



FALL 2020

CompNotes

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) is issuing a \$5 billion dividend to ease the financial pressures your organization may be experiencing amid the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Ohio Governor Mike DeWine has asked his agencies to do everything they can to ease the strain of COVID-19 on Ohioans. Even after this dividend, the net position of the State Insurance Fund for injured workers remains strong due to investment returns, declining injuries, and decreasing reserves.

Approved by the BWC's Board of Directors on Nov. 2, it marks the agency's third dividend of more than \$1 billion this year, bringing the total to nearly \$8 billion. (Following \$1.54 billion in April, \$1.34 billion in October.)

Checks could be mailed by the end of the year. All told, private employers will see approximately \$4.3 billion. Public employers (counties, cities, schools, etc.) will see approximately \$687 million in dividends. This includes around \$219 million for schools.

Collectively, Franklin County's private and public employers will see an infusion of \$558 million. That's a half billion dollars from this dividend alone. Other top counties include:

- Cuyahoga: \$528 million
- Hamilton: \$379 million
- Summit: \$241 million
- Montgomery: \$194 million
- Lucas: \$191 million

Employers: To estimate your dividend, multiply your October dividend by 3.72.

This dividend would leave the BWC with a net position of approximately \$6.1 billion. The State Insurance Fund would remain in strong position to support Ohio's injured workers for years to come.

Note: Given this is BWC's third dividend this year, we urge employers to consult their tax advisors on any potential tax implications. We will send employers a 1099 federal tax form.

To read more about this dividend, please visit bwc.ohio.gov.

Source: BWC

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

2
UNEMPLOYMENT UPDATE

3
EMPLOYER SPOTLIGHT

4
BWC UPDATE

6
SAFETY TIP

7
EDUCATIONAL WEBINARS

Unemployment update

With Unemployment Fraud on the Rise...What to do if you Suspect a Claim is Fraudulent?

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a significant increase in the number of unemployment claims being filed which are overrunning many state systems. The increased claim volumes, in conjunction with the additional benefits granted through the CARES Act, as well as states allowing claims to be backdated to March, has created opportunity and increased incentives for filing fraudulent claims and identity theft. Not unexpectedly, the state of Illinois is seeing a significant uptick in identity theft based unemployment fraud. In September, Sedgwick processed the greatest number of fraudulent claims ever and October is starting off at an even faster pace.

What to do if you receive a claim for someone that is still employed?

- Check with the employee to verify whether or not they filed a claim. They may have filed a claim due to the loss of a second job or due to a reduction in hours, which would be appropriate. However, if they did not file an unemployment claim, take the following actions:
 - Notify your claims examiner about the fraudulent claim so that they may respond to the claim appropriately.
 - Suggest that the individual file a police report, place a fraud alert on their credit report, and notify the state unemployment agency's fraud unit. Most states have either a fraud hotline or webpage that can be used to report fraudulent unemployment activities.
 - Below are some resources that may be helpful to victims of identity theft:
 - FTC Website: <https://www.identitytheft.gov/Information>
This site contains a great deal of information regarding reporting and following up on identity theft.
 - Credit Reporting Agency Phone Numbers and Website Information:
 - Equifax – (800) 685-1111 or [Equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services](https://www.equifax.com/personal/credit-report-services)
 - Experian – (888) 397-3742 or [Experian.com/help](https://www.experian.com/help)
 - TransUnion – (888) 909-8872 or [TransUnion.com/credit-help](https://www.transunion.com/credit-help)

How can I protect my employees once a fraudulent claim has been filed?

- Once a fraudulent claim has been filed, the best line of defense is to respond to the unemployment claim timely. Notify Sedgwick that the employee did not file a claim and that the claim is fraudulent, and follow the other suggestions above.

Many victims wonder how their information was obtained. Unfortunately, very little information is needed in most states to file an unemployment claim, most of which is often available on the dark web from personal information secured through past data breaches. Some of this information was breached and obtained years ago and it is just surfacing now.

Unlike other forms of identity theft, unemployment fraud can't be prevented by the usual measures like placing a freeze or watch on your credit report. It is up to states, employees, and employers to stop benefits from being issued once a claim has been determined to be fraudulent.

For additional questions, contact UnemploymentSecureEmail@sedgwick.com.

Employer Spotlight



Central Allied Enterprise

Central Allied Enterprise, a paving contractor dating back to 1929, is now in their 4th generation with 125 employees. They are proud members of the community and have a mission for continued growth, service, and innovation. Central Allied is located in Canton, Ohio and they truly have a passion for the quality of work that they produce and the safety of their employees. This commitment to excellence is highlighted by the tenure of many of their employees who have been with the company for decades.

With the growth of the company, changes were implemented to reduce their work-related injuries. Doug Woodhall is a Vice President of the corporation, and he has brought his 10 years of law enforcement background into the daily affairs of the operations which he has been a part of for 38 years. Doug has a lifetime achievement award from the East Central Ohio Builders Exchange and carries certifications in Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Mine Safety Health Administration (MSHA) and has been asked to speak before local safety councils. With the experience he brings to the table Central Allied has been able to qualify for a group rating discount for over a decade currently participating at an impressive 49% discount. In the construction industry, this is a tremendous accomplishment.

To achieve this standard of excellence Doug has implemented the following programs.

- Bi-monthly safety committee meetings with each division, employees are awarded when their ideas are used.
- Eye protection, hearing protection, trench boxes, and clothing are provided to employees to keep them safe in any weather condition
- Random visits to job sites to be sure that proper safety techniques are being used
- Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) is at each worksite and employees are trained in how to respond when the situation presents itself
- Cameras have been installed within the plant
- Water and electrolytes are always on hand and training completed to assist an employee if they would become affected by the weather
- Complete review of lockout tag-out procedures
- Each winter two to three months are spent to rebuild and purchase new equipment to prevent injuries. Two to three million dollars each year is committed to capital improvements
- Transitional work and salary continuation are used
- Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Safety Grants

The implementation of these bullet points has generated an OSHA rate of less than 1 and sometimes zero. To further reduce the exposure, specialists are brought in to train employees on confined space, fall protection, trench boxes, and excavating. Doug feels that if people know what is expected of them and are trained properly positive results will follow. Doug's philosophy passed down by his father and instilled since the company's inception is that when you make employees part of the solution, investigate and make changes once an accident takes place it shows the employees that you are concerned about their wellbeing.

Without a doubt, safety is stressed from the top down at Central Allied, and Doug will not rest upon the achievements accomplished. We are very proud to have Central Allied as our client, but even more, impressed with the commitment that they make to their employees.

Congratulations to Central Allied for your achievements and for being our spotlight company!

BWC update

Upcoming BWC program and safety training deadlines

Dates are subject to change based on BWC's reaction to COVID-19 developments.

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) offers employers many different ratings, bonuses and rebate programs to encourage cost control, return to work, efficiency and safety. If you are interested in enrolling in a BWC program or are already enrolled, here are some important deadline dates to remember.

If you have any questions or if you would like to learn more about these discount programs and the potential savings they could offer your organization, click on the program or contact Lora Brooks, CompManagement Program Specialist at 800.825.6755, ext. 65436.

PUBLIC EMPLOYERS	
Deadline to change installment options or to elect deferred payments for the 1/1/2021 rating year (deferred payments are due by 4/30/2021)	Nov 15, 2020
Application deadline for Drug Free Safety (DFSP) , Industry Specific Safety (ISSP) , and Transitional Work Bonus (TWB) Programs for the 1/1/2021 rating year	Nov 30, 2020
Deadline for Individual Retrospective rated employers to file settlement applications for inclusion on their next retrospective rating bill	Dec 1, 2020
First prospective billing installment payment due for the 1/1/2021 rating year (unless employer opted to defer payment)	Dec 21, 2020*
Deadline for group employers (rating & retro) with claim(s) in the green period to attend 2 hours of BWC approved safety training or complete BWC's online accident analysis form and safety class	Dec 31, 2020
Deadline for employers participating in the ISSP to complete their loss prevention activities (1-3 activities based on payroll) and SH-29 (on-site consultation survey)	Dec 31, 2020
Payroll True-Up notices sent by BWC for the 1/1/2020-12/31/2020 payroll period (due 2/15/2021)	Jan 2021
DFSP accident analysis training deadline; new supervisors have 60 days from hire date to complete	Jan 31, 2021
DFSP and ISSP online safety management self-assessment (SH-26) deadline	Jan 31, 2021

**Any active policy that chooses to pay all of their installment payments in a single payment by the 12/31/2020 will receive a 2% Early Payment Discount. (This discount cannot reduce premiums below the \$120 annual minimum.) When the payment is received, BWC will remove all remaining installment billings for the year and the 2% discount will be refunded to the employer. The 2% discount will not be adjusted during the true-up process at the end of the rating year.*

PRIVATE EMPLOYERS	
Application deadline for Group Rating for the 7/1/2021 rating year	Nov 23, 2020
Application deadline for Deductible Program, Group Retrospective Rating, Individual Retrospective Rating, and One Claim Program for the 7/1/2021 rating year	Jan 29, 2021

Public Employers – 2021 Rates Announced

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Board of Directors has approved the following rates for public employer taxing districts. The rates reflect a 10% reduction of overall premium for the 1/1/2021 to 12/31/2021 payroll year.

NCCI MANUAL	DESCRIPTION	2020 BASE RATE*	2021 BASE RATE*
9430	Counties	1.01	0.79
9431	Cities	1.94	1.73
9432	Villages	1.81	1.74
9433	Townships	1.90	1.74
9434	Local School Districts	0.49	0.41
9435	Public Libraries	0.32	0.24
9436	Special Public Universities	0.23	0.18
9437	Joint Vocational Schools	0.18	0.15
9438	Public Work-Relief Employees	0.34	0.26
9439	Public Emergency Service Organizations	12.14	11.68
9440	Public Hospitals	0.31	0.24
9441	Special Public Institutions	0.48	0.37
9442	Public Transit Authorities	1.84	1.77
9443	Special Public Authorities	0.93	0.80
9444	Clerical Telecommuter Employees	0.19	0.17

BWC Board of Directors

A proposal for a premium dividend was discussed during the August Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) Committee meeting, later this proposal was approved by the Board in September which returns up to \$1.5 Billion to Ohio state funded employers. This is the second dividend the BWC is releasing this year, both to assist the Ohio business community during this difficult time.

Similar to the dividend released earlier this year in April (100% of 2018 premium), this dividend represents 100% of paid premium for the 2019 policy year.

- Private employers: July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020
- Public employers: January 1, 2019 – December 31, 2019

Dividends are made possible due to Ohio BWC's strong investment strategy and a decline in the number of claims.

Click here for [Frequently Asked Questions about the dividend.](#)

Safety Tip

2021 Ohio Safety Congress Goes Virtual

The annual Ohio Safety Congress & Expo will be online only March 10-11, 2021*. The event will feature dozens of learning sessions and a digital expo, allowing participants to chat virtually with vendors about new and existing products and services.

Individuals with an interest in occupational safety and health, wellness, rehabilitation and workers' compensation are encouraged to attend.

- Learn to improve safety management programs and best practices
- View the newest workforce safety products and services

- Chat with business representatives, safety professionals and workers' compensation specialists.
- Connect with exhibitors to discuss cost-saving solutions
- Keep Ohio's work force healthy and productive

Attendance is free for Ohio employers. Registration will open at www.ohiosafetycongress.com in January 2021.

*Dates have changed from the original dates of March 31-April 2 announced earlier this year.

Source: BWC

Division of Safety & Hygiene is Moving!

The Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) has moved its Division of Safety & Hygiene headquarters from Pickerington to the BWC's headquarters in downtown Columbus.

Sixty-two employees located at 13430 Yarmouth Drive in Pickerington have moved their offices to the William Green Building at 30 W. Spring St., Columbus.

Phone numbers and email addresses remain the same for relocated staff, who, like most BWC staff, continue to work from home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Remote services during the pandemic will continue. In-person safety training previously offered in Pickerington will be held at designated locations in the greater Columbus metropolitan area once they resume.

Source: BWC

OSHA's Emergency Preparedness and Response Resources

Emergencies can create a multitude of hazards for workers in impacted areas. Being prepared for emergencies is key in ensuring that employers and workers know what to do, know where to go and know how to keep themselves safe.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has created free [Emergency Preparedness and Response resources](#) to provide information to employers and workers on preparing and training for an emergency situations.

OSHA's resources include guides, QuickCards, eTools and Fact Sheets on a variety of topics including:

- General preparedness and response
- Natural disasters and weather related incidents
- Oil, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive incidents
- Disease agents and toxins

To view all of OSHA's safety resources, visit: www.osha.gov

Upcoming Educational Webinars

Workers' Compensation

SESSIONS	DATE	TIME (EST/EDT)
7 steps to a successful workers' compensation program	November 17, 2020	2:00 pm
Introduction to Workers' Compensation	December 3, 2020	10:00 am

For more information about these courses, as well as full course descriptions, please [click here](#). The client education programs listed above are offered at no charge to current clients of CompManagement.

The sessions are approximately 60 minutes in length and are certified by the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) for one hour of the two-hour safety training requirement for group and group retrospective-rated employers. To be eligible for the safety training credit, the attendee must remain in the session for at least 75% of the total session time. If the qualification is met, we will send a certificate of attendance via email within three business days of the session date.

REGISTRATION

To register for our client education program webinar sessions, send an email to: seminarrsvp@sedgwick.com. Be sure to indicate the company name, BWC policy number, session name, session date, name(s) of those wishing to attend and an email address for each person attending.

Unemployment Compensation

SESSION	DATE	TIME (EST/EDT)
Hearing Preparation & Winning Strategies	December 8, 2020	2:00 pm

For more information about these courses, as well as full course descriptions, please [click here](#). The client education programs listed above are offered at no charge to current clients of CompManagement. All sessions are approximately 60–90 minutes in length.

REGISTRATION

To register for our client education program webinar sessions, send an email to: ucwebinars@sedgwick.com. Be sure to indicate the company name, session name, session date, name(s) of those wishing to attend and an email address for each person attending.

**For more news and information,
connect with us!**

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