

Minutes State Safety & Return to Work Group Meeting



Meeting Date : 01/25/2024

Room : TEAMS

3 Pages

Time 1 :00 pm

Meeting Attendees

Rob Virts - DOA	Kirby Fugle - FWP	Lori Strandell - OPI
Amy Jenks - DOA	Charlotte Hafer - DOC	Stormy Tuffield - MSF
Tawni Jo Aguirre - DOA	Jenna Hebert - DPHHS	Justin Ulmen - MDT
Duncan Adams - Rev	Amy Horne - DLI	Amanda Murphy - Rev
Jessica Arnold - Commerce	Dan Johnson - MSF	Kelly DaSilva – Legislative
Steve Baiamonte - DOA	Keri Maes - MSF	Donna Schmidt – MSDB
Herb Byers - MSF	John McCormick - OPI	Wayne Bunch - MSF
Mark Carpenter – Sec. of State	Traci Merzlake - Agriculture	Jeff Plum – State Auditor
Matt Chambers - DNRC	Lexi Newcomer - OPD	Sheri French - DOA
Terri Christianson - DOJ	Doug Overman – Judicial	
Shannin Danko – Commerce	Randa Renenger - OPI	
Alice Flesch - MDT	Nathan Showalter - Rev	


Meeting Notes

Wayne Bunch - Assistant Vice President at MSF - Claim Communication between Agencies and MSF.

- MT Law dictates how communications are handled by honouring personal and confidential information.
- Discussions between injured worker and their provider are also confidential.
- MSF will make every effort to support the cooperative arrangement around claims information and management. Consistent with past practice, MT law and court decisions, MSF will communicate 1) the status of claims; (2) work restrictions; (3) significant reserve changes; and (4) return to work opportunities. Requests for specific action or requests for inappropriate information cannot be acted upon. Statements such as, “please remove the indemnity reserves” and “please close out the indemnity reserve and decrease medical reserves to reflect exposure for any unpaid bills” are obvious attempts to direct the adjustment and payment of claims. In addition, attempts to direct settlement, settlement considerations or settlement value constitute inappropriate interference in claims management.
- Reserve letters have recently been updated to note why the change is occurring.

Steve Baiamonte - Administrator/Security Director for GSD – Emergency Action Plans.

- Make sure your agencies Emergency Action Plan is updated.
 - If your agency is moving offices, Steve recommends contacting the agency who is currently in your new location to discuss and review what emergency actions plans are in place.
 - Once your agency is moved ensure drills are being conducted and everyone is educated on the new meeting locations and exit routes.
- If your agency needs a new site map you can contact Steve Baiamonte.
- If anyone has questions on office moves you can contact Gannon Campbell, State Space Planning Manager with GSD.
- If you are experiencing issues with leased buildings, you can contact Steve Baiamonte as GSD works with managers of leased buildings.
- For non-emergency security and safety issues call 444-3060.

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Tawni Jo Aguirre – WCMB

- Safety Program – All Agencies need to have a written Safety Program Manual. WCMB has put together a written manual that can be modified and tailored to your agency. The downloadable manual can be found on our website at <https://workerscomp.mt.gov/> under Safety Program.
- WCMB Website – Our website includes information on Return to Work, Safety Programs, Claims Filing as well as Tools and Forms. Webinars, Safety Group Minutes, and other communications are posted to our website as well.
 - Our next Webinar will be held on Thursday February 8, 2024 and Tawni will sending out a meeting invite Friday January 26th. Please feel free to send the invite to anyone in your agency who may be interested in attending. These webinars are also recorded and the recording can be accessed via WCMB website for later use.
- OSHA 300 Log – Agencies are required to complete their log by 01/31/2024. Completed OSHA 300a logs should be posted from 02/01/2024 thru 04/30/2024 on your agencies bulletin boards.
 - DLI's compliance bureau will be asking to see agency OSHA logs when they are conducting inspections.
 - *Amy Horne, DLI Compliance and Risk Management Specialist*; discussed the inspection process and specifically what they are looking for when reviewing OSHA 300 logs.

Stormy Tuffield – MSF

- 2024 WorkSafe Champions – This is a 9-module safety education program that is offered to all policy holders at no charge.
 - The next course will start in April and will be offered in person or virtually. You can contact Stormy Tuffield or WCMB if you are interested in participating.
 - The first group graduated in December had great things to say about the program.

Rob Virts – WCMB

- Roles & Responsibilities (WCMB vs. MSF) – The WCMB along with MSF have created a document that outlines the roles and responsibilities of each agency. This can be found on the WCMB website. <https://workerscomp.mt.gov/about-us/About-Us>
- Position Recruitment – WCMB still has a Safety Position that has not yet been filled.
 - One of the new responsibilities of individual will be Safety Related Training.
- June Renewal Meetings – These are the annual renewal meetings to review your agencies work comp premium for the upcoming year. Rob will be reaching out to agencies to scheduling these meetings by the end of February. Meetings will be held at your agency in hopes that upper management and agency directors will be in attendance.
 - If you are a smaller agency and would like to schedule a renewal meeting, please let Rob or Tawni Jo know.

Meeting Wrap-Up

- Send suggestions for future meeting topics to Rob.

Upcoming Meetings

Date/Time

April 25, 2024 – SSG meeting – 1:00pm – 2:30pm – In Person – Location TBD
June 2024 – Policy Renewal Meetings – Individual Agency Meetings
October 24, 2024 – SSG meeting – 1:00pm – 2:30pm – Virtual – TEAMS