

NEWS RELEASE

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BWC and IC Consolidating Springfield and Dayton Service Offices

Merging of Two Customer Service Offices to save more than \$1,000,000 per year

COLUMBUS – In an effort to achieve greater efficiency and cost savings, the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) and the Ohio Industrial Commission (IC) will close their Springfield Customer Service operations, effective Friday, March 27, 2009. The Springfield operations will be consolidated with current operations in Dayton. The closing will result in an annual cost savings of more than a million dollars a year and will eliminate current service and operational redundancies, lower administrative costs and save on commercial lease expenses.

“Now is the time to think creatively about how we can provide quality customer service while operating more efficiently through the reallocation of our resources and staff,” said BWC Administrator Marsha Ryan. “Given the close proximity of both offices, this consolidation makes good business sense. It will save employer premium dollars, make the most of available space within our Dayton facility and that ensure customers of each office will be offered complete services in a single location.”

The Springfield office has operated in the central business district, at 1 Limestone Street, since opening in February 1994. In January 2008, the BWC office lost 16-percent of its workforce, including the service office manager due to an early retirement incentive. The BWC office currently has 29 permanent employees and the IC office has four. Both offices have been operating as a “satellite” of the nearby Dayton office, located less than 25 miles away. This consolidation plan will eliminate the need to fill four BWC critical hire positions in Springfield and one position in Dayton. While BWC and the IC will retain all current employees, through attrition, the IC eventually will not backfill two clerical positions and a manager position, saving an additional \$173,000 per year.

“The consolidation of the IC’s Springfield office with the Dayton office will allow the IC to make the most efficient use of its resources,” said IC Executive Director Christa Deegan. “The significant fiscal savings to the IC over the next ten years will be in excess of \$3.1 million. We look forward to continuing to provide excellent customer service at our combined Dayton location.”

Springfield office staff service approximately 6,422 active employer policies and 4,746 active injured worker claims. However, a recent 12-month study of BWC office walk-in traffic showed just 33 employers and 10 injured workers visit the office each month. The IC also reported a 20% reduction in the volume of injured workers that use services in the Springfield office over

the past four years, and the volume of employers that use Springfield office IC services has decreased by 13% over the same time period.

After March 27, customers who previously received services through the Springfield office will be advised to visit customer service offices in Dayton or Columbus. Employers and injured workers may also access their BWC accounts online at www.ohiobwc.com or may speak to a customer service representative by calling 1-800-OHIOBWC. To reach the IC, log onto www.ohioic.com or call 1-800-521-2691.

After the consolidation, BWC and IC will have 15 customer service offices located throughout the state to service injured workers and employer customers within assigned geographic territories. In December 2007, BWC closed two underused customer service facilities located in Bridgeport and downtown Cincinnati, consolidating those operations with nearby BWC facilities for a savings of more than \$800,000.

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Media contacts:

Melissa Vince

614-466-2956 or 614-202-2329

melissa.vince@bwc.state.oh.us

Maria Smith

614-728-8045 or 614-205-5709

maria.smith@bwc.state.oh.us

For IC information contact:

Crystal Davis Hutchins

614-752-8172 or 614-203-3679

chutchins@ic.state.oh.us

30 W. Spring Street
Columbus, OH 43215
1-800-OHIOBWC
ohiobwc.com
ohioic.com
IC: 1-800-521-2691