

New York State Bar Association

**Workers' Compensation Division
1st Annual Educational Seminar**

Wednesday, November 4, 2026
12:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, November 5, 2026
8:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

New York State Bar Association, 1 Elk Street, Albany, NY

12.0 MCLE Credits

11.0 Credits in Areas of Professional Practice, 1.0 Credits in Skills

This program is transitional and is suitable for all attorneys including those newly admitted.

Agenda

Wednesday, November 4, 2026

12:30 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Check-In | Registration
Reception Area

1:00 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.

Welcome & Opening Remarks
Great Hall

Speakers:

Alex C. Dell, Esq.
Law Firm of Alex Dell, PLLC
Albany, New York

John H. Snyder, Esq.
Gitto & Niefer
New Hartford, NY

1:15 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Current Trends in NYS Workers' Compensation

Stay current on the key issues, emerging developments, and evolving perspectives shaping New York's workers' compensation landscape. Hear from leaders representing the Workers' Compensation Board, labor, business, and insurance as they share insights on the trends and challenges impacting the system today.

Speakers:

Steve M. Scotti, Esq., Executive Director

New York State Workers Compensation Board
Schenectady, NY

Joe Canovas, Esq., Assistant to the President, Special Counsel

NYS AFL-CIO
New York, NY

**David F. Wertheim, Esq., Managing Director, Regulatory Affairs
Life Insurance Council of New York, Inc.**

Albany, NY

Moderator:

David P. Wehner, Esq., Principal

DW Advisors, LLC
Former Chairman, New York State Workers Compensation Board
Albany, NY

1.5 MCLE Credits in Areas of Professional Practice

2:30 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.

Litigation Strategy & Effective Hearing Protocol

Explore practical strategies for effectively preparing and presenting workers' compensation cases before the Board. This session will address effective hearing preparation, developing case strategy, presenting evidence and arguments, responding to issues that arise during hearings, and practical advocacy techniques for effectively representing clients before the Board.

Speakers:

Sean F. Nicolette, Esq.

Law Firm of Alex Dell, PLLC
Albany, NY

Melissa A. Day, Esq.

The Law Offices of Melissa A. Day, PLLC
Amherst, NY

1.0 MCLE Credit in (tentative, Skills)

3:20 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Networking Break

3:30 p.m. - 4:20 p.m.

Appellate Division, 3rd Department Panel

Gain insight into workers' compensation appellate practice before the Appellate Division, Third Department, including key considerations and practical guidance to help attorneys better prepare for and navigate the appeals process.

Speaker:

Hon. Justin O. Corcoran, Associate Justice

New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Third Department
Albany, NY

Erica Putnam Little, Esq. Managing Attorney

New York State Supreme Court, Appellate Division, Third Department
Albany, NY

Moderator:

Ronald Balter, Esq.

Vecchione Vecchione & Cano LLP
Garden City, NY

1.5 MCLE Credits in Areas of Professional Practice

4:20 p.m. - 5:10 p.m.

Section 32 Settlements & Stipulations

Explore the resolution of workers' compensation claims and disputed issues through Section 32 settlements and stipulations before the Workers' Compensation Board. This session will examine key considerations and practical strategies for effectively negotiating and resolving claims.

Speakers:

Bethany Nicoletti, Esq.

Meggesto, Crossett & Valerino, LLP
Syracuse, NY

Stacey Vaikness, Esq.

Jones Jones, LLP
New York, NY

1.0 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

5:10 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

Networking Reception

Hinman Library

Agenda

Thursday, November 5, 2026

8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Networking Breakfast

Great Hall

9:00 a.m. - 9:05 a.m.

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Great Hall

Speakers:

Alex C. Dell, Esq.

Law Firm of Alex Dell, PLLC
Albany, NY

John H. Snyder, Esq.

Gitto & Niefer
New Hartford, NY

9:05 a.m. - 9:55 a.m.

Permanency & Labor Market Attachment

Examine the evidence and strategies that shape the resolution of permanency and labor market attachment issues in workers' compensation claims. This session will offer perspectives from both sides of the table on navigating these critical and often complex areas of practice.

Speakers:

Dan Bronk, Esq.

Bronk & Somers, P.C.
Rochester, NY

Ed Nicosia, Esq.

Nicosia Law, P.C.
Rochester, NY

1.0 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

9:55 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

Medical Causation & Benefits

Explore the critical issues involved in establishing medical causation and securing appropriate benefits at the outset of a workers' compensation claim. This session will examine the importance of obtaining key initial evidence and developing an effective strategy to support proper benefit determinations and payments.

Speakers:

Anne O'Connell Zavelo

O'Connell Zavelo LLC
Brooklyn, NY

Additional Speaker TBD

1.0 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

10:45 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

Networking Break

11:00 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

A View from the Workers Compensation Board

Gain valuable insight into the Workers' Compensation Board from those who work within and alongside the system. This session will highlight important information, perspectives, and practical considerations that anyone appearing before the Board should know.

Speaker(s):

Joe Cavalcante, Esq., Ombudsman/Advocate for Injured Workers

New York State Workers Compensation Board
Albany, NY

Anthony Toma, Advocate for Business (TBD)

Moderator:

Matthew R. Mead, Esq.

Stockton, Barker & Mead, LLP
Troy, NY

1.5 MCLE Credits in Areas of Professional Practice

12:15 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Lunch

Kids Chance of New York Scholarship Presentation

Speaker:

David P. Wehner, Esq.

Principal, DW Advisors, LLC

Former Chairman, New York State Workers Compensation Board
Albany, NY

1:30 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.

Case Law Update/Appeals

This presentation will provide a review of the workers' compensation related cases that have been decided by the Appellate Division and Court of Appeals from September of 2025 through September of 2026. During this presentation we will focus especially on decisions that have been the most significant statewide and on cases which have had the most impact on the practice of workers' compensation law. We will also spend some time looking at areas where case law is still developing.

Speakers:

Jason Carlton, Esq.

Gitto & Niefer LLP
Binghamton, NY

Mary Ellen O'Connor, Esq.

O'Connor Law, PLLC
Larchmont, NY

1.0 MCLE Credits in Areas of Professional Practice

2:45 p.m. - 3:35 p.m.

Third Party Settlements – Liens & Offsets

Explore the key considerations involved in resolving liens and offsets arising from third-party actions involving work-related injuries. This session will examine strategies for navigating these issues while protecting workers' compensation benefits and facilitating the effective resolution of related claims.

Speakers:

F. Daniel Bowers, Esq.

Hamberger & Weiss LLP
Buffalo, NY

Brendan Quinn, Esq.

Buckley Mendleson Criscione & Quinn, P.C.
Albany, NY

1.0 MCLE Credit in Areas of Professional Practice

3:35 p.m. - 3:45 p.m.

Networking Break

3:45 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Practicing with Professionalism

Examine the importance of professionalism, courtesy, and ethical conduct in workers' compensation practice. This session will explore the principles and practical considerations that promote respectful and professional interactions before the Workers' Compensation Board.

Speakers:

Alex C. Dell, Esq.

Law Firm of Alex Dell, PLLC
Albany, NY

Dan Falge, Esq.

Cohen Vaughan
Syracuse, NY

1.5 MCLE Credits in Areas of Professional Practice

Adjourn