



STATE OF MAINE
WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD
Board of Directors Business Meeting

January 13, 2026

A business meeting of the Maine Workers' Compensation Board of Directors was conducted remotely via Teams and in person at the Board's Central Office at 442 Civic Center Drive, Suite 100, Augusta, on Tuesday, January 13, 2026.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Rohde (*Executive Director/Chair*), Glenn Burroughs, Ronnie Green, Serina DeWolfe, Penny Picard, and Lynne Gaudette (*Directors*), and Richard N. Hewes (*General Counsel*) attended in person.

CALL TO ORDER

Executive Director Rohde called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. with over 30 people participating in person and via Teams. Board members introduced themselves for the recording.

I. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Draft Minutes of the December 9, 2025 Business Meeting of the Board of Directors

Director Burroughs MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 9, 2025, BOARD MEETING AS WRITTEN; Director Green SECONDED. **MOTION PASSED 6-0.**

II. SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Personnel Subcommittee

The Personnel subcommittee interviewed four of the five applicants for the position of mediator. The remaining interview will be conducted this week.

2. IME Subcommittee

The IME subcommittee is working on scheduling the interview with a doctor who has expressed interest in becoming a Board-approved examiner pursuant to 39-A MRSA § 312. The IME Subcommittee will conduct annual interviews with randomly selected examiners in the coming weeks.

3. Framework Subcommittee

The next Framework meeting will be held later in January.

III. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

1. Chamber of Commerce

Executive Director Rohde met with Amanda Johnson, from the Maine State Chamber of Commerce. She began working as a Government Relations Specialist last year. Amanda attended the Board meeting.

2. Caribou Office

Work at the new Caribou office is progressing. The Board anticipates moving in this spring.

3. Personnel

The Lewiston office has two vacant secretarial positions. If we are not able to hire for these positions quickly, a temp may be needed for at least one of the positions.

4. Rulemaking and Forms

The Rules group is wrapping up their review of this agency's rules.

IV. GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

1. Hardship Petition

The pro se employee in the case of *Glenda Charles v. Maine Staffing Services* has filed a petition for an extension of benefits due to extreme hardship under §213(1). The Board will review this petition at a hearing immediately after this Board meeting. The employee has not exhausted available benefits under §213 and a petition for award of benefits is pending before Administrative Law Judge Rooks.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Legislation Updates

The Second Regular Session of the 132nd Legislature has commenced. To date, there are no workers' compensation bills for the Board to address.

2. Rules Group Updates

The Rules group will meet again on January 21, 2026. The group has almost completed their review.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

1. Compliance Report

Carrie Pomeroy presented the 3rd Quarter 2025 Compliance Report draft. She noted that compliance for initial payments met the benchmark for the first time since 2020.

Director Burroughs MOVED TO ACCEPT THE 3RD QUARTER 2025 COMPLIANCE REPORT AS WRITTEN. Director Picard SECONDED. **MOTION PASSED 6-0.**

VII. QUESTIONS FROM ATTENDEES

At the end of the meeting, Matt Harmon from MEMIC inquired about letters that are being sent to injured employees regarding delays and staff turnover in the Advocate Division. Executive Director Rohde explained that the Board has advised injured employees to expect delays in processing claims in some Advocate Division offices and that claimants should consider seeking private counsel. The letters are only being sent out for claims that were not resolved at troubleshooting and are ready to be sent to the advocate division for representation.

The Board is reviewing cases, caseload distribution, and reassessing every 30 days. Additionally, the Board is reevaluating its traditional case-assignment process so that cases might be reassigned to advocates statewide versus the traditional method that is based on client location. While it is convenient to keep cases regionally assigned, using a statewide approach may be more helpful overall in reducing or avoiding delays when there are staff vacancies.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Director Picard MOVED TO ADJOURN. Director DeWolfe SECONDED. **MOTION PASSED 5-1.** (*Director Burroughs opposed.*)

The meeting formally adjourned at 10:24 a.m.