



NORTH CAROLINA INDUSTRIAL COMMISSION

June 2022 Quarterly Update

Full Commission Section

- Governor Roy Cooper has reappointed Myra L. Griffin to serve a second 6-year term as a Commissioner on the North Carolina Industrial Commission beginning July 1, 2022, subject to confirmation by the North Carolina General Assembly. Griffin, who was designated Vice-Chair of the Commission by Governor Cooper in February of 2019, has dedicated her legal career to the work of the Commission. Since joining the Commission in 1998, she has served in various important capacities and has made innumerable contributions. Her Commission experience includes both litigation (while serving as Assistant Attorney General assigned to the Commission) and quasi-judicial work (while serving in the Executive Secretary's Office, Deputy Commissioner Section, and Full Commission Section). Griffin received her B.A. degree in Political Science from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and her J.D. degree, *cum laude*, from North Carolina Central University School of Law.

- Amber May has returned to the Industrial Commission as General Counsel after serving for 8 years as Rules Review Commission Counsel at the North Carolina Office of Administrative Hearings. May previously worked in the Full Commission Section of the Industrial Commission as Law Clerk to former Chair Pamela Young. May earned her law degree from North Carolina Central University School of Law and her bachelor's degree in Business Administration from Meredith College.

Deputy Commissioner Section

- Anne Harris was appointed to serve as a Deputy Commissioner in March of 2022, and she is primarily hearing cases in the Triad region of the State. Harris brings extensive relevant experience to the Commission, having represented North Carolina individuals in workers' compensation claims for 29 years and having over 6 years of legal experience in the areas of elder law and estate planning. Harris earned her undergraduate degree from Emory & Henry College, her law degree from Wake Forest University School of Law, and her L.L.M. in Elder Law from Stetson University College of Law. While practicing law, Harris was a North

Carolina Dispute Resolution Commission certified mediator. She also was certified as a specialist in the area of workers' compensation law by the North Carolina State Bar.

- Michelle Denning also was appointed to serve as a Deputy Commissioner in March of 2022, and she is hearing noninsured cases throughout the State. For the past 16 years, Denning has worked in various capacities at the Industrial Commission and other State agencies that interact with the Commission. Denning joined the Industrial Commission in 2006, serving for 9 years in multiple roles including Full Commission Law Clerk, Legal Counsel to the Chairman, and Special Deputy Commissioner. In 2015, she joined the N.C. Department of Justice as an Assistant Attorney General, where she represented the Industrial Commission in noninsured cases and penalty enforcement matters and later represented the N.C. Department of Public Safety (DPS) in workers' compensation litigation. In 2018, Denning moved to DPS as Assistant General Counsel where she managed workers' compensation cases on behalf of the agency. In 2019, she returned to the Industrial Commission as General Counsel. Denning earned her undergraduate degree from Meredith College and her law degree from Regent University School of Law. She also holds a North Carolina Dispute Resolution Commission mediation certification (inactive status).

- Patrick Wooten was appointed to serve as a Deputy Commissioner in May of 2022, and he is assigned to the Commission's Raleigh Office. Wooten brings a wealth of workers' compensation experience to the Industrial Commission, having served in the Workers' Compensation Section of the North Carolina Department of Justice as a Special Deputy Attorney General since 2003. Over the past nineteen years, Wooten has litigated hundreds of complex workers' compensation cases before the Industrial Commission on behalf of numerous State agencies, departments, and institutions. He also has represented State entities seeking statutory workers' compensation lien recovery from third-party cases in Superior Court. Wooten's legal experience also includes substantial appellate work, including representing the State in workers' compensation and criminal appeals at the North Carolina Court of Appeals and North Carolina Supreme Court. Prior to joining the Department of Justice in 2003, Wooten worked as a Law Clerk and Research Assistant for North Carolina Supreme Court Justice G.K. Butterfield, Jr. Wooten earned his undergraduate degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his J.D. from North Carolina Central University.

Mediation Section

- After nearly 25 years as Dispute Resolution Coordinator, Deputy Commissioner John C. Schafer retired from the Industrial Commission as of February 1, 2022.

Schafer's contributions to the Commission's Mediation Section were numerous and invaluable, and the Commission greatly appreciates his dedicated service. Under Schafer's leadership, the Industrial Commission's mediation program underwent a series of changes that helped the Commission to more efficiently administer litigated cases in a way that benefits the parties. Schafer was instrumental in the adoption of Commission mediation rule revisions that helped eliminate unnecessary delays in the mediation process, and he implemented changes to ensure the expeditious setting of cases not resolved at mediation.

- Chief Deputy Commissioner Tammy Nance began serving as the Commission's Acting Dispute Resolution Coordinator effective February 1, 2022. Nance has a keen understanding of the Commission's mediation program and the important role it plays in the workers' compensation system, having served as a certified mediator while practicing law in the private sector.
- Effective June 1, 2022, the Industrial Commission will begin emailing Report of Mediator invoices to counsel of record for defendants in all cases where an employer or carrier has legal representation. *These invoices will be emailed by the Commission to defense counsel **only**. Upon receipt of a client's invoice, defense counsel should immediately forward the Report of Mediator invoice to the appropriate employer or carrier representative for payment.* Pursuant to Rule 11 NCAC 23E .0203, payment shall be made in full by the employer or employer's carrier upon receipt of the Commission's Report of Mediator invoice.

Clerk's Section

- All carriers, third-party administrators, and self-insured employers are required to provide the Commission with an email address for service of claim-related documents in cases where the Commission does not have email contact information for a specific representative assigned to the claim, pursuant to Rule 11 NCAC 23A.0109(d). This Rule requires a general email address for receipt of letters and notices related to claims when the Commission has NOT been advised of a specific person handling the claim. (Note: Once the Commission has been advised of a specific representative assigned to the claim, then correspondence regarding the claim will be sent directly to that person). To assist parties with easily providing the required email address to the Commission, the Clerk of the Commission issued a memo on April 27, 2022, which contains instructions and which can be filled out and returned to the Commission via email at contactinfo@ic.nc.gov. The April 27, 2022 memo can be accessed by opening the link [here](#).