

February 2019

Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation

BWC eNews

See you at OSC19!



The countdown to [2019 Ohio Safety Congress & Expo \(OSC19\)](#) is on. We hope to see you in Columbus March 6-8 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center for the latest workplace safety and health training, education and resources.

“There is no better conference for Ohio employers seeking to strengthen their safety programs and rally their workforce to a safety-first mindset,” said BWC Administrator/CEO Stephanie McCloud. “Every employer should consider attending to learn the latest on injury prevention, rehabilitation and return-to-work strategies, all critical to containing workers’ compensation costs.”

McCloud will open the conference at 9:30 a.m. Wednesday during the first General Session. Other scheduled keynote speakers include:

- Michael Nelson, Jr., vice president of Technical & Production at Nestlé USA — Nelson will discuss the critical role workplace safety and health plays in the

company's quest to offer high-quality products that are essential to living well.

- Collette Carlson, founder of Speak Your Truth, Inc. — Carlson will discuss connecting and communicating to form crucial relationships that drive productivity, engagement and collaboration.

There is no fee to attend OSC19, which includes [more than 200 educational sessions](#) presented by experts from across the country. Live demonstrations include proper [chainsaw felling techniques](#), [fire extinguisher use](#), [cooking with fire](#) and [working with electricity](#). In addition, an expo marketplace will also host 300 exhibitors.

Registration is available at ohiosafetycongress.com.

Follow Safety Congress on Twitter: [@OhioBWC](https://twitter.com/OhioBWC) #OSC19.

BWC proposes 20 percent private employer rate decrease

BWC proposed a 20 percent reduction in average premium rates for private employers. This would be the largest cut in nearly 60 years if approved by the BWC's board of directors next week.

BWC Administrator/CEO Stephanie McCloud told board members fewer workplace injuries and falling estimates of future medical costs are driving her recommendation to lower rates for the ninth time since 2008.

"We're pleased Ohio employers recognize that workplace safety is vital to the health of their workforce, their businesses and our state's economy," said McCloud.

"Their efforts to promote safe and healthy workplaces are clearly paying off, and they're making it easier for us to maintain low and stable workers' compensation rates now and into the future."

The rate reduction would be effective July 1 and save private employers \$244 million over premiums for fiscal year 2019.

The proposed 20 percent rate cut represents an average statewide change. The actual premium paid by individual private employers depends on a number of factors,

including the expected future claims costs in their industry, their company's recent claims history and their participation in various BWC rebate programs.

BWC pledges additional \$500,000 to help law enforcement purchase body armor

BWC is committing an additional \$500,000 to fund the Attorney General's Ohio Law Enforcement Body Armor Program.

"I'm happy that we're able to continue our support of local law enforcement officers through this program," said Governor Mike DeWine. "Law enforcement officers put their lives at risk on a daily basis, and these additional funds will outfit even more Ohio officers with body armor to help protect them as they protect their communities."

The Ohio Law Enforcement Body Armor Program was created by Governor DeWine in August, while he was Attorney General. It allows local law enforcement agencies to receive up to \$40,000 per agency to purchase body armor vests with a local match of 25 percent. BWC pledged funding for the program after announcing it would dedicate a portion of its Safety Intervention Grants to prevent injuries and fatalities among law enforcement officers.

"Over the last six months, BWC has committed \$2 million to help 250 law enforcement agencies across Ohio," said BWC Administrator/CEO Stephanie McCloud. "The additional \$500,000 we are announcing today will help protect even more men and women in law enforcement."

"Body armor is the cheapest life insurance we ever buy, and we know it works and saves lives," said Attorney General Dave Yost. "I've been to too many law enforcement funerals and hope never to have to attend another. I commend Administrator McCloud and Gov. DeWine for their continuing leadership in this important life-saving investment."

Interested law enforcement agencies may apply for the program through an application form available through the Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway. Questions about the

program should be directed to the office of the [Ohio Attorney General](#).

Scioto County receives \$50k under workplace recovery program

Scioto County received \$50,000 this month under BWC's new Substance Use Recovery and Workplace Safety Program that helps employers hire and retain workers recovering from drug addictions. Scioto County is the first county to receive funding under the \$5 million program that launched in October. It currently covers three counties, Montgomery, Ross and Scioto, but Governor Mike DeWine recently proposed expanding the program to help employers in other parts of the state. He is requesting \$15 million in the BWC's fiscal year 20-21 budget.

"This state has been hit hard by our nation's opioid crisis, and that goes for our employers, too," said BWC Administrator/CEO Stephanie McCloud. "We're hopeful this program can lift some of the administrative burden employers face in finding and retaining qualified, drug-free workers to fill vacant jobs. We believe this program will lead to safer, more productive workplaces."

The Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board serving Scioto County will administer the funds to support 10 local employers that have applied so far to participate in the program. The funding will cover the following services for the first quarter of calendar year 2019:

- Reimbursement for pre-employment, random and reasonable suspicion drug testing;
- Training for managers/supervisors to help them better manage a workforce that includes individuals in recovery;
- A forum/venue for "second-chance" employers to share success stories that will encourage others to hire workers in recovery.

The role of ADAMHS boards in the participating counties is to identify eligible employers and employees, disperse funding and measure results. Employers pay for expenses up front and apply to the boards for

reimbursement. The program applies to workers recovering from any dangerous substance, not just opioids.

For more information, contact BWC at BWCOpioiWorkplaceSafetyProgram@bwc.state.oh.us or the ADAMHS boards in the following counties:

- Montgomery Co. ,937-443-0416, MCOWSP@mcadamhs.org
- Ross (Paint Valley), 740-773-2283, contactus@pvadamh.org
- Scioto, 740-354-5648, alsbd@adamhsals.org

BWC eBriefs

Assignment of claim numbers

Over the years, BWC has used different data elements to assign claim numbers. Each claim number is a unique identifier for the claim. BWC's new claims-management system uses the year the claim entered the claims-management system rather than the year of the injury as the first two numbers of the claim number. It is important to remember that all documentation submitted to BWC for that specific claim must contain that claim number.

Employer webinar Feb. 28

Our next employer webinar will be Thursday, Feb. 28 at 11:30 a.m. Join us for important information on a number of topics, including policy reminders and important dates, the Better You, Better Ohio! health and wellness program, the Policy Activity Rebate Program, buying and/or selling a business, an Ohio Industrial Commission overview and our monthly safety tip.

Register to attend [here](#) and visit the [Employer webinars](#) page to view recorded presentations from past webinars.

Safety Update

February is American Heart Month, a great time to make healthy changes that can lower your risk of developing heart disease. Check out the [February Safety Update](#) for details, and links to the latest health and safety news.

PAR deadline extended

The private employer enrollment period for the [Policy Activity Rebate \(PAR\) Program](#) has been extended to Feb. 28.

Employers can receive a 50-percent premium rebate, up to \$2,000, for promoting a safe work environment, and improving claims and policy management. Employers must complete 11 credits by choosing from [33 activities](#).

Go to the [enrollment service offering](#) to sign up.

The enrollment period for public employers runs through July 31, 2019.

Registration open for BWC's Medical & Health Symposium, April 26 – 27

Ohio providers are invited to BWC's fourth annual Medical & Health Symposium focusing on *Comprehensive Care for an Injured Worker*. By attending providers will have access to state and national medical experts. They will speak on topics such as chemical dependency; medical marijuana; opioids; traumatic brain injuries; patient collaboration and chiropractic care.

We also offer an educational track, the provider staff forum, specially designed for medical office staff who manage the day-to-day operations of workers' compensation processes and workflows.

Learn more about the symposium and register to attend [here](#).

Be your own **GUARDIAN ANGEL!**

Don't let safe habits slip at work and at home



Learn more at

BeSafeOhio.com



Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation
30 W. Spring St.
Columbus, Oh 43215

Questions? Call 1-800-644-6292
or visit us on the web www.bwc.ohio.gov

Like

Tweet

Forward

[Preferences](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)