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
9.5 Credits in Areas of Professional Practice, 1.0 Credits in Skills, 1.5 in Ethics and Professionalism

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 Councill of New York, Inc.
Albany, NY

Moderator:

David P. Wehner, 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 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.

Speakers:

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

Matthew J. Zappen, Esq., Principal Appellate Court Attorney
Appellate Division, Third Department
Albany, NY

Moderator:

Ronald Balter, Esq.
Vecchione Vecchione & Cano LLP
Garden City, NY

1.0 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

Stacee 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

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

Mary Ellen O'Connor, Esq.
O'Connor Law, PLLC
Larchmont, NY

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, Ombudsman/Advocate for Injured Workers
New York State Workers Compensation Board
Albany, NY

Anthony Tomaselli, Esq.
Advocate for Business at the NYS Workers Compensation Board
Schenectady, NY

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
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

Crystle Watts, Esq.
Harding & Mazzotti LLP
Albany, NY

1.5 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 Ethics and Professionalism