

# The *INNOVATOR*

An MC Innovations  
Publication

### Special points of interest:

- > Stay tuned for new occupation choices in VLW!
- > Strategies needed to address workplace violence.
- > Job Descriptions, Wage Charts and Supplementary Reports.

## Upcoming Changes to Occupation Field in VLW

Many of you have provided feedback that the occupations/titles listed in VLW when reporting a claim don't match occupations/titles used in your agencies. With the help of the advisory council, we have come up with an improvement!

We will convert to utilizing the Job Role Table that applies to all positions in PMIS. Every position, whether classified, faculty, ungraded, appointed, at-will or wage has a job role code.

Stay tuned for more information on this exciting enhancement! We anticipate rolling out this change before the end of the first quarter of 2017.

## Workplace Violence Prevention

### Strategies for Protecting Employees

Violence in the workplace has devastating effects for the organization, the employees involved, and those left to process the event while continuing on with "business as usual." Protecting employees goes beyond providing security officers and locked doors. Though these precautions are important, training employees to respond appropriately in a potentially violent situation is equally important.

Within the Commonwealth of Virginia (COV) from fiscal year (FY) 2013 to FY 2016, there were approximately 4,445 workers' compensation incidents involving acts of violence that resulted in \$15,927,674 in total incurred costs. These incidents included struck/injured by a fellow worker, a patient, or other person; gunshot claims; and people in the act of a crime.

Begin preparing employees in the workplace by making sure they know where their workplace violence (WPV) risks may come from. Violence in the workplace may come from any of the four primary perpetrator categories: strangers, current and former clients/customers, current and former employees, and relatives or friends. After the risks are identified, provide information about how an employee is expected to respond when encountering a violent or potentially violent situation involving anyone in the identified categories. This should include reviewing emergency evacuation plans, shelter-in-place procedures and locations, and the agency's continuity of operations information as it relates to a WPV event. Information from sources like the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) may be beneficial when identifying the potential impact to your agency. They currently have a WPV Prevention Course for Nurses as that field has experienced more than 9,000 WPV-related injuries since 2014. Other sources include the Department of Homeland Security. They have resources available about preparing for and responding to active shooter events. There is also a Workplace Violence Prevention Course available through the Department of Human Resource Management's (DHRM) Workers' Compensation Services (WCS). Courses are available for free to Commonwealth of Virginia (COV) agencies. Sign up for them through your agency's Virginia Learning Center Portal (formerly the Knowledge Center).

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Whether at home, at work, or traveling between the two, employees should also be very aware of their surroundings. If an employee suspects an act of violence has occurred or will occur, they should know the proper method for communicating that information to the organization.

**Here are a few tips to keep in mind when encountering a WPV situation:**

- ◆ Stay calm
- ◆ Assess whether you should [Run, Hide, or Fight](#) and take action quickly
- ◆ Listen for details and document them as soon as possible. (Include background noises, etc.)
- ◆ Try to signal for help as soon as possible
- ◆ Never try to disarm a perpetrator
- ◆ Be extremely attentive...watch for the moment to escape
- ◆ Contact law enforcement as soon as you are able

As an agency, be sure to provide resources to employees to assist with recovery after an encounter has occurred. These resources can include employee assistance programs (EAP), local and community resources, and law enforcement. DHRM and WCS are also excellent resources for all COV agencies.

Remember, ***applied*** knowledge is power. Violence prevention strategies work better when employees are equipped with the appropriate information they need to respond.

**Resources:**

***NIOSH Occupational Violence Resources***

<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/violence/default.html>

***DHS Active Shooter Preparedness***

<https://www.dhs.gov/active-shooter-preparedness>

***Run, Hide, Fight Video (from Ready Houston)***

<https://vimeo.com/51547048>

## Meet Assistant Vice-President/Claim Manager – Joe Johnson

Employee  
Spotlight



Welcome to our newest member of MCI's management team, Joe Johnson. Joe joined us in November and is responsible for the leadership of the claim teams managing your agency's workers' compensation claims. Joe is a graduate of Winston-Salem State University and has been in the claims industry for 34 years. Joe also holds the designation of Workers' Compensation Law Specialist (WCLS) through the American Educational Institute, Inc. He has over 20 years of Virginia workers' compensation experience.

**Quick facts about Joe:**

**Before working here, what was the most unusual or interesting job?**

Managing a 150 unit apartment complex.

**What is your favorite part about working for MCI?**

Enjoying the state holiday schedule.

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**What is your proudest moment at MCI?**

Receiving such a warm welcome from everyone.

**Share something about yourself that would surprise us.**

“The one thing that I like is to make others laugh. People, who do not know me, think I’m the serious, no-nonsense type, but those who know me are always looking for a good laugh. There is also another side of me that is all business, but I like to have a good time.”

**Best vacation or favorite travel spot?**

Las Vegas, NV for his 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary & boy’s weekend in South Beach.

**What three words best describe you?**

Outgoing, cooperative and understanding.

**What did you want to be when growing up?**

A dentist.

**What is an ability you wish you had?**

Ability to repair things, “handyman.”

**What is your biggest pet peeve?**

People who text while driving in front of me.

**What music is on your favorite playlist(s)?**

Contemporary Jazz and R&B.



Commonwealth of Virginia  
Workers' Compensation Services

## FY17—Results through the 2nd quarter

It’s hard to believe we have already passed the halfway point of this fiscal year! Below we have documented a comparison of some key program metrics in FY16 and FY17 through two quarters.

Metrics	FY17	FY16
# Claims Received	3,725	4,167
Indemnity	272	293
Medical Only	1,773	1,953
Record Only	1,680	1,921
Closing Ratio	100.82	101.04
# of Compensability Decisions	2,152	2,491
Ave. Compensability Decision Lagtime (days)	13	13
# Medical Bills Paid	25,479	27,583
\$ Medical Bills Paid	\$14.962m	\$16.917m
Cost Avoidance	\$5.38m	\$6.93m
Ave. Medical Bill Payment Turnaround Time (days)	9	11
% Claims Reported to MCI within 10 Days	86.3%	85%

**Strong 2nd Quarter  
Results!**



Overall, new claim volume is down **10.6%** with the biggest change in the number of record only claims reported (down 12.5%). Claim closings continue to be strong and over the 100% closing ratio goal. The average number of days it takes our staff to make compensability decisions continues to be strong with consistent results of **13** days which is better than the program goal of 14 days.

Generally the payment of medical bills represents close to 70% of the total payments on the workers’ compensation program each fiscal year. As a result MCI places considerable focus on strategies aimed at controlling medical costs.

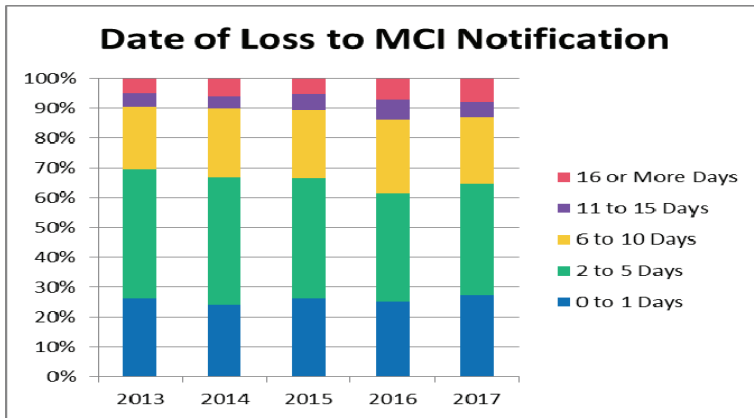
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*(FY17 Results—Continued from page 3)*

Cost avoidance through the second quarter of FY17 approached **\$5.4M** or **26.45%**, compared to 29.1% through two quarters of FY16.

Just as our compensability decision lagtime has consistently met program goals, so has the average number of days it takes for us to pay medical bills. Our strong performance of 11 days through Q2FY16 was reduced to 9 days through two quarters of FY17.

While there is still room for improvement the MCI received 86.3% of the reported claims within 10 days of the date of accident. See the chart below for further comparison.



Through the halfway point of this fiscal year, program results are strong! We continue to explore opportunities to improve on these results and provide you and your injured workers with superior service.

## Holiday Highlights

Thanks to the generosity of our MCI team, we were able to spread some holiday cheer to a family of seven on the Eastern Shore. The sleigh or in this case, two SUVs, made our way to Northampton County Department of Social Services with food and gifts on December 13, 2016. The folks at Social Services were stunned at the incredible out-pouring of food and gifts that our office collected not only for “our” family, but also to help restock the food pantry.



Of course the holiday would not be complete without a MCI team partner fair and lunch! On December 16, 2016 our 6<sup>th</sup> floor office space was transformed into an exhibition hall for the program’s team partners who shared swag and goodies with our staff, which was followed by lunch at McCormack’s Grill. Thanks to the entire MCI team for a great 2016!

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## Quick Tips

### **Developing a Job Description**

The Claims Department relies upon Employee Work Profiles or other documentation in support of an Employee's Job Description to communicate with medical providers regarding return to work capability. The documentation can also support termination of benefits, when the employment relationship has been severed, if we can demonstrate that the injured worker has the capacity to return to a comparable position based upon the physical demands of the pre-injury position. Finally, it can be an integral part of the Vocational Rehabilitation process by providing documentation of transferable skills, assisting in the search for suitable alternative employment.

Occasionally no documentation is available. For this reason we would like to draw your attention to a useful resource tool, the Dictionary of Occupational Titles ([www.occupationalinfo.org](http://www.occupationalinfo.org)), published by the U.S. Department of Labor. The tool will allow you to research positions by Occupational Title, Standard Industrial Classifications (SIC) codes, and/or Occupational Information.

Please consider reviewing and using this tool if your Benefit Coordinator asks you for information about a Job Description and none is available.

### **Wage Charts**

Wage information is required on all lost time (indemnity claims). MCI has generally required the utilization of the Wage Chart (Form 7A) for reporting of wages. However, we recognize that agencies may have other, more convenient ways of providing wage information. If you can provide complete wage information by utilizing other means available to your agency, we can accept same in lieu of the Wage Chart. Just keep in mind, that there may still be the occasional claim requiring a Wage Chart. For example, injured worker's dispute of the average weekly wage or compensation rate, or specific request from the Attorney General's Office or Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission. Interested? If so, contact Kitty Hughes at [kitty.hughes@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:kitty.hughes@dhrm.virginia.gov) for guidance on how to make the change.

### **Supplementary Report**

Many of you have probably noticed that the Supplementary Report can no longer be found on the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission website. That's because it is no longer a required or recognized form of the VWCC. What this means for your agency is that MCI no longer requires the utilization of this form either! While the form is not required, the communication of various changes in work status, which results in lost time or return to work, is still vitally important to the management of your employee's workers' compensation claim. Immediate notification of the following is the key to ensuring accurate payments to your agency and the injured worker:

- ◆ An injured worker's lost time from work
- ◆ An injured worker's return to work at either full duty or modified duty
- ◆ A change in an injured worker's earnings
- ◆ A change in an injured worker's employment status
- ◆ A change in the number of hours an injured work works

You are also welcome to keep reporting lost time and return to work via the Supplementary Report! The choice is all yours. For those of you electing to continue using the Supplementary Report you can find the form on [www.covwc.com](http://www.covwc.com) in our Forms Library.



### **Innovator Suggestions?**

#### **Contact:**

**Penny Gough, Managing Partner**

**Phone: 804.775.0702**

**E-mail:**

**[pgough@mcinnovations.com](mailto:pgough@mcinnovations.com)**