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## **Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission**

### **Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Captures Inaugural 2016 IAIABC Innovation Award**

**[Richmond, VA]**- The Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission is pleased to announce its selection as a recipient of the inaugural, "Innovation Award" by the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions (IAIABC). Through innovation, the Commission is continuing to better serve employers and injured workers in the Commonwealth by utilizing technology and deploying resources in new ways. This prestigious award reflects the Commission's commitment to its vision of leading the nation as the most effective and innovative state agency.

The Commission has been recognized for "Innovation and Automation of Alternative Dispute Resolution in Virginia," an initiative to improve service delivery of administrative functions and increased productivity in response to the growing demand for alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services. The project effectively integrated the Commission's mediation efforts creating a streamlined electronic process for case assessment, issue identification, scheduling, and resolution. "Automation of ADR services has allowed us to meet the increased demand for mediation services while at the same time processing and resolving claims more efficiently. It is a cost and time saver -- a win/win for injured workers and Virginia employers alike," commented Deborah Blevins, Deputy Commissioner for the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission.

As noted on [IAIABC's website](#), the Innovation Awards grew out of a need to "share new initiatives and showcase jurisdictional efforts on system improvement." In its inaugural year, eight U.S. jurisdictions submitted projects ranging from agency performance scorecards to a safety grant program. "The judging panel was impressed by the quality of submissions and had a difficult time narrowing down and selecting the award recipients," noted IAIABC's Executive Director, Jennifer Wolf Horejsh. The Commission will be presented with its Innovation Award at the IAIABC 102<sup>nd</sup> Convention held from September 26-29, 2016 in Portland, Maine.

## **About The Commission**

The Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission (VWC), established in 1918, is an independent judicial and administrative state agency which oversees the workers' compensation system for employees, employers, and insurers. VWC interprets and applies the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act and resolves claims through hearings and mediation. A 2014 Oregon study ranked Virginia as the fourth-lowest cost system in the nation. Leading the way in electronic data and claims filing systems, in 2015 VWC processed over 52,000 claims and issued over 4,100 judicial opinions. VWC also administers the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund, the Uninsured Employer's Fund, and adjudicates claims under the Virginia Birth-Related Neurological Injury Compensation Program. Headquartered in Richmond, Virginia, VWC operates regional offices in Lebanon, Virginia Beach, Roanoke, Harrisonburg, Manassas, and Fairfax.

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For more information about the VWC, visit [www.workcomp.virginia.gov](http://www.workcomp.virginia.gov). For more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview, please call Charles Steepleton at 1-877-664-2566 or email [questions@workcomp.virginia.gov](mailto:questions@workcomp.virginia.gov).