Safety and Loss Control Unit will help employers analyze their companies' injury history; provide program-design assistance; provide information on training, literature, web sites and other resources; and teach employers how to track program results.

For more information on services offered, contact the Safety and Loss Control office at (304) 746-0214 or toll free at (866) 825-1660.

A Publication of Workers' Compensation Division

DIRECTIONS

N.E.W.

