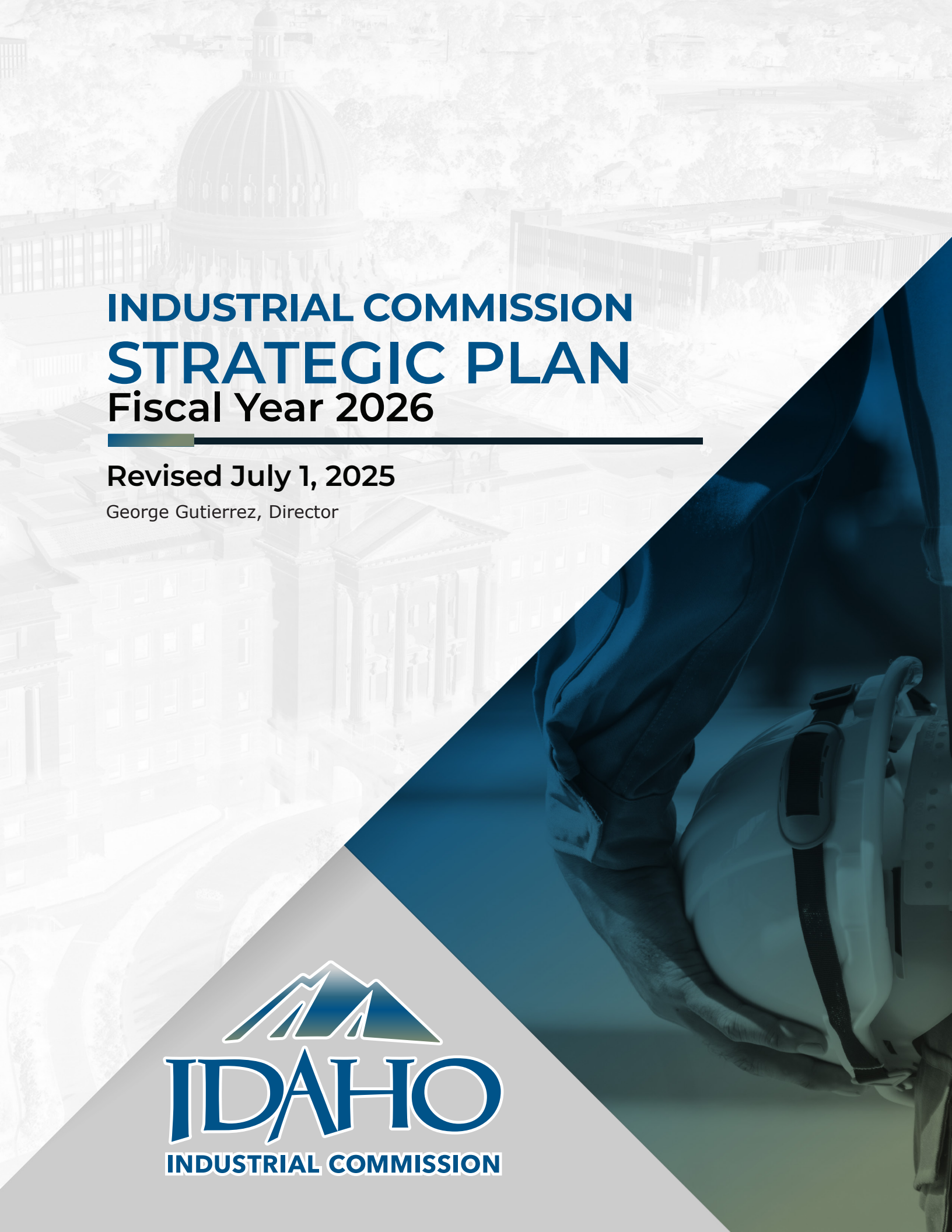




INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION STRATEGIC PLAN

Fiscal Year 2026

Revised July 1, 2025

George Gutierrez, Director





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission & Introduction.....	3
Vision & Values	5
IRIS Modernization Project.....	6
Fiscal Department: Regulatory Compliance	7
Adjudication Division.....	8
Benefits Administration Department.....	9
Employer Compliance Department	10
Rehabilitation Department	11
Crime Victims Compensation Program	12
Idaho Code Cleanup.....	13



MISSION & INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT

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

LETTER FROM THE COMMISSIONERS

The Idaho Industrial Commission was established in 1917 with the "Grand Bargain"—a foundational agreement that removed workplace injuries from private litigation and created a statutory remedy to protect both labor and industry. Since then, our role has evolved to meet the needs of a growing state. Today, we administer Idaho's Workers' Compensation laws and the Peace Officer and Detention Officer Temporary Disability Fund, oversee the Crime Victims Compensation Program, provide impartial appellate review of Employment Security Act cases, and offer rehabilitation services to help injured workers return to their pre-injury wages.

In fulfilling this mission, the Commission actively collaborates with our Advisory Committee on Workers' Compensation, legislators, stakeholders, and representatives from both labor and industry across the state.

Externally, 2025 marked a year of significant legislative progress. In partnership with the Governor's Office and legislators, the Commission proposed and helped pass several updates to Idaho Code:

- **Notice of Hearing (§72-713):** Allows hearing notices to attorneys via email, while unrepresented individuals continue to receive certified mail with the option to opt into electronic notification.
- **Funeral Benefits (§72-436):** Increases the burial allowance from \$6,000 to \$10,000, removes geographic transport restrictions, and clarifies inclusion of transportation costs.
- **Liability for Failure to Secure Compensation (§72-319):** Clarifies that LLC members may be held liable when their company fails to carry required workers' compensation insurance.
- **Definition of "Family Member" (§72-102):** Moves and standardizes the definition for consistent application across the statute.

Looking ahead, our legislative efforts will continue through the Idaho Code Cleanup Act.



Commission Chair
Claire Sharp



Commissioner
Thomas E. Limbaugh



Commissioner
Aaron White

Internally, we advanced our IRIS business system modernization project. With our legacy systems at end-of-life, we seized the opportunity to improve operations through digital document storage and web portals that enhance constituent access. Five of six required applications—covering all workers’ compensation modules—are now complete. In June 2025, we launched the sixth application for our Crime Victims Compensation Program and are finalizing the remaining items under the original contract. IRIS 2.0 has further improved efficiencies in data processing, document storage, and reporting capabilities. We expect full project completion by March 2026.

We remain committed to open communication with Governor Little, the Legislature, stakeholders, and the Advisory Committee on Workers’ Compensation—and to keeping our focus on delivering justice, accountability, and meaningful service to the people of Idaho.

THE COMMISSION’S IRIS PROGRAM

In January 2021, the Commission embarked on a strategic initiative to modernize its operations and enhance constituent services. Collaborating with a local technology integrator, the Commission configured off-the-shelf software to replace 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, all six of the planned 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 launched the Crime Victims Compensation Program’s module in early June 2025 and is actively working on final application adjustments and building out the stakeholder portal. The portal functionality will target critical processes, providing stakeholders with convenient access to services, including online forms and case status tracking. We anticipate these components will be completed by the end of summer 2025.

Future Focus: Project enhancements and additional process improvements for all IRIS modules are underway and will continue throughout the Spring of 2026. These enhancements comprise 31 specific milestones that fine-tune data import processes, administration functions, and build 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 that emphasize customer service and create data management and workflow efficiencies.

Objectives:

1. Facilitate the design and implementation of new technology and business processes.
2. Complete viable system modules and enhancements for each department.

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 complete IRIS enhancement phases and milestones.

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 completed 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.
- Prompt scheduling of expedited and emergency hearings in contested workers compensation cases.
BENCHMARK: Schedule hearing to be conducted within 45 days of hearing request.

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 the injured worker and employer to design and implement the best vocational plan to return the injured worker to work.

Performance Measures:

- Percentage of eligible injured workers who returned to work.
BENCHMARK: Greater than 70% of eligible injured workers.
- Percentage of pre-injury wages restored for injured workers who returned to work.
BENCHMARK: Greater than 90% of wages are restored.
- Ensure timely eligibility determination.
BENCHMARK: Less than 10 business days from the referral date.

External Factors:

- Increased costs in housing, food, and transportation, as well as access to technology, has made it difficult for workers to identify sustainable employment opportunities at wages comparable to their pre-injury wage. 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.
- Of the cases referred to the Rehabilitation Division since FY2023, there has been a 48% increase in the number of claimants who are represented by attorneys. This presents challenges for field consultants with communication, stakeholder coordination, and providing timely and effective return to work services.



CRIME VICTIMS COMPENSTATION 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.



IDAHO CODE CLEANUP

In response to the passage of the Idaho Code Cleanup Act in the 2025 Legislative Session, I.C. § 67-3701 et seq., the Industrial Commission is conducting a comprehensive review of Idaho statutes under its purview, including subjects such as worker's compensation, crime victims' compensation, and police officer and detention officer temporary disability. The Commission's examination is focused on fulfilling the purpose of the Idaho Code Cleanup Act: finding and removing unnecessary complexities and bureaucratic processes.

Objectives:

1. Review statutes entrusted to the Industrial Commission's administration for unnecessary, obsolete, outdated and code provisions subject to the Idaho Code Cleanup Act, and provide a report of results to the Idaho State Legislature.
2. Initiate legislation to repeal or amend statutes which have been identified as unnecessary, obsolete, or unnecessary pursuant to the Idaho Code Cleanup Act.

Performance Measurement:

- Complete statutory review according to agency guidelines and identify statutes subject to the Idaho Code Cleanup Act.
BENCHMARK: Draft and submit a legislative report to the legislative services office identifying statutes subject to the Idaho Code Cleanup Act in compliance with I.C. § 67-3704 no later than September 1, 2025
- Prepare agency legislation repealing and amending statutes subject to the Idaho Code Cleanup Act utilizing the Executive Agency Legislation process.
BENCHMARK: Complete the Executive Agency Legislation process and promulgate resulting legislation to the 2026 Legislative Session.