



Initiatives to improve outcomes and reduce costs

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The mission of the Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) is to “Keep Washington Safe and Working.” The Department has launched a number of initiatives aimed at improving results for customers and reducing overall costs. This fact sheet provides a brief description of some of the initiatives.

Helping injured workers heal and return to work: These initiatives improve injured workers’ physical and financial health.

- **Stay at Work Program** – This program offers employers financial incentives for providing light-duty jobs to injured workers to keep them active and connected to the workforce, reducing time-loss costs. More than 2,000 employers have participated since the program began in January 2012.
- **Job Assistance Services Pilots** - Several pilot projects are underway to provide job assistance services for injured workers, in partnership with WorkSource.
- **Medical Management Project** – This initiative will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of L&I’s clinical resources by using its occupational nurse consultants at critical times in a claim.

Improving L&I’s workers’ compensation claims processes: L&I has several initiatives underway to streamline processes, find solutions, and improve customer service.

- **Claims Processor Pilot** – This pilot relieves claim managers of day-to-day administrative tasks, allowing them to spend time adjudicating claims.
- **Knowledge Management System** – This new online system will give claims staff modern search capability and improved electronic access to resources such as policies, procedures and guidelines, freeing up time to assist customers and reducing overall costs.
- **First 100 Days of a Claim** – L&I mapped the first 100 days of a time-loss claim to identify where it can eliminate unnecessary tasks and reduce delays for workers and employers.

Improving medical care and serving providers: These initiatives improve treatment and outcomes for injured workers, ultimately reducing costs associated with long-term disability.

- **Medical Provider Network** is a strong network of medical providers whose qualifications meet certain standards, similar to other health care insurers. L&I will create a “top tier” of the network for providers who use certain occupational health best practices.

- **Centers for Occupational Health and Education (COHEs)** are organizations that provide training and organizational support to providers to increase their use of best practices in treating injured workers. COHEs support the piloting of new best practices and approaches to help injured workers heal, reducing the chance of long-term disability.
- **Opioid Guidelines** – L&I recently implemented new guidelines for doctors who prescribe narcotics, or opioid medication, to treat pain in injured workers. The new guideline will improve the care of injured workers and save lives.

Safety Initiatives: At L&I, safety always comes first. L&I helps make sure workers go home from their jobs safe and sound by helping employees and businesses understand how they can reduce workplace injuries and make everyone safer. Fewer injuries reduce workers' compensation costs and improve productivity.

- **Logger Safety Initiative** – This initiative is a partnership between L&I, private landowners, logging companies and others that aims to reduce injuries and costs in the logging industry. The initiative focuses on establishing standards and incentives for participating employers, with the goal of creating a culture of safety that is pervasive throughout the logging industry.
- **Safety and Health Investment Project (SHIP)** – The SHIP program awards grants for innovative ideas aimed at preventing accidents and helping injured workers return to work.
- **Prevention Initiative** – L&I will work with employers to explore new, innovative ways to prevent the leading causes of serious workplace injuries.

Making it easy to do business with L&I: Businesses, medical providers and workers should all find it easy to do business with the Department. L&I is developing systems and processes that are easy to understand and designed from customers' perspectives.

- **FileFast** – This online service allows injured workers and medical providers to file claims electronically rather than fax or mail them. Claims filed online or by phone arrive five days faster on average – and the information is more complete, requiring less follow-up. Speed and completeness are vital because a two-week delay early in a claim increases costs by 18 percent.
- **QuickFile** – Employers can now file their quarterly reports online at L&I's QuickFile web site. About 160,000 Washington businesses now use the site.
- **E-Correspondence** – L& I recently launched a new online service that allows injured workers, employers and medical providers to receive and manage claims-related mail electronically. This eliminates the need to manually open and process large volumes of mail, which are primarily copies of letters and legal notices required by law.