



## Agenda – Tentative – Subject to Change

7:00 a.m.–8:30 a.m.

**Registration and Breakfast Networking – Expo is open**

8:30 a.m.–8:45 a.m.

**Opening Remarks and Introductions**

- **Lori Hiltabrand**, COO, Illinois Chamber of Commerce
- **Adam Cox**, Executive Director, Illinois Self-Insurers Association
- **Gina Breen**, President, Illinois Self-Insurers Association

8:45 a.m. – 9:40 a.m.

**General Session – Does Care Started by Advanced Practitioners Result in Different Outcomes?**

**Dr. Bogdan Savych, Workers Compensation Research Institute**

*As more injured workers begin treatment with nurse practitioners and physician assistants, a new study from the Workers Compensation Research Institute (WCRI) examines whether provider type affects workers' compensation claim outcomes. Using data from 29 states, the research compares cases where care started with advanced practitioners versus primary care physicians. This presentation helps stakeholders understand how initial provider choice may influence the course of treatment and recovery*

9:40 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

**Morning Break & Visit Exhibitors**

10:00 a.m. – 10:55 a.m.

**General Session - A Potpourri of Appellate Cases**

**Lisa Azoory-Keller and Adam Cox, Illinois Self Insurers Association**

*Adam J. Cox and Lisa Azoory-Keller discuss some of the Appellate Court cases issued over the past year, the issues and scenarios analyzed, and the impact going forward for workers' compensation claims."*

11:00 a.m. – 11:50 a.m.

**Breakout Sessions**

**Workshop #1: Impact of the Aging Workforce on the Workers' Comp Industry**

**John Campbell, Keefe, Campbell, Biery & Assoc.**

*Please join John Campbell of Keefe, Campbell, Biery & Associates for analysis and discussion of the impact our aging workforce has on the workers' compensation system. Statistical analysis and application to current case-law and claim handling will improve your claim analysis skill set.*

**Workshop #2: AI Powered Claims Handling – The Defense Perspective**

**Kevin Deuschle, IFMK Law**

*An examination of the use of AI in the workers' compensation claims process: This session will discuss the use of AI tools by employers, claims handlers, and defense attorneys and will address dangers, opportunities, and strategies to increase efficiency and reduce legal spend while avoiding strategic and ethical pitfalls.*

**Workshop #3: Vocational Rehabilitation and Self-Directed Job Search: Intelligent**

**Avoidance of Adverse Outcomes – Joseph Belmonte, C.R.C., Vocamotive, Inc.**

*exam Participants will gain an understanding of the theoretical and legal foundation upon which an evidence based, data-driven approach to job search is developed, implemented and documented.*

*The goal of the training is to assist claims and legal professionals to develop legally sound and objective criteria necessary to implementation of either protocol cost-effectively with an eye to control of critical cost parameters including TTD (maintenance), case open times, and to avoid the development of adverse fact patterns which complicate litigation and increase exposures.*

*This will include an overview of research in the field of vocational rehabilitation, review of Joint Commission on Administrative Rules (State of Illinois), Illinois Workers Compensation Case Law, as well as data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, to identify practical recommendations for implementing client self-directed job search or vocational rehabilitation, and to compare and contrast costs associated with either protocol.*

#### **Workshop #4: From Blind Spot to Bullseye: Improving Credit Risk Management in Self-Insurance**

**Brian Weitzman, Marsh McLennan**

*This session will discuss the importance of managing credit risk inherent within the portfolio of self-insured employers and tackle topics such as appropriate collateral requirements, holistic credit analysis and ongoing monitoring of the portfolio, and other solutions designed to protect guaranty fund assets and reduce costs for businesses.*

11:50 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.	<b>Visit Exhibitors &amp; Lunch Buffet</b>
12:20 p.m. – 12:40 p.m.	<b>Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission Update</b> <b>Michael Brennan, Chairman, Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission</b>
12:45 p.m. – 1:10 p.m.	<b>General Session - The Case for Civility: Why It Matters Now More Than Ever</b> <b>"A Clarion Call to Return"</b> <b>Raychel A. Wesley, Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission</b> <i>In these unprecedented times, the foundational principle of civility is hanging by a thread. The decline in professional courtesy, respect, and integrity is more than just a matter of bad manners; it is a systemic crisis that erodes public trust, undermines the administration of justice, and takes a significant toll on the well-being of everyone. This presentation confronts the issue head-on, exploring the complex factors that have brought us to this critical juncture. We will examine how we arrived at this troubling state, including how the toxic political climate emanating from Washington has normalized incivility, personal attacks, and the abandonment of traditional norms of respectful disagreement, creating a cultural environment where such behavior has seeped into all aspects of life. This session will provide a roadmap for restoring civility, offering practical, evidence-based solutions that can make an immediate difference. We will explore how we can rise above the current climate of divisiveness and reclaim the dignity and respect that should define not only our professions, but our lives. Join us to discover actionable strategies, from communication techniques that defuse tension to institutional changes that foster a culture of respect, you will leave with the tools and inspiration needed to be part of the solution.</i>
1:10 p.m. – 1:50 p.m.	<b>General Session – IME: Pearls and Pitfalls</b> <b>Dr. Leon Benson, Illinois Bone &amp; Joint Institute</b> <i>Dr. Benson will do a deep dive into an IME from a physician perspective, talk about the role of MD, and provide examples of Pearls &amp; Pitfalls that can occur during an IME. The comprehensive discussion will give the employer, legal counsel, and insurance personnel an inside look at the IME as seen by the physician.</i>
1:50 p.m. -2:10 p.m.	<b>Afternoon Break &amp; Visit Exhibitors</b>
2:10 p.m – 3:00 p.m.	<b>General Session – 2025 Legislative Developments</b> <b>Ramiro Hernandez, Illinois Chamber of Commerce</b>
3:00 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	<b>Panel Discussion – Legislative panel</b> <b>Moderator: Bill Lowry, Nyhan, Bambrick, Lowry, P.C.</b> <b>Panelist: Rep. Dan Ugaste</b> <b>Panelist: TBA</b> <b>Panelist: TBA</b>
3:45 p.m.	<b>Exhibitor Introductions, Drawings for Prizes &amp; Closing Remarks for adjournment</b>