

Pat McCrory, Governor
Andrew T. Heath, Chairman



Charlton L. Allen, Commissioner
Bernadine S. Ballance, Commissioner
Linda Cheatham, Commissioner
Danny Lee McDonald, Commissioner
Tammy R. Nance, Commissioner

North Carolina Industrial Commission

August 3, 2015

New Deputy Commissioners Appointed

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Raleigh, N.C. - North Carolina Industrial Commission Chairman Andrew T. Heath has announced the appointment of seven deputy commissioners. Chairman Heath has appointed Leigha Blackwell Sink and Jesse "Jay" Tillman and re-appointed current Deputy Commissioners Philip A. Baddour, III, J. Brad Donovan, James C. Gillen, Myra L. Griffin, and Adrian A. Phillips. All appointments are for six-year terms. Deputy commissioners function as the Industrial Commission's trial-level judges and hold hearings in contested workers' compensation cases, state tort claims, and other matters.

"Deputy commissioners play a significant role in protecting the rights of North Carolina's workers and businesses," said Chairman Heath. "I am very pleased to appoint this experienced and skilled group to hear and adjudicate the Commission's diverse caseload."

Leigha Blackwell Sink previously practiced workers' compensation law with the firm of Gallivan, White & Boyd, P.A. in Charlotte, NC. Prior to her time in private practice, she served as an Assistant Attorney General for the South Carolina Attorney General's Office, and clerked for South Carolina Circuit Court Judge Edgar W. Dickson. Ms. Sink is a graduate of the University of North Carolina, and earned her law degree from the University of South Carolina. Ms. Sink is admitted to practice law in both North Carolina and South Carolina.

Jesse "Jay" Tillman most recently practiced general civil litigation with The Bond Helping Law Group in Charlotte, NC. Previously, he spent ten years in both the Raleigh and Charlotte offices of Cranfill, Sumner, and Hartzog, LLP. Mr. Tillman is an officer in the United States Navy Reserve and recently served as Special Assistant and Operations Risk Management Officer to the Fifth Fleet Commander in Bahrain. He is a recipient of the Legion of Merit and Defense Meritorious Service Medal. Mr. Tillman is a graduate of the University of North Carolina, the Campbell University School of Law, and is admitted to practice law in both North Carolina and South Carolina.

Philip A. Baddour, III joined the Industrial Commission as a Deputy Commissioner in November 2000. From 1996 to 1999, Mr. Baddour practiced law in Goldsboro, primarily in the areas of personal injury and workers' compensation. In 1999, he joined the North Carolina Attorney General's Office as an Assistant Attorney General in the Tort Claims Section. As an Assistant Attorney General, he represented state agencies in workers' compensation and tort claim actions. Before entering law school, he served as a Legislative Assistant to Congressman Martin Lancaster. Mr. Baddour is a graduate of the University of North Carolina, the Campbell University School of Law, and also serves as a First Lieutenant in the North Carolina National Guard.

J. Brad Donovan came to the Industrial Commission in 1997 as a Special Deputy Commissioner and was appointed a Deputy Commissioner in October 2003. Prior to that time, he spent two years as a clerk in the Raleigh law firm of Edmisten and Weaver, and eight years as a member of Staff Counsel to the North Carolina Court of Appeals. Mr. Donovan is a graduate of the University of Kansas and the North Carolina Central University School of Law. He has published law review articles in the areas of family law and appellate practice.

James C. Gillen has served as a Deputy Commissioner since May 2005. He previously served as a Special Deputy Commissioner as well as an Agency Legal Specialist for several former Commissioners. He is a graduate of North Carolina State University and the Campbell University School of Law.

Myra L. Griffin has served as a Deputy Commissioner since February 2005. Before her appointment as a Deputy Commissioner, Ms. Griffin worked as an Assistant Attorney General with the Tort Claims Section of the N.C. Department of Justice. In this capacity, she served as Agency Counsel to the Industrial Commission and prosecuted cases with the Fraud Investigations Unit. Ms. Griffin previously served the Commission as both an Agency Legal Specialist and Special Deputy Commissioner. She is a graduate of the University of North Carolina and the North Carolina Central University School of Law.

Adrian A. Phillips joined the Industrial Commission as a Deputy Commissioner in May 2002. Prior to her appointment, she worked as an Assistant Attorney General in the Tort Claims Section of the Department of Justice and she was assigned to the Industrial Commission as Agency Counsel. She served as Supervisor and Prosecutor of white-collar crime in the Medicaid Fraud Division from 1998-2000. Ms. Phillips also served as an Assistant District Attorney in Caswell and Person counties. She is a graduate of Bennett College and the North Carolina Central University School of Law.

Contact: Kim Genardo
Director of Communications
North Carolina Department of Commerce
(919) 733-5082