



THUNDER BAY & DISTRICT INJURED WORKERS SUPPORT GROUP

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Monte McNaughton
Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development
400 University Avenue, Toronto, Ontario

Dear Minister McNaughton,

The Thunder Bay & Dist. Injured Workers Support Group urge the Minister of Labour and the *Government of Ontario* to give injured workers an active and meaningful role in the hiring process for the WSIB's new President and CEO as well as the new Chair.

Decision makers can do so by using the job description below - written by injured workers themselves - as a guide when posting the job and engaging in the hiring process.

Job Overview:

- The President and CEO oversees the running of the Province of Ontario's compensation board. The role of the compensation board is, as legislation states, "to provide compensation and other benefits to workers and to the survivors of deceased workers," as well as to manage finances, and facilitate rehabilitation and return to meaningful work, when appropriate.
- This position requires strong dedication to the community and principles of justice, and the ideal candidate should be able to demonstrate these capacities through previous employment and volunteer experience in a setting relatable to worker's rights, work injury, disability rights, etc.
- The organization's new leader should see injured workers as the primary recipients of the services provided by the WSIB, rather than as "customers" or "stakeholders" whose priorities are less important than those of employers.

Day to day tasks include:

- Meeting with injured workers and their families, primary healthcare providers, worker representatives, injured worker groups, and others who have first-hand experience of the impact.
- of decisions made by the WSIB, in order to learn where the system is failing.

- Studying compensation systems in the districts with the highest injured worker satisfaction rates, and instituting bold and creative changes to the system that put injured workers first.
- Working diligently to reduce stigma within the WSIB by educating employers and WSIB staff about the damage that is done when disabled workers are treated with suspicion, as if they are criminals.
- Proactively ensuring employers are compliant with WSIB rules around claim suppression, injury reporting, worker education, workplace signage, etc.

Additional Qualifications:

- Lived experience as an injured worker (or family member of an injured worker, or healthcare provider to injured workers) is an asset. An understanding of the problems with for-profit insurance industry practices is a must.
- The new president should possess an understanding of holistic medical approaches (i.e. understanding that physical, psychological and emotional illnesses and injuries are interrelated and cannot be placed into silos).
- Strong comprehension of the history of workers' compensation, and a dedication to its founding principles including: compensation as a no fault, non-adversarial system; compensation as long as the injury lasts; employer funded, collective liability; and compensation's continuing existence as an independent public agency. Patience, open heartedness, and honesty are a high priority.

Immediate Priorities:

- Rewrite the WSIB's COVID-19 policy to include presumptive coverage for workers in vulnerable sectors.
- Create and oversee a task force that will aggressively look for holes in the compensation system, finding workers who fall through the cracks or face systemic barriers, and implementing progressive changes to the system to make sure no one is left behind.
- Specifically, work with all levels of government and civil society to create and institute innovated measures that protect migrant workers from dangerous workplaces, and from having to leave the province immediately after an injury.
- Address the 90%+ job dissatisfaction rate among WSIB employees by ending pressure on front-line staff to reject claims, lightening workload, and developing new training systems less focussed on corporate bottom-line goals.

- Establish a Board funded, arms-length crisis care initiative for injured workers including a crisis line and improved access to long term mental health care.

Hiring Process:

Shortlisted candidates will be interviewed by a hiring committee that includes those most affected by their actions, including injured workers, advocates, and healthcare professionals, among others.

Thank you for your consideration of our request. We would be happy to provide more information and help with the hiring process.

Sincerely,

Eugene Lefrancois
President

Cc
Premier Doug Ford
Leader of the Provincial NDP
Leader of the Provincial Liberals