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## Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission

### Commission's Head Mediator Receives National Award At The 105<sup>th</sup> IAIABC Convention



**[Pittsburgh, PA]-** On October 23<sup>rd</sup>, Deputy Commissioner Deborah Wood Blevins was the recipient of the 2019 Award of Merit presented by the International Association of Industrial Accident Boards and Commissions (IAIABC). This award recognizes Deputy Commissioner Blevins' contributions to cultivating collaborative partnerships with the IAIABC and the National Association of Workers' Compensation Judiciary, resulting in educational programs and resources for judges and mediators across the United States.

Deputy Commissioner Blevins was one of five individuals and one organization recognized for their service to the IAIABC and the workers' compensation industry. The IAIABC's President presented the award during a luncheon celebration at their 105<sup>th</sup> Convention in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The organization honors those who demonstrate commitment and achievement in reducing harm and aid recovery of injured workers.

"Deputy Commissioner Blevins has positioned the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission as a leader in mediation services – seeking to use technology and systems-based approaches to extend alternative dispute resolution (ADR) services to injured workers and stakeholders throughout the state. Under her leadership, the Commission has integrated new technology into its operations, mentored international government agencies on ADR best practices and has grown the Commission's mediation program to twenty-seven (27) certified Mediators," noted Commissioner R. Ferrell Newman, Chairman of the Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission.

#### About the Commission

The Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission (VWC), established in 1918, is an independent judicial and administrative state agency that oversees the workers' compensation system for employees, employers, and insurers. VWC interprets and applies the Virginia Workers' Compensation Act and resolves claims through hearings and mediation. A 2018 Oregon study ranked Virginia as the tenth-lowest cost system in the nation.

Leading the way in electronic data and claims filing systems, in 2018 VWC processed over 46,000 claims and issued over 4,000 judicial opinions. VWC also administers the Criminal Injuries Compensation Fund, the Uninsured Employer's Fund, and adjudicates claims under the Virginia Birth-Related Neurological Injury Compensation Program. Headquartered in Richmond, Virginia, VWC operates regional offices in Bristol, Virginia Beach, Roanoke, Harrisonburg, Manassas, and Fairfax.

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For more information about the VWC, visit [www.workcomp.virginia.gov](http://www.workcomp.virginia.gov). For more information about this topic, or to schedule an interview, please call Charles Steepleton at 1-877-664-2566 or email [questions@workcomp.virginia.gov](mailto:questions@workcomp.virginia.gov).