

Ted Strickland, Governor
Gary DiCeglio, Chairperson
Bill Thompson, Member
Kevin R. Abrams, Member
Christa D. Deegan, Executive Director

NEWS RELEASE

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The Industrial Commission of Ohio Consolidates Canton and Akron Offices

Merging of Two District Offices to Save More Than \$460,000 Per Year

COLUMBUS – In an effort toward greater efficiency and cost effectiveness, the Industrial Commission of Ohio (IC) is relocating our Canton office operations into the Akron district office, effective Monday, June 29, 2009.

This consolidation will eliminate current service and operational redundancies, and result in reduced office lease expense, reduced payroll cost, and reduced cost for security. **Over the next ten (10) years, the total cost savings for the consolidation of the Akron and Canton IC offices will be \$4.64 million.**

The Akron office is located in a state building and is less than 24 miles from the Canton office, which is currently housed in private office space. The rent paid in Canton is the highest of any properties leased by the IC across the state. The relocation of the Canton office's twelve (12) employees to Akron will be performed by Industrial Commission staff, and will not require any additional expenditure. The Akron office space is more than adequate to house the combined thirty-five (35) employees of both offices, and all employees will keep their jobs.

In FY 2010 alone, this consolidation will result in a savings of \$464,384. As our operations are directly funded by employer premium dollars, this significant cost savings may not be ignored. Furthermore, hearing workloads have progressively decreased during the last ten (10) years in Canton and Akron, and technological advances no longer require the IC to be housed in the same location as the Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC).

"The Industrial Commission of Ohio is always striving to provide quality services while using our resources and staff in the most efficient ways possible," said Executive Director Christa Deegan. "I look forward to making this a smooth transition as we

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continue to look for new ways to utilize available space among our district offices while ensuring that customer service does not suffer.”

Accessibility and quality service to IC customers is of the utmost importance to us. After June 26, hearings previously conducted by the Industrial Commission in Canton will be held in the IC office closest to the injured workers’ residence. Employers and injured workers may also access their ICON accounts online at www.ohioic.com, or may speak to a customer service representative by calling 1-800-521-2691.

The IC conducts hearings on disputed workers’ compensation claims, determines violations of specific safety requirements, and determines if an injured worker is permanently and temporarily disabled due to a work-related injury or occupational disease. Three Governor-appointed Commissioners lead the agency---headquartered in Columbus--which has 5 regional and 10 district offices throughout the state.

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