

What do Injured Workers Want?

The Injured Workers' Movement has **4 key demands**.

- eliminate experience rating
- eliminate deeming
- provide universal worker's compensation coverage
- provide full cost of living protection

In addition to these four points, we have developed a vision for what the Ontario workers' compensation system should look like. The blueprint for that vision can be found in the 2004 document "*Platform for Change*". The document was adopted by the Ontario Network of Injured Workers Group and the Ontario Federation of Labour in 2004, and was revised in 2013.

Key Concepts from the Platform

In Ontario, we need a workers' compensation system that fully compensates and supports those suffering from workplace injuries and illnesses, that helps injured workers return to employment with dignity, and that effectively promotes workplace safety. Key features of such a system are highlighted below:

The purpose of the workers' compensation system shall be to

- compensate injured workers and survivors
- recognize and compensate all work-related occupational injuries and diseases
- provide inclusive no-fault coverage to all workers and to secondary victims of occupational disease

The workers' compensation system shall be

- administered by a public board named the Workers' Compensation Board
- funded collectively by employers
- reviewed publicly at regular intervals

Compensation shall

- reflect full income loss into retirement
- reflect loss to quality of life
- maintain employee benefit coverage and CPP contributions
- be based on real-life wage loss, not deemed earnings
- be adjusted fully for cost of living

Decision-makers shall

- be timely, accessible, and responsive
- be highly trained, well paid, and compassionate
- provide translation services when necessary
- provide clear written information to workers about the system and their claims

The workers compensation system shall support health care that

- is the same as for all Canadians in a public non-tiered system
- includes time to heal
- ensures the worker's right to choose health care providers
- respects the worker's treating health care providers

The workers compensation system shall include vocational and social rehabilitation that

- is comprehensive and consultative
- recognizes and compensates for injured workers' limitations
- recognises and compensates for limited employer interest in employing injured workers
- provides quality public rehabilitation services, including ESL

Access to Justice shall be maintained by

- ensuring the system is non-adversarial
- eliminating time limits for worker appeals
- limiting employer rights to appeal to initial entitlement and some return to work issues
- fully disclosing all claim documents to injured workers
- deciding appeals through an independent, competent tripartite Tribunal not bound by Board policy

There shall be sufficient funding for arms length programmes and other independent institutions including

- the Office of the Worker Advisor
- Community Legal Clinics and Legal Aid Certificates
- support systems such as the Occupational Health Clinics of Ontario Workers and the Workers' Health and Safety Centre
- the Institute for Work and Health or other research initiatives
- the Ontario Network of Injured Workers Groups

Workplace Health and Safety shall be improved by

- basing incentives, if any, on factual and accountable safety improvements
- prohibiting employer's use of workplace incentive programmes
- eliminating experience rating programmes
- ensuring the Ministry of Labour vigorously prosecutes violations
- ensuring the Ministry of Labour undertakes frequent and detailed workplace site visits.