



STRATEGIC PLAN

Fiscal Year 2025

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MISSION & INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT

Fairly administer the Idaho Workers’ and Crime Victims Compensation Laws.

LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

The Idaho Industrial Commission (“Commission”) continues to honor its responsibilities to fairly administer Idaho Workers’ Compensation laws and the Crime Victims Compensation program, review employment security appeals, and provide rehabilitation services to return injured workers to their time-of-injury wages following an unexpected work injury. While the responsibilities are numerous and the challenges facing Idaho’s workers’ compensation system are complex, the Commission remains committed to serving employees and employers in our great state.



Commissioner, Chairman
Thomas E. Limbaugh

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST COMMISSIONER, CLAIRE SHARP

Governor Little appointed Claire Sharp to the Commission earlier this year, and the Commission welcomes and supports her leadership. Sharp earned her Juris Doctor from Brigham Young University in 2008 and has since demonstrated a commitment to public service and the legal profession. Sharp has a deep understanding of the Commission’s operations, and looks forward to serving in this new capacity. Notably, Sharp is the first woman appointed as Commissioner since Rachel Gilbert was appointed by Governor Phil Batt in 1995.



Commissioner
Aaron White

THE COMMISSION EMBRACES ITS STAKEHOLDERS AND ITS COMMITMENT TO IDAHOANS

We reaffirm the foundational “Grand Bargain” of 1917, in which labor and industry agreed to a statutory remedy for workplace injuries, thereby allowing sure and certain relief to injured workers and practical outcomes for Idaho employers. Our mission is to apply the wise principles of the historical “Grand Bargain” to modern challenges facing Idaho employees and employers and appropriately manage our additional statutory responsibilities.



Commissioner
Claire Sharp

The Commission is uniquely positioned to support innocent victims of crime through its Crime Victims Compensation Program (CVCP) and has accelerated its outreach, support, and advocacy for victims. During the 2024 Legislative Session, the Commission successfully reduced burdensome and unnecessary regulations in its CVCP through Governor Little’s Zero-Based Regulation (ZBR) Initiative. We are presently applying Governor Little’s ZBR to our



workers' compensation regulations and are leading negotiated rulemaking sessions throughout the state to improve our processes and increase efficiencies.

The Commission embraces engagement with our stakeholders in the workers' compensation industry and the CVCP community. This involvement has been crucial to reaffirming our commitment to those we aim to serve, as it allows our constituents to openly voice their concerns and help shape the direction in which the Industrial Commission operates. Furthermore, through these strengthened community connections, the Commission has operated with increased transparency by directly sharing staffing, policy, and process changes with those impacted by those changes, ultimately reaffirming our mission and values to all Idahoans.

THE COMMISSION'S IRIS PROGRAM

In January 2021, the Commission embarked on a strategic initiative to modernize its operations and enhance constituent services. The Commission collaborated with a local technology integrator to configure off-the-shelf software, replacing legacy business applications. The primary objectives were to establish digital document storage, streamline processes, and improve stakeholder interactions. The IRIS application underwent meticulous scoping, design, and implementation to ensure robust functionality.

Achievements So Far: To date, five out of the planned six modules have been successfully deployed. These modules cover critical functions such as case management, document handling, and data storage. The transition to electronic document storage and case tracking has significantly enhanced data accuracy and availability, providing valuable insights into stakeholder interactions. Minimized data entry and reduced duplication of work have streamlined overall operations, allowing staff to focus on value-added tasks.

Upcoming Milestones: The IRIS development team is actively working to complete the final module for the Crime Victims Compensation Program and to build out our stakeholder Portal. We anticipate these critical components of IRIS will be online later this fall. The IRIS portal functionality will target critical processes, providing stakeholders with convenient access to certain services, including online forms and case status tracking.

Future Focus: Project enhancements and additional process improvements for all IRIS modules are underway and will continue throughout the next year. This includes fine-tuning data import processes and administration functions. Our focus will then shift toward building comprehensive reporting tools that align with organizational goals and enhance productivity.

The Commission will continue communicating our IRIS progress to Governor Little, the Idaho Legislature, stakeholders, industry representatives, and the Advisory Committee on Workers' Compensation to support accountability and transparent governance. Transparency benefits all Idahoans, and we look forward to serving Idaho citizens through the Commission's mission and vision.



VISION & VALUES

VISION STATEMENT

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, and to meet the needs of crime victims by progressively, compassionately, and effectively easing the impact of crime.

INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION VALUES

Ethical Practices and 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 communication platforms to ensure that content is informative, current, and easily accessible

Effective and 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

Challenging and Positive Work Environment

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



IRIS MODERNIZATION PROJECT

Goal:

The IRIS modernization project will replace legacy business applications with digital solutions emphasizing customer service and creating data management and workflow efficiencies.

Objectives:

1. Facilitate design and implementation of new technology and business processes.
2. Finalize scope of work for IRIS enhancements for all departments

Performance Measures:

- Successfully meet the IRIS timeline and budget.
BENCHMARK: Completion of viable system modules for each department that meets functional data and system needs
- Successfully define scope of work for IRIS enhancements and execute a contract amendment with specified milestones that align with agency needs and fiscal responsibilities.

External Factors:

- Contract fulfillment by an external contractor.
- Competitive and rapidly changing technology environment.
- Availability of technological expertise to provide long term support.



FISCAL DEPARTMENT: REGULATORY COMPLIANCE

Goal:

The Fiscal department works to ensure regulatory compliance of insurance carriers and self-insured employers within the scope of Title 72 (Title 72, Chapter 3, Idaho Code).

Objectives:

1. Reviews applications and grants authority to insurance carriers to write workers' compensation insurance and to employers looking to become self-insured.
2. Ensures insurance carriers have adequate securities are on deposit with the State Treasurer's Office to cover outstanding workers' compensation liabilities.
3. Efficiently, accurately, and unbiasedly administer the Police Officer and Detention Officer Temporary Disability Fund.

Performance Measures:

- Review completed applications for self-insured status or to write workers' compensation in the state of Idaho.
BENCHMARK: Process applications in less than 30 days.
- Perform premium tax auditing of self-insureds.
BENCHMARK: Audit each self-insured once every four years.

- Audit security deposits of insurance carriers to ensure adequate coverage for outstanding liabilities.
BENCHMARK: Complete audit of each insurance carrier annually.
- Ensure proper administration and allocation of dedicated funds and timely processing of applications for benefits for the Peace Office and Detention Officer Disability Fund.
BENCHMARK: Monitor monthly collections from the courts and process applications for benefits in less than 30 days.

External Factors:

- Shifts in the insurance industry and the business economy.



ADJUDICATION DIVISION

Goal:

The Adjudication Division promotes the timely processing and resolution of disputed workers’ compensation claims and crime victims’ compensation cases; provides an alternative method of resolving disputes through mediation, and provides judicial review of unemployment insurance appeals from the Idaho Department of Labor (Title 72, Chapters 1-13, Idaho Code).

Objectives:

1. Provide timely dispute resolution arising from workers’ compensation claims, unemployment appeals, and crime victim compensation cases.

Performance Measures:

- Issue workers’ compensation and crime victim compensation case decisions promptly.
BENCHMARK: Less than 90-day average.
- Issue timely decisions on unemployment insurance appeals.
BENCHMARK: 40 days or less.
- Schedule mediations in a timely manner on requested workers’ compensation claim disputes.
BENCHMARK: 20 days or less.

External Factors:

- The Commission has no control over the number of cases filed. While it makes every effort to close all cases in a timely manner, the judicial process requires adequate time for discovery, presentation of evidence, and deliberation.
- Unforeseen economic events can potentially increase the volume of unemployment appeals.



BENEFITS ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Goal:

The Benefits Administration Department works to ensure workers’ compensation benefits are paid accurately and timely; resolve emergent issues between claimants and sureties on non-litigated claims; and maintain statutory claim records (Title 72, Chapters 1-8, Idaho Code).

Objectives:

1. Conduct audits of sureties and self-insured employers to ensure compliance with the Idaho workers' compensation statute and rules.
2. Maintain statutory claim records filed with the Commission.
3. Review settlement agreements and attorney charging liens in a timely manner.
4. Resolve medical fee disputes between payers and providers.
5. Ensure compliance of The Idaho Public Records Law, Idaho Code 74-101, by fulfilling records requests in a timely manner.
6. Conduct educational training and certification for workers' compensation professionals.

Performance Measures:

- Issue settlement agreement dismissals and attorney fee decisions timely.
BENCHMARK: 7 days or less
- Conduct surety and self-insured employer audits.
BENCHMARK: 12 audits per year
- Issue medical fee dispute decisions timely.
BENCHMARK: Less than 30 days following the 21-day response period
- Fulfill required records requests within the timeline set by statute
BENCHMARK: Less than 10 days
- Satisfy industry demands for Certified Idaho Workers' Compensation Specialist (CIWCS) courses.
BENCHMARK: Reduce the waiting period to less than 180 days.
- Offer Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Claims reporting training sessions.
BENCHMARK: 2 sessions per year

External Factors:

- The Commission has no control over the number of claims, settlement agreements, medical fee disputes, and records requests filed in a fiscal year.
- The availability of qualified workers' compensation professionals to support industry need and the Commission's need for qualified employees.
- Legislation introduced by external stakeholders could change our statutory responsibilities.



EMPLOYER COMPLIANCE DEPARTMENT

Goal:

The Employer Compliance Department enforces the insurance requirements of the Idaho Workers' Compensation Law; and provides educational outreach to help employers understand Idaho workers' compensation insurance requirements so they can protect their employees and their business in the event of a work-related accident or injury (Title 72, Chapters 1-8, Idaho Code).

Objectives:

1. Successfully bring uninsured employers into compliance with Idaho workers' compensation insurance requirements.

Performance Measures:

- Percentage of employers who became compliant with Idaho's workers' compensation insurance requirements as a result of an Employer Compliance inquiry or investigation.
BENCHMARK: Greater than 95% of investigated employers.
- Review Idaho Business Registrations to ensure new businesses obtain required coverage as a result of educational outreach and the investigation process.
BENCHMARK: Greater than 90% of new businesses.

External Factors

- The implementation of the Industrial Commission's Redesigned Information System (IRIS) has resulted in redesigning how department personnel and processes are structured. This has resulted in better access and ability to process and ensure employers have proper workers' compensation insurance.
- The growth of new businesses in Idaho has challenged existing staff and resources to handle the volume of compliance investigations and related work.



REHABILITATION DEPARTMENT

Goal:

The Rehabilitation Division assists injured workers by facilitating an early return to employment, as close as possible to their pre-injury wage and status (Title 72, Chapter 5, Idaho Code).

Objectives:

1. Provide injured workers with appropriate vocational services that allow them to return to work and restore them, as close as possible, to their pre-injury wages.
2. Provide early interaction with injured workers and employers to design the best vocational plan to return the injured worker back to work.

Performance Measures:

- Assist eligible injured workers in returning to work.
BENCHMARK: Greater than 65% of eligible injured workers.
- Assist injured workers returning to work in obtaining wages as close to their pre-injury wage as possible.
BENCHMARK: Injured workers are returned to 90% of their wages.
- Ensure timely eligibility determination.
BENCHMARK: Less than 5 business days from referral date.

External Factors:

- Rising cost of housing, transportation, and access to technology has made it difficult to identify sustainable employment opportunities for workers. These factors are more exacerbated in rural communities.

- Employers continue to report that injured workers do not possess the required skills to transition to other employment opportunities and/or industries statewide.
- Economic circumstances are making it difficult for injured workers to find employment at higher wages than their pre-injury wages.



CRIME VICTIMS COMPENSATION PROGRAM

Goal:

The Crime Victims Compensation Program (CVCP) assists victims of crime with costs related to treatment for injuries (medical, mental health, funeral, and wage loss) sustained as a result of a crime and for sexual assault forensic examinations.

Objectives:

1. Issue timely payments for sexual assault forensic examinations.
2. Provide timely payments of crime-related expenses.

Performance Measures:

- Process eligible victims' claims timely.
BENCHMARK: Issue payment within 120 days of receipt of application.
- Issue timely payment of sexual assault forensic examination claims
BENCHMARK: Less than 45 days from receipt of application.
- Timely determination of eligibility for benefits for crime victims.
BENCHMARK: Make eligibility determination of the application within 30 days of receipt of the required information

External Factors:

- Diminishing federal grant funding limits victims services throughout the state, and increases requests to the program for assistance from victims without local resources.
- Rising costs of medical services.
- Potential for large mass casualty events and CVCP's ability to respond effectively with limited staff.
- Increasing requests for non-traditional care and services.



ZERO-BASED REGULATION

In response to Governor Little's Executive Order 2020-01, the Industrial Commission is continually working towards preventing and eliminating the accumulation of costly, ineffective, and outdated regulations and reducing the regulatory burden to achieve a more efficient government operation.

CRIME VICTIMS COMPENSATION PROGRAM ADMINISTRATIVE RULES, IDAPA 17.10.01

In 2023, the Commission reexamined the Crime Victims Compensation Program administrative rules, which had not been reviewed since 2010. During this review, the Commission recognized the need to update the language in the

rules, and wanted to seek stakeholder input on potential changes.

Objectives:

1. Engage with our stakeholders throughout the state to identify outdated and burdensome regulations and to identify methods to improve accessibility and administrative efficiency.

Performance Measurement:

- Conduct six stakeholder engagement meetings throughout the state to get stakeholder input on current issues and needs.
BENCHMARK: Conduct in-person engagement meetings utilizing virtual platforms for those who cannot attend in person.
- Promulgate rules to the 2024 Legislative Session
BENCHMARK: Present rules to the Legislature and implementation of streamlined rules

ADMINISTRATIVE RULES UNDER THE WORKERS' COMPENSATION LAW, IDAPA 17.01.01

During the fourth quarter of 2023, the Commission began reexamining the Idaho Workers' Compensation Administrative Rules. During this review, the Commission recognized the need to update the language in the rules, and wanted to seek stakeholder input on potential changes.

Objectives:

1. Engage with our stakeholders throughout the state to identify outdated and burdensome regulations and to identify methods to improve accessibility and administrative efficiency.

Performance Measurement:

- Conduct five stakeholder engagement meetings to get stakeholder input on current issues and needs.
BENCHMARK: Conduct in-person engagement meetings utilizing virtual platforms for those who cannot attend in person, and hosting virtual participation sites in our Commission field offices for those that do not have internet access.
- Promulgate rules to the 2025 Legislative Session
BENCHMARK: Present rules to the Legislature and implementation of streamlined rules