



THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
WORKERS' COMPENSATION JUDICIARY, INC.
PRESENTS

16TH ANNUAL NATIONAL WORKERS' COMPENSATION JUDICIARY COLLEGE

PROGRAM AGENDA

AUGUST 18, 19 & 20, 2025

THE ORLANDO WORLD CENTER MARRIOTT,
ORLANDO, FLORIDA

ORGANIZATION

The National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary, Inc. (NAWCJ) is a professional nonprofit organization devoted exclusively to the adjudication of workers' compensation matters at the trial and appellate level. Since its formation in 2008, NAWCJ has sought to provide a national forum for the enhancement of the workers' compensation adjudicatory process and justice system; the improvement of the judicial skills of workers' compensation judges, adjudicators, and administrators through its educational conferences and publications; and the opportunity for these adjudicators and officials nationwide to periodically meet and discuss issues of mutual concern in a supportive environment.

NAWCJ is committed to diversity and a national presence in its officers and membership, and welcomes current and former state, federal, and local judges, administrative law judges, hearing officers, referees, commissioners, and agency heads, including appellate authorities. Members have come from the following states: Arkansas, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia, Wisconsin and Wyoming. Associate non-voting membership is open to attorneys, law professors, and other professionals involved in the field of workers' compensation law.

MISSION

The mission and goals of NAWCJ are:

- To provide high quality educational training and forums to workers' compensation adjudicators and administrators on matters unique to this system of justice and commonality of issues, regardless of the differing states' substantive workers' compensation laws;
- To develop strong working relationships with other professional organizations that share NAWCJ's objectives for the advancement of workers' compensation law and the improvement of its justice system;
- To develop mutual professional relationships and exchanges of information among its membership;
- To promote scholarly research and discussion regarding issues of common interest to the nation's workers' compensation adjudicators; and
- To monitor changes in the states' workers' compensation legislation and executive directives that impact the adjudication of workers' compensation claims and, when requested by these authorities, to address matters for improvement of the justice system;

It is also the association's objective to work with other educational-based groups in providing leadership and promote justice within the workers' compensation system. NAWCJ presents, in partnership with other organizations, its National Workers' Compensation Judiciary College in conjunction with the annual Workers' Compensation Educational Conference (established in 1949 and currently attracting approximately 7,000 attendees). The educational conference will take place in August this year at the Marriott World Center in Orlando, Florida. As a part of the association's Judiciary College, attendees are permitted to participate in the educational conference, one of the largest gatherings of workers' compensation professionals in the United States, taking advantage of breakouts and the exhibitor halls. For information concerning the annual Workers' Compensation Educational Conference, please refer to its website at www.wci360.com. Continuing legal education credits will be applied for from the various jurisdictions represented by attendees.

WWW.NAWCJ.ORG

GENERAL INFORMATION

The date of the National Workers' Compensation Judiciary College has been set for August 18, 19 & 20, 2025. The College will be held at The Orlando World Center Marriott, 8701 World Center Drive, Orlando, FL 32821, in conjunction with the 79th Annual Workers' Compensation Educational Conference.

PROGRAM:

The program for the Judiciary College is designed to address issues uniquely related to the adjudication of workers' compensation matters allowing participants to interact with others from different jurisdictions on issues of common concern. Although NAWCJ allows associate membership, the College is exclusively for workers' compensation adjudicators and administrators (both at the trial and appellate levels), allowing for a free and open interchange of ideas to improve the adjudicatory process in workers' compensation systems throughout the country. The Judiciary College program will also take advantage of select courses presented by the concurrent Workers' Compensation Educational Conference. For a copy of the complete program of the Workers' Compensation Educational Conference, go to www.wci360.com.



ENTERTAINMENT:

Fortunately, the College is not an “all work and no play” experience. This year, on Monday night, the Conference presents Big and Rich. Complimentary heavy hors d’oeuvres and beverages will be served.

CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION INFORMATION:

Continuing legal education credits will be available to the attendees of the Judiciary College. When registering, please note the jurisdiction or association from which you seek certification.

SHUTTLE:

Complimentary shuttle service will be provided between the Marriott and the Caribe as follows: Sunday 7:00 am – 12:00 midnight, Monday 6:30 am – 1:00 am, Tuesday 7:30 am – 12:00 midnight, and Wednesday 7:00 am – 3:00 pm.

ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP:

The mission statement for the National Association of Workers’ Compensation Judiciary, Inc. (NAWCJ) is contained in this brochure. Association membership is encouraged by members of the judiciary and the non-judiciary. Annual membership fees for the judiciary is \$75.00 per year, which is included in the College Registration Fee, or \$195 for three years. Associate membership for the non-judiciary members is \$250.00 per year.



SPONSORSHIPS

Sponsorships in support of the educational efforts of the Judiciary College are available in the following categories:

Judiciary College Sponsorship - \$1000

- Acknowledgement in the Judiciary College materials
- Logo on a sign inside the Judiciary College classroom
- Video and verbal acknowledgement at the Judiciary College
- Attend the reception with the judges and regulators
- Acknowledgement on the NAWCJ website
- Acknowledgement in NAWCJ's Lex and Verum newsletter
- Table-Top Booth (limited number of booths available)

Table-Top Booth - \$500

- Includes a 6 ft. draped table and a chair
- Acknowledgement in the Judiciary College materials

Beverage Break Sponsorship - \$250 per break; \$500 per day

Each Beverage Break Sponsorship includes:

- A sign with company logo posted at the break station and a small cocktail table for company materials
- Acknowledgement in the Judiciary College materials

Beverage breaks will be held in the foyer for the following dates/times:

Monday, August 18th

9:50 – 10:00 a.m.

1:30 – 1:45 p.m.

2:50 – 3:00 p.m.

Tuesday, August 19th

10:50 – 11:00 a.m.

11:50 – 12:00 p.m.

2:00 – 2:10 p.m.

3:00 – 3:10 p.m.

Wednesday, August 20th

10:50 – 11:00 a.m.

PROGRAM AGENDA

MONDAY, AUGUST 18, 2025

8:00 – 8:50 am **Registration**
Outside of Grand Ballrooms 1 - 6,
Convention Level

NATIONAL WORKERS' COMPENSATION JUDICIARY COLLEGE

Limited to Workers' Compensation Adjudicators and Regulators only.
Grand Ballrooms 4 - 6, Convention Level

8:50 – 9:00 am **Welcome and Introductions**

9:00 – 9:50 am **Judicial Security:
Understanding Threats and
Staying Safe**

Michael Jones
Major Security Consulting & Design, Inc.

Judicial security is a growing concern due to increased threats and violence against judges and courts. Mike Jones will lead a dynamic presentation to help prepare you and your co-workers to respond to security threats, violence or threats of violence, and active shooter situations.

9:50 – 10:00 am **Break**

10:00 – 11:00 am **Evidence - What Does it
Matter? A Panel Discussion**

Honorable Jacquelyn Newman, Judge
Florida Division of Workers' Compensation

Honorable Amanda Luedtke
*Administrative Law Judge
Wisconsin Department of Administration
Office of Worker's Compensation Hearings
Division of Hearings and Appeals*

Honorable Ferrell Newman
*Commissioner
Virginia Workers' Compensation
Commission*

Honorable Frank R. McKay
*Appellate Judge and Director
Georgia State Board of Workers'
Compensation*

Honorable Michael Alvey
*Chairman
Kentucky Workers' Compensation Board*

This panel consists of a moderator and 2 trial judges and 2 appellate judges, with 1 trial judge and 1 appellate judge from jurisdictions that have an evidence code, and one trial judge and one appellate judge from jurisdictions that don't have an evidence code. The panel will (1) discuss cases from each of the represented jurisdictions where rulings on the admissibility of evidence determined or materially affected the outcome; and/or (2) if there's time, the panel will discuss hypotheticals and whether/how outcomes might change, depending on the existence of strict rules of evidence.

11:00 – 12:00 pm **Ethics for Workers'
Compensation Adjudicators -
What & Why?**

John J. Lazzara, Esq.
*Adjunct Professor
Workers' Compensation Skills & Law
FSU College of Law*

Honorable Neera Bahl
*Appellate Judge and Director
Georgia State Board of Workers'
Compensation*

A Code of Conduct or Ethics for Workers' Compensation Tribunals is integral to the mission of fair and impartial adjudication of workers' compensation claims. Such codes or standards are essential to promote, foster, and preserve the importance, integrity, and independence of the tribunal.

12:00 – 12:40 pm **Annual Business Meeting and
Lunch**
Grand Ballrooms 1 & 2

12:40 – 1:30 pm **Comparative Law Panel**

Honorable Shannon Bruno-Bishop
*Judge, Louisiana Office of Workers'
Compensation*

Honorable Lee Bruner
*Judge, Montana Workers' Compensation
Court*

Honorable Keith Cardoza Jr.
*Associate Judge
Rhode Island Workers' Compensation
Court*

Honorable Jonathan Walker
*Judge, Florida Division of Workers'
Compensation*

It is always interesting to learn how other jurisdictions' policies and procedures vary from ours. The Comparative Law Panel is a perennial NAWCJ favorite where assembled adjudicators get a view of some of the substantive and procedural similarities and differences in states' workers' compensation laws. This panel will discuss the different agency structures, hearing processes, appellate processes, and settlement processes, as well as the approaches states take in addressing common issues confronted by workers' compensation adjudicators. Audience participation expands the scope of the panelists' perspectives, resulting in, what is always, a very exciting session.

1:30 – 1:45 pm **Break**

1:45 – 2:00 pm **Announcements**

2:00 – 2:50 pm **From Advocate to
Adjudicator: The Jump from
Lawyer to Judge**

Honorable Michael Alvey
*Chairman, Kentucky Workers'
Compensation Board*

Honorable Pamela Beason Johnson
*Workers' Compensation Judge
Tennessee Court of Workers'
Compensation Claims*

After grueling years in law school and practice, we all adapted to the role of advocate. We learned to “think like a lawyer.” Every lawyer has tools, tricks, and practices that make one successful as an advocate. With far less time to transition, a new judge must learn to think like an adjudicator and leave the role of advocate behind. This transition must be made in the way one thinks, researches, and writes. A judge's involvement in a case is vastly different than a lawyer's involvement. Issues can occupy attorneys for months or years, but before the Court, the judge addresses and resolves the issues quickly. Join this panel for a lively and interactive discussion of the challenges new judges face and learn to successfully transition from advocate to adjudicator.

2:50 – 3:00 pm **Break**

3:00 – 4:50 pm **Judging in the Moment**

Honorable Pamela Beason Johnson
*Workers' Compensation Judge
Tennessee Court of Workers'
Compensation Claims*

Attendees will view scripted videos of mock hearings with various vignettes/scenarios commonly seen in workers' compensation disputes. Judge Johnson will then lead a lively discussion with the attendees to examine ways to address the issues presented in the videos.

4:50 pm **Adjourn**

5:00 – 6:00 pm **NAWCJ and SAWCA Reception**
Grand Ballrooms 1 & 2

TUESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2025

8:45 – 9:45 am **Live Surgery**

Palms Ballroom, Canary

10:00 – 10:50 am **“To Be or Not to Be - A Good
Writer**

Grand Ballrooms 4-6, Convention Level

Honorable Melanie May
*Judge, Florida Fourth District Court of
Appeal*

Writing clear and understandable reports, recommendations, and orders is an essential part of being a judge. There are tricks of the trade which can help you write more effectively. This session will focus on ways to make your writing more clear and concise, and at the same time allow you to better communicate your findings, facts, legal conclusions, and ultimate disposition. The session will also help you to ensure your work withstands appellate review and is understood by the parties and the public.

10:50 – 11:00 am **Break**

11:00 – 11:50 am **We'll be back...**

Honorable Stephanie Kinney
*Administrative Law Judge, Kentucky
Workers' Compensation Board*

Honorable David Langham
*Deputy Chief Judge, Florida Division of
Workers' Compensation*

AI is everywhere, as in misinformation about what it is, how it works, and where it is taking us. Today's news becomes stale in hours and the unprecedented pace of technological change is both exhausting and frightening. Staying current? Not if you glance away. AI is already touching more than we realize and it is more persistent, pernicious, and relentless than even Kyle Reese realized: “It Doesn't Feel Pity, Or Remorse, Or Fear, And It Absolutely Will Not Stop, Ever.” Terminator, MGM, 1984. So, you can sit on the porch and scream at it or find out how to understand it, engage it, and leverage it. This tech revolution is no different than so many before, and our reactions should not be either.

11:50 – 12:00 pm **Break**

12:00 – 1:00 pm **Lunch**
Grand Ballrooms 1 & 2

1:00 – 2:00 pm **The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly: Bizarre, Unusual, and Pivotal Workers' Compensation Cases from 2024 and 2025**

Honorable Wesley G. Marshall
Commissioner, Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission

Commissioner Marshall will lead a lively, interactive discussion of bizarre, interesting, and pivotal workers' compensation cases from across the country for 2024 and 2025. There will be plenty of opportunities to ponder and learn. Don't miss the chance to weigh in and offer your opinion on why some workers' compensation courts got it right or got it wrong!

2:00 – 2:10 pm **Break**

2:10 – 3:00 pm **The Challenges of Adjudicating Medical Issues in a Workers' Compensation Case in an Ever-Changing Healthcare System**

Dr. Robert Snyder
Medical Director, Tennessee Bureau of Workers' Compensation

Mr. Robert Wilson
President
WorkCompCollege.com

Honorable Edward Wise
Deputy Commissioner, Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission

This panel will discuss how the ever-changing delivery of medical care is impacting the adjudication of workers' compensation cases. We will discuss the evolution of the delivery of medical care in a workers' compensation claim and how those issues have, and will, affect us as adjudicators.

3:00 – 3:10 pm **Break**

3:10 – 4:00 pm **AMA Guides: Understanding Their History and Application**

Dr. Chris Brigham
Brigham & Associates

Mr. Kenneth Eichler
Health Solutions
American Medical Association

Honorable David L. Langham
Deputy Chief Judge, Florida Division of Workers' Compensation

The AMA Guides play an integral role in workers' compensation cases. This comprehensive session will provide workers' compensation judges with essential knowledge about the historical context, latest developments, and practical application of the AMA Guides, with particular emphasis on its implications for judicial decision-making.

4:30 pm **Adjourn**

6:00 pm **NAWCJ Dinner**

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 20, 2025

Grand Ballrooms 4-6, Convention Level

9:00 – 10:00 am **Sixty Tips in Sixty Minutes**

Honorable David L. Langham
Deputy Chief Judge, Florida Division of Workers' Compensation

Honorable Stephanie Kinney
Administrative Law Judge
Kentucky Workers' Compensation Board

Honorable Timothy W. Conner
Presiding Judge, Workers' Compensation Appeals Board
Tennessee Bureau of Workers' Compensation

Honorable Robert Rassp
Presiding Judge
Workers' Compensation Appeals Board
Los Angeles

Mr. Stuart Colburn, Esq.
Downs & Stanford, P.C.

In this fast-paced presentation, four judges from around the country will discuss best practices for workers' compensation adjudicators. The moderator will highlight a one-sentence "tip" offered by one of the judges, give that judge one minute to expound on why that tip is important, and offer the other judges an opportunity to discuss the topic further as time allows. This presentation will focus on the importance of impartiality, timeliness, handling litigants, managing the courtroom, and writing orders and opinions.

10:00 – 10:50 am **Generational Differences and Perspectives from the Bench**

Honorable Keith Cardoza Jr.
Associate Judge, Rhode Island Worker's Compensation Court

Honorable Amanda Luedtke
*Administrative Law Judge
Wisconsin Department of Administration
Office of Worker's Compensation Hearings
Division of Hearings & Appeals*

Honorable Kenneth Switzer
*Worker's Compensation Judge
Tennessee Court of Workers' Compensation Claim*

Honorable Jason Cording
*Deputy Commissioner
Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission*

For the first time in history, we have four generations represented in the workforce in large numbers - Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, and Gen Z. As they work together, the generational differences in dealing with technology, language, communication and approaches to work present challenges and opportunities in the courtroom and legal community. This panel will engage in an interactive conversation discussing the generational differences and ways to turn the challenges into opportunities.

10:50 – 11:00 am **Break**

11:00 – 11:50 am **Mental Health Under High Stress**

John Lesko, Esq.
Florida Lawyers Assistance

Alicia L Latimore
*Administrative Judge
Problem Solving Courts Division
Ninth Judicial Circuit of Florida*

This session will explore features of the legal profession and practitioners' high susceptibility to behavioral, mental health and substance use difficulties, as well as practices that can help legal professionals avoid potential impairments and develop greater success, fulfillment, and happiness in their careers and personal lives.

11:50 am **Closing Comments and Adjournment**

REGISTRATION FORM

Name

Agency Name (as you wish it to appear on name badge)

Title

Business Mailing Address

Agency Website

City

State

ZIP

Telephone Number

Fax Number

Email Address

Continuing Legal Education or Bar License Number

State/Jurisdiction/Association

Will you attend the lunch on Monday, August 18, 2025? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Will you attend the lunch on Tuesday, August 19, 2025? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Will you attend the dinner at Big John's Rockin' BBQ on Tuesday, August 19, 2025? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, do you need transportation to Big John's Rockin' BBQ? ☐ Yes ☐ No Cell number: _____

☐ Check here if you have special needs that require attention.

HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS: For your convenience a block of sleeping rooms has been reserved at the Caribe Royale Resort & Conference Center (8101 World Center Drive, Orlando, FL 32821) for this event. The sleeping room rate is \$140.00 single/double per night, plus tax. Cut-off date is July 14, 2025. Shuttle service will be provided to and from the Marriott World Center from the Caribe. The Caribe has a self-parking fee of \$20.00, plus tax, per day for overnight guests, plus a resort fee of \$20 per night, which includes wifi. Valet parking \$40.00 per night. To make your reservation go to <https://book.passkey.com/event/50956607/owner/186/home>. Sleeping rooms must be confirmed with credit card along with first night's deposit, refundable up to 3 days in advance of arrival. Checkout prior to guest's reserved checkout date will result in an early checkout fee equal to 1 night's room, plus tax.

COLLEGE REGISTRATION FEE: Advance Registration for Members of NAWCJ - \$225; \$265 after July 20, 2025. Advance Registration for Non-Members of NAWCJ - \$350; \$360 after July 20, 2025. Call for discounted registration fees for five or more attendees from the same agency.

ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP: To become a member of NAWCJ please select from the following:

☐ Member \$75 - one year (Workers' Compensation Judges)

☐ Associate Member \$250 - one year

☐ Member \$195 - three years (Workers' Compensation Judges)

SPONSORSHIPS: Please select sponsorship type:

☐ Judiciary College Sponsorship \$1000

☐ Table-Top Booth \$500

Beverage Break Sponsorship - ☐ \$250 per break ☐ \$500 per day

METHOD OF PAYMENT: ☐ Check ☐ Mastercard ☐ VISA ☐ American Express ☐ Discover

Credit Card Account Number

Expiration Date

CVV

Signature

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: The National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary, Inc.
FEIN # 26-4598530

ONLINE REGISTRATION AVAILABLE AT WWW.NAWCJ.ORG.

REGISTRATION: To register, mail the completed registration form, along with credit card information (VISA/MC/AmX/Discover) or a check made payable to: The National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary, Inc., P.O. Box 16126, Tallahassee, Florida 32317; email form to carolyn@blackcatnetworks.net; or register online at www.nawcj.org. Registration for the Judiciary College will include conference handout materials, access to the exhibit area, Monday night reception, lunches, dinner at Big John's Rockin' BBQ, and participation in the Annual Workers' Compensation Educational Conference. The registration fee is \$225.00 for members of the NAWCJ; \$350.00 for non-members. Onsite Registration is \$265.00 for NAWCJ members; \$360.00 for non-members, or if received after July 19, 2025 For more information, contact the National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary at (321) 946-2892. This is a "business casual" program. **YOU MUST BE AN ADJUDICATOR OR REGULATOR TO ATTEND.**

Contributions, gifts or dues to the National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes.

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