

2026 WORKERS' COMPENSATION CONFERENCE



Workers'
Compensation
Board

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: GOOD NEWS FOR NEW YORKERS!

With the support of Governor Kathy Hochul, major improvements have been made to the New York workers' compensation system over the past year, benefiting all stakeholders.

- ✓ **Reduced workers' compensation premium rates:** In July 2026, Governor Kathy Hochul announced that insured employers statewide would see a reduction in workers' compensation insurance premium rates, based on a 22% average decrease in loss cost rates. The Governor projected an estimated savings of more than \$1 billion for businesses or an average of \$1,779 per policyholder in New York State. The new loss cost rates took effect on October 1, 2026.
- ✓ **Low employer assessment rates:** In addition to reduced employer insurance costs, the employer assessment rate has declined by 40.6% since 2021 when the Governor took office.
- ✓ **Increased benefits for injured workers:** Governor Hochul's 2023 legislation to index the minimum weekly benefit to one-fifth of the New York State Average Weekly Wage took effect in July 2026, increasing the benefit by more than 116% since 2023.
- ✓ **Universal authorization:** In May 2026, Governor Hochul championed legislation to automatically authorize all eligible, licensed medical providers to treat injured workers in New York State, removing a longstanding unnecessary requirement that providers must apply for special authorization to treat. Cutting this red tape opens the door to thousands more primary care providers and specialists who can help injured workers heal and get back to work faster. The new law takes effect January 1, 2028.
- ✓ **New anti-fraud program:** Also in May 2026, Governor Hochul championed legislation that establishes a \$7 million grant program for county district attorneys (DAs) to establish and staff dedicated workers' compensation fraud units. This funding will ensure DAs have the necessary resources to investigate and prosecute these crimes, ultimately protecting honest workers and reducing costs for New York businesses. The new anti-fraud program will be implemented in 2027.
- ✓ **Investments in technology:** To improve Board systems and processes, Governor Hochul's budget has included funding for the Board's multi-year OnBoard modernization program. Early implementations of OnBoard initiatives — including an online prior authorization request system, new eForms for attorneys and insurers, and electronic submission of medical billing forms — have resulted in improved accuracy and major efficiencies. Stay informed about new projects at wcb.ny.gov/onboard.

