

From: Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation
Sent: Wednesday, February 28, 2018
Subject: RepConnect - February 2018



Cincinnati Office has Moved

Effective Jan. 16, 2018, the new office location and address is:
Cincinnati Claims Office
135 Merchant St.
Springdale, OH 45246

All phone numbers are the same.

- Claims – 1-800-644-6292
- Employer Services – 513-583-4403

Lump sum settlement – Intent to Settle process

BWC is implementing a new process for the settlement of claims. Substitute House Bill (HB) 27, effective Sept. 29, 2017, made changes to [Ohio Revised Code \(ORC\) 4123.512](#). Known as Intent to Settle, the changes allow a claimant or employer to attempt to settle a claim rather than appeal a final Ohio Industrial Commission (IC) decision into court.

Within 30 days of receipt of the final IC order, either party may file a *Notice of Intent to Settle* (C-512) with BWC. The filing party must serve the notice on the opposing party. Unless the opposing party files an objection within 14 days, BWC extends the time to file an appeal to 150 days. This extension gives the parties an opportunity to settle in lieu of appealing the decision into court.

[ORC 4123.65](#) governs settlements initiated through this new process. Thus, they are subject to the same requirements as administrative settlements, including employer notice and signature where necessary and approval by the IC.

According to uncodified language from Substitute HB 27, this new process only applies to claims arising on or after Sept. 29, 2017.

To file, please send the C-512 via:

Fax: 614-621-3395;

Mail: Legal Division, Employer Services Support and Settlements Unit, 30 W. Spring Street, 26th floor, Columbus, Ohio 43215.

Alternative dispute resolution imaged documentation change

In the past, BWC has required managed care organizations (MCOs) to send alternative dispute resolution (ADR) reports separate from ADR packets. Effective immediately, BWC is asking MCOs to include ADR reports with the ADR packet. This ensures all ADR-related information for a specific treatment issue is in one packet, allowing easy access to customers.

BWC's new lumbar fusion rule now in effect

BWC's new lumbar fusion rule went into effect Jan. 1, 2018. The new rule requires conservative care for injured workers prior to lumbar fusion surgery.

Under the [new rule](#), injured workers will undergo at least 60 days of comprehensive conservative care before they can consider a lumbar fusion surgical option. Conservative care options include rest, physical therapy, chiropractic care, anti-inflammatories, ice and other non-surgical treatments.

The new rule's goals are to:

- Incorporate current best clinical practices in the treatment of lumbar injuries prior to a fusion surgery;
- Educate injured workers about treatment options for allowed lumbar conditions;
- Promote at least 60 days of comprehensive conservative care;
- Provide criteria for when lumbar fusion surgery may be necessary.

The following are prerequisites for authorization for lumbar fusion surgery:

- At least 60 days' trial of conservative care;
- A health and behavior assessment;
- Review of, and signed acknowledgement of, the informed decision-making document [What BWC wants you to know about Lumbar Fusion Surgery](#) by the injured worker, physician of record and surgeon;
- Medical evaluation of risk factors related to the surgery;
- Documentation of specific medical and surgical indications for the surgery.

Exceptions include conditions that require more immediate intervention such as spinal fractures, tumors, infections and progressive functional neurological deficits. The rule is not meant to preclude, or substitute for, the surgeon's responsibility to exercise sound clinical judgment considering current best medical practices when treating injured workers.

Ohio Safety Congress & Expo offers free CLEs

Registration is now open for the [Ohio Safety Congress & Expo 2018 \(OSC18\)](#). Safety congress is the largest regional safety and health conference in the U.S. However, it's not just about workplace safety.

Attendance is FREE for this three-day event happening March 7-9 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. It provides [several classes offering free continuing legal education](#).

Each year thousands of attendees come to safety congress to learn from expert presenters from across the country covering topics related to:

- Occupational safety and health;
- Workers' compensation trends;
- Controlling claims costs;
- Medical treatment of injured workers.

Additionally, the Expo Marketplace features hundreds of exhibitors and representatives from BWC. Register for OSC18 [here](#).

BWC prepares to launch new website

Better look and navigation provide better experience

As part of our ongoing efforts to improve the customer experience, BWC will soon launch

a new website. We developed the site with input from users, and it promises a better customer experience through better design, easier navigation and more relevant content. It replaces the current site that dates to 2000. We expect the site, which will remain [bwc.ohio.gov](https://www.bwc.ohio.gov) [<https://www.bwc.ohio.gov/>], to go live in the coming weeks.

Visitors to BWC's new homepage will find the most-requested information right up front, as well as easy pathways based on our main users, including workers, employers and providers. Regardless of which page you're on, the navigation is consistent and easy to follow. You'll always link to the most requested services, commonly asked questions, featured resources, news and events.

One challenge with our existing site has been the sheer volume of information. While virtually everything you might ever want to know was there, it could be difficult to find and sift through. In designing the new site, our philosophy has shifted from "more is better" to organizing the content to provide the most relevant information upfront. The result is content that is easier to find and understand.

The first changes users will notice will be the new look, along with new content that customers see prior to logging in. Later this year, we'll change the content and services that exist after logging in. Until then, customers will still be able to conduct those transactions on the new site, using the existing service offerings.

The biggest impact on long-time users will be the loss of bookmarks. Because the content and navigation are changing significantly, there will be no automatic redirecting or roadmap to the new content. If you do visit our website often, we encourage you to take some time to explore the new site once it goes live. We are also working on a video tour of the new site for when it launches.

While we're still finalizing the new look and content, here's a sneak peek of where we're headed!



Making workplaces safer.
Helping injured workers recover.
Providing service and savings
for Ohio businesses.

File a Claim

Apply For Coverage

Find a Certified Provider

The information you need **when** you need it

Our portal is designed to show the information you are looking for with a minimum effort. Are you a Worker, or are looking for Safety Training Classes? Are you an Employer or are you looking for Certified Providers? You can start your journey based with the type of information you are looking for.





Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation
30 W. Spring St.
Columbus, Oh 43215-2256

Questions? Send us an email reconnect@bwc.state.oh.us

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