

**Ministry of Labour,  
Immigration, Training and  
Skills Development**

Office of the Minister

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September 21, 2023

Grant Walsh  
Chair  
Workplace Safety and Insurance Board  
Toronto, ON

Dear Chair Walsh:

I am pleased to write to you in your capacity as the Chair of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).

As Chair of one of the largest statutory workplace safety insurers in North America, you are a vital partner in ensuring the delivery of high-quality services to injured workers and their families, when they need it most. Workers and employers depend on you to provide leadership to your agency's board, management, and staff.

My expectations are set out in this year's letter and build on the ongoing work the WSIB has been executing.

**WORKER SUPPORT AND CLIENT SERVICES**

The WSIB has continued to achieve exciting outcomes on behalf of workers and employers. Core to its ongoing successful client services delivery are the following objectives:

- Make all information and technology upgrades necessary to modernize their systems and support initiatives like the implementation of super indexing by 2024.
- Modernize the claims process by the end of August 2024, and then implement a one-window digital portal that includes: registration, self-service for no-lost-time claims, access to information and the status of claims, digital submission of documents, and the creation of a seamless digitalized process that provides real-time access to WSIB information required for Workplace Safety and Insurance Appeals Tribunal (WSIAT) appeals.
- Continue full funding for the Injured Workers Outreach Service and maintain the current program design.
- Conduct a review of client services utilizing tools like feedback surveys, roundtables, and other mechanisms, and identify opportunities to enhance operational procedures by August 2024.
- Work with the ministry so the WSIB can mobilize a timely response to workplace fatalities.

## **SUPPORTING ONTARIO'S BUSINESS COMMUNITY**

Ontario is growing, and the government has an ambitious plan to support it. The WSIB can support the government's efforts to foster this success by:

- Preparing for a surplus distribution as required or permitted under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997* (WSIA) based on the sufficiency ratio.
- Ensuring that temporary help agency premiums reflect the risk of the work being performed by workers for client employers to ensure an equitable and competitive business environment.
- Implementing and fully operationalizing a one-stop shop portal in partnership with the Canada Revenue Agency that enables employers to report earnings and make payment remittances by June 2024.
- Identifying robust and innovative health and safety initiatives that employers are implementing across the province by December 2024.
- Continuing to identify opportunities to expand the client sectors covered by the WSIB. This should include exploring the expansion of WSIB coverage to athletes.

## **PROMOTING AND ENHANCING OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The WSIB will continue to promote and enhance occupational health and safety by:

- Engaging with the Chief Prevention Officer (CPO) to identify opportunities to prevent workplace injuries, including through the implementation of funding initiatives – these can, and should, include funding opportunities for training delivery agents and hospital-affiliated research institutes.
- Developing an action plan of how the WSIB will continue supporting the execution of the Prevention Works Strategy and other relevant health and safety initiatives (i.e., Supporting Ontario's Safe Employers, data sharing, occupational health and safety system oversight).
- Continuing to share information with the ministry for the purposes of enabling the CPO and Fair, Safe and Healthy Workplaces Division to carry out their respective prevention and enforcement mandates under the OHSA in accordance with the WSIA and the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- Continuing ongoing evaluations of Ontario's occupational disease system, inclusive of feedback from impacted stakeholders and victims of occupational disease to ensure WSIB's compensation policies reflect the latest scientific and legal standards. This should inform expansions of presumptive coverage when warranted.
- Supporting the CPO's development of a robust health and safety framework by providing a summary report of best practices and resources to prevent or reduce workplace injuries through the identification of the long-term competency of workers post-training, and the impact of existing or emerging technologies (i.e., assistive devices) for delivering occupational health and safety learning. This report should be provided by August 2024

## **STRONG BUSINESS PRACTICES AND ACCOUNTABILITY**

This government continues to work with agencies across Ontario to uphold a high standard of accountability, transparency, and integrity. The WSIB will maintain strong business practices and accountability for the workers of Ontario by:

- Maintaining a sufficiency ratio of 110-124, pending market forces, to reinforce the WSIB's strong financial position without increasing employer premiums.
- Work collaboratively on public communications campaigns to pinpoint opportunities for alignment and amplification via ministry channels.
- Conducting a jurisdictional review of workplace safety and insurance regimes in other comparable jurisdictions and providing a summary report of the differences and

similarities of Ontario's system, and recommendations for alignment where logical and feasible by June 2024.

- Continuing to collaborate on intergovernmental engagements to maximize opportunities for alignment and augmentation.
- Continuing to adhere to the government real estate directive as the WSIB prepares its plan to move its head office to London, including the required inventory of real estate activities.
- Exploring the cost savings of relocating regional urban offices without compromising client needs services.
- Positioning the WSIB as a leader in second chance employment for the over one million people across Ontario who are living with a criminal record.
- Supporting Ukrainians arriving in Ontario as a result of the Russian invasion.
- Maintaining and continuing to strengthen accountability measures (including audits) and immediately notify my office of any errors or oversights while implementing plans to address them promptly.
- Ensuring that entitlements for injured workers are calculated and distributed accurately and efficiently, while continuing to adhere to the WSIA.

In closing, I know I can count on you to support our efforts to deliver policies and priorities in the most efficient and effective manner. Collectively, we must take these steps to provide confidence in the system to workers, employers, and the public.

Your ongoing cooperation and support are greatly appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns, please have your office contact Richard Sookraj, Deputy Chief of Staff, at 416-326-7600 or richard.sookraj@ontario.ca.

Sincerely,



Monte McNaughton  
Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development

- c: Jeffery Lang, Chief Executive Officer, WSIB  
Richard Sookraj, Deputy Chief of Staff, Minister's Office  
Greg Meredith, Deputy Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development  
Patricia Perez, Assistant Deputy Minister & Chief Administrative Officer, Corporate Management & Services, MLITSD  
Rosemarie McCutcheon, Chair, WSIAT