

20 24 | ANNUAL REPORT



WAO
Yukon Workers'
Advocate Office



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Advocate Office

CONTACT US

Phone 867-667-5324

Toll free in Yukon 1-800-661-0408, ext 5324

Fax 867-393-6346

workers.advocate@yukon.ca

yukon.ca/en/learn-about-workers-advocate-office

In person

4141C 4th Avenue
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 1J1

By mail

P.O. Box 2703 (Q-1)
Whitehorse, Yukon
Y1A 2C6

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VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Vision

WAO is a recognized leader in promoting organizational fairness and continuous improvement. Our actions enable access to justice, accountability and well-reasoned decision making.

Mission

We generate and share knowledge with our clients and Workers' Safety and Compensation Board (WSCB) to improve the understanding of the responsibilities and limitations each organization has towards our shared clients. We strive to demonstrate a case specific and individualized approach to each client, considering their circumstances and the merits of each case.

Values

We interact with our clients and stakeholders with compassion, based on their identified needs, considering the impact of each decision on them. We communicate with WSCB seeking to contribute towards process and system improvements. We are impartial and independent in our decision making, holding ourselves to a high standard, acting in the public interest.

GOALS AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES



GOAL

Access to justice

Guiding principle 1

Clients have timely access to thorough reviews and decisions that reflect their individual needs, and the merits of their cases.



GOAL

Fairness and compassion

Guiding principle 3

We provide services that are relationally, procedurally, and substantively fair. We also uphold and teach those principles in our work with the WSCB and clients alike.



GOAL

Process navigation and continuous improvement

Guiding principle 2

We are successful in enhancing clients' ability to understand and navigate systems, resolving conflict where necessary. We work with WSCB to highlight areas for improvement based on trends, clients' rights and sharing our knowledge of the common clientele we serve.



GOAL

Organizational excellence

Guiding principle 4

Our workplace is engaged, healthy, and collaborative which is reflected in the outcomes of our work and how our team, clients and stakeholders view our programs.

FROM THE WORKERS' ADVOCATE

2024 year at a glance

In 2024, the Workers' Advocate Office (WAO) has continued to improve our program statistics to further evaluate and track our work. In 2024, we made changes to the case issues we track to measure the increases in psychological injury claims we review, and to account for clients that we have served in the past and return to WAO for further services.

We served 105 clients in total during 2024, assisted with 131 separate issues, with 99 stemming from physical injury claims and 32 from psychological injury claims.

During 2024, WAO reviewed 41,292 pages of secure file disclosures, stemming from 121 requests for initial and updated disclosures and took 1,828 case management actions.

During 2024, WAO appealed only eight claims to the reconsideration officers at Workers' Safety Compensation Board (WSCB). This is a noteworthy decrease from the past five-year average of 14. What we found in 2024 is a continued decrease in WAO providing representation to clients, and an increase in providing advice and explaining the reasons for and meaning of claims decisions.

WSCB staff and WAO worked together to collaboratively resolve seven cases through early case resolution in 2024. WAO did not appeal reconsiderations decisions to the Workers' Safety Compensation Appeal Tribunal (WSCAT) in 2024. This demonstrates that the reconsideration decisions were fair and well reasoned.

WAO conducted a program workload evaluation in 2024. The results showed the justification for slightly more funding for WAO. WSCB approved this funding adjustment for WAO, effective January 1, 2025.



Eric Stevenson
Workers' Advocate



WHAT THIS SHOWS

Overall, as shown by the number of clients the demand for WAO services are generally consistent year-over-year. Beginning this year, WAO is reporting on returning clients, in addition to statistics we have reported in past years; new clients, carried over clients and the total of all clients served during the year.

Although we have only measured disclosure review volume and case management actions for the past two years, those numbers demonstrate increased complexity of files and clients' needs. In 2023 WAO took 1,278 case actions, compared to 1,828 in 2024. This trend is also shown by comparing WAO's disclosure review volume. In 2023, WAO reviewed 23,565 pages of disclosure from 80 disclosures, where in 2024 WAO reviewed 41,292 pages from 121 disclosures.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Total clients	80	73	77	82	77	105
New clients	50	44	49	46	43	51
Returning clients	-	-	-	-	-	28
Clients carried over from previous year	30	29	28	36	34	26
Total issues	-	-	-	-	-	131
New issues	105	81	116	97	91	105
Carried over issues	-	-	-	-	-	26
General inquiries	21	13	3	17	33	43

Total clients: the sum of new, returning and carried over clients. All who WAO has provided services to during the year.

New clients: are new to receiving services from WAO.

Returning clients: have received WAO services in past years, who return to receive services in another year.

Carried over clients: received services in the previous year, whose issues are unresolved and continue to receive services into the next year.

Total issues: the sum of the issues for new clients, returning clients and carried over clients, where service was provided during the year.

New issues: the sum of issues for clients new to WAO and those previously served by WAO.

Carried over issues: are within files for clients carried over from one year to another.

Case actions: indicates an entry in the WAO database.

For example, communication (notes on an email, phone call or meeting), changes in the case status (filing or results of an appeal), our file review or investigation results, general case management activities.

Disclosure review volume: indicates the number of disclosures and pages WAO reviews from initial and updated disclosure packages from YWSCB each month.

A client is defined as an individual who signs an authorization form requesting the Workers' Advocate review their concerns and if warranted provides advice and represents them in reconsideration or appeal. The office also deals with general inquiries from workers who contact us for information on WSCB processes, procedures, the *Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*, or WSCB policies. General inquiries do not usually translate into new clients and their inquiries are usually handled within a few short conversations. WAO responded to 43 general inquiries in 2024, which is significantly more than the average of 17 over the past five years.

2024	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Case actions	103	199	214	195	153	112	129	105	105	144	80	292
Disclosure review	6	12	18	14	16	10	10	6	3	7	3	16
volume	1,452	2,859	14,743	1,095	4,920	1,404	1,431	3,934	552	1,488	2,066	6,264



1,278

case actions in 2023



1,828

case actions in 2024



80 disclosure review 2023



121 disclosure review 2024



23,565

volume of disclosure review in 2023



41,292

volume of disclosure review in 2024

WAO CASE ISSUES 2024

Each file often includes more than one issue. The table includes both new and carried over issues for 2024.

Issues

Acceptance	35
Ongoing entitlement	38
Overall file and decision review	11
Wage loss review	19
Return to work	3
Worsening injury	0
Permanent impairment review	2
Annuity review	1
Deeming	7
Employer appeal	1
WSCB investigation	5
Stay and rehear	1
Cross reference with current file	3
Overpayment	5
Total	131

Physical or psychological injuries

Physical injury	99
Psychological injury	32
Total	131



RECONSIDERATIONS AND APPEALS

Applications for reconsideration and appeal must be submitted within 12 months of the claim decision. The Reconsideration Officer is the first level of appeal available, and the Workers' Safety Compensation Appeal Tribunal (WSCAT) is the second and final level of appeal available to workers through the *Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*. Before WAO submits a reconsideration, we assess files for early case resolution with WSCB. In 2024, WAO and YWSCB successfully resolved seven issues together.

The WAO can represent workers in reviews before a Reconsideration Officer and appeals before the WSCAT, if there is merit and sufficient information.

An analysis of WAO reconsiderations demonstrates that 43 per cent (3/7) were overturned in favor of the worker. 57 per cent (4/7) were upheld, with one outstanding at year-end. Given WAO did not submit appeals to WSCAT after a decision being upheld at reconsideration, this shows reconsideration decisions are fair and well-reasoned.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Reconsideration	20	8	14	13	7	8
Appeals WCAT	0	0	1	3	3	0
Success on reconsideration and appeal	14/20	2/8	6/15	7/16	7/10	3/7



FINANCIALS

The Workers' Advocate Office is funded annually by the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board through employer contributions as outlined in the *Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*.

The figures are adjusted to account for rounding and are based upon the calendar year, the fiscal year of the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board. The administration fee of \$45,093 paid to the Department of Justice is not included in the budgeted amount or the actual expenditures.

The budget amount for 2025, presented and approved by the Workers' Safety and Compensation Board of Directors is **\$427,417**.

	Budget	Actual Expenditures
Personnel	\$399,291	\$345,589
Office and operations	\$51,634	\$30,137
Total	\$450,925	\$375,726





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