

# WORKERS' COMPENSATION NEWS

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## **Annual Meeting at Salishan - - - Geoff Wren**

The 2015 Oregon State Bar Workers' Compensation Section's Annual Meeting will take place at the Salishan Spa and Golf Resort on Friday, May 8, 2015, to Saturday, May 9, 2015. The conference will kick off with a lunchtime keynote speech by Judge Erika Hadlock of the Oregon Court of Appeals and news from Board Chair Holly Somers and Presiding ALJ Joy Dougherty. Presentations will follow about collaborative communication with Jennifer Webster, Ph.D., how to try a case with ALJs Mark Mills and Bruce Smith and attorney Ron Atwood, elder abuse reporting, anatomy and common injuries of the lower extremity with Dr. Mallik Tella, third party claims with attorneys Brian Whitehead and Randy Pickett, and employee leave laws with attorney Dan Grinfas. We will cap off the conference with an appellate law update from Grieg Lowell and Julene Quinn.

## **PLEASE NOTE : Going-Forward Reception**

Are you a new member or new to the Oregon Workers' Compensation Section? Please come by and meet with members of the Going Forward Committee to visit and ask questions.

We would love to help address any issues you may have about our section and how we can improve your experience. We are meeting in the Lobby on Friday during the afternoon break - Time to be Announced. See you there!

## **Hearing Notices through the WCB Portal - What You Need to Know** By Greig Lowell, WCB Project Manager Users of the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB)

**Users of the Workers' Compensation Portal can now receive their Hearing Notice electronically by email. This feature is optional, not mandatory. Because it may represent a large change in your firm's internal processing, some explanation is in order.**

**The Hearing Notice email notification through the portal is "either/or." If anyone in your firm activates the email notification, WCB will no longer send you paper copies of the Hearing Notice. In my discussions with several firms who activated this notice, they were not aware it was an "either/or" process. Therefore, we recommend that you carefully consider your current internal process of docketing and calendaring before you activate this electronic notice. Your portal "contact detail" tab is where you can activate or de-activate this feature.**

**If you choose to activate Hearing Notice by email, we also recommend that you have at least two people receive the notification, or have access to that email inbox. No one wants to miss a Hearing Notice because a key employee is on vacation. As with all other portal notifications, you can find a complete list of your prior notifications in the "contact history" tab.**

### **Settlement Documents Project Update**

**The WCB Portal settlement documents project is underway. We have built some prototype screens, and have received positive feedback from stakeholders. The preliminary designs will allow you to upload settlement documents in a PDF format for all existing WCB cases, and also any new cases, whether or not a WCB case number exists.**

**As with other portal features, we plan to have an electronic acknowledgment and notification process. Through your portal account, you will be able to see if your case is still in process or approved. We anticipate the electronic settlement system will save mailing and processing time, allowing settlement proceeds to be distributed more rapidly.**

**We are still working out the specifications and requirements. Once that is done in the next few weeks, we will be able to give you an estimated completion date for the project. If you are interested in seeing the page designs and wish to provide feedback, please contact us at [portal.wcb@oregon.gov](mailto:portal.wcb@oregon.gov), or call (503) 934-0151.**

# **ARE YOU NEW TO THE OREGON WORKERS' COMPENSATION SECTION ?**

If you are a new member of the Workers' Compensation Section, or thinking about becoming a member, or are interested in learning more about the practice of Comp, the comings and goings and goings on of our Section feel free to contact one of the Members of the Sub-Committee:

The Chair of the Going Forward Sub-Committee is Steve Schoenfeld who can be reached at 503-236-8170)([Steve@schoenfeldlawyers.com](mailto:Steve@schoenfeldlawyers.com)). Steve represents Injured Workers.

The Members of the Sub-Committee are :

- From the Defense Bar :

Larry Schucht (971-242-5914) ([larsch@saif.com](mailto:larsch@saif.com)]

Krishna Balasubramani (503-412-3104)([kbalas@sbhlegal.com](mailto:kbalas@sbhlegal.com))

- Claimant's Attorneys

John M. Oswald (503-244-0064) ([listsender@lists.trialsmith.com](mailto:listsender@lists.trialsmith.com))

Rob Guarrasi (503-699-5588) ([rob3151@comcast.net](mailto:rob3151@comcast.net))

Feel free to email and/or phone one or more of the Sub-Committee Members if you have questions about Work Comp, want to chat about your particular concerns, or are just curious about this practice area. Our Section is relatively small and very welcoming.

Also, if you are a new Admittee and are interested in possibly obtaining a Mentor for the purposes of the Bar's New Lawyer Mentoring Program feel free to reach out to one of the above.

- - -Rob Guarrasi - Subcommittee Member

