



WORKERS' COMPENSATION

AND SAFETY CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 13, 2026

8:00 am – 4:00 pm

NIU Center

1120 E. Diehl Rd | Naperville IL 60563

Agenda – Tentative – Subject to Change

7:00 a.m.–8:30 a.m.

Registration and Breakfast Networking – Expo is open

8:30 a.m.–8:55 a.m.

Opening Remarks and Introductions

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

8:55 a.m. – 9:45 a.m.

Panel Discussion – Combined panel (What keeps you up at night)

Moderator: William Lowry, Nyhan, Bambrick, Kinzie & Lowry, P.C.

Panelist: Lori Poppe Hiltabrand, Illinois Chamber of Commerce

Panelist: Christine Jagodzinski, Nyhan, Bambrick, Kinzie & Lowry, P.C.

Panelist: Ashley Bayless, Gallagher Asphalt

Panelist: Jeff Cravalho, Caterpillar

9:45 – 10:00 am

Morning Break and visit exhibitors

10:05 – 10:55

Breakout Sessions

Workshop #1: Back to Work – Getting the Injured Employee Back to Work, Diandra Abate and Matt Gorski, Amundsen Davis Law, LLC

Join Diandra Abate and Matt Gorski as they explore practical strategies for returning injured workers to productive employment safely, effectively, and efficiently. They will address common challenges employers encounter throughout the return-to-work process and provide tips on how to manage those issues. Lastly, they will examine proactive measures employers can implement to reduce the risk of repeat injuries and improve long-term safety and compliance.

Workshop #2: Accident Investigations/Best Practices for Post-Accident Procedures, Kevin Deuschle, IFMK Law

An employer's approach to accident investigation is a critical part of claim handling as it impacts the availability of good evidence, work culture, and often the final outcome in workers' compensation cases. We will discuss the legal perspective on the do's and don's when it comes to gathering documentation, effective communication, and maintaining a productive workforce.

Workshop #3: Announcement Coming soon

11:00 am – 12:00 pm

General Session – AI and Technology in Workers' Compensation

Keefe Campbell Biery & Associates - Shawn Biery and John Campbell

Explore how artificial intelligence is transforming the workers' compensation landscape, from claims processing and fraud detection to legal, ethical, and regulatory considerations. Learn how emerging technologies are creating new opportunities while presenting evolving challenges for attorneys, employers, insurers, and claims professionals.

12:00 p.m. – 12:40 pm

Visit Exhibitors & Lunch Buffet

12:40 -1:20 pm

General Session – Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission Update

Michael Brennan, Chairman, Illinois Workers' Compensation Commission

1:20 pm – 2:10 pm

General Session – The Do's and Don'ts of Mediating Workplace Injury: A Win, Win, Win Perspective

Dr. Doug Craig, President, Atlantic OccuPsych

2:10 p.m. – 2:25 p.m.

Afternoon Break & Visit Exhibitors

2:25 – 2:45 pm

General Session – 2026 Legislative Developments

Lori Poppe Hiltabrand, Illinois Chamber of Commerce

2:45 p.m. -3:45 p.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."

3:45 p.m.

Exhibitor Introductions, Drawings for Prizes & Closing Remarks for adjournment