

THE APPEALS BOARD UPDATE

The Division of Workers' Compensation (DWC) has been operating the new Electronic Adjudication Management System (EAMs) since August 2008.

This system was designed for processing documents into the DWC system.

The bulk of these filings represent the six "priority" forms:

1. Application for Adjudication of Claim (the start of the litigation process)
2. Declaration of Readiness to Proceed (request for hearing)
3. Request for Expedited Hearing (on applicant issues)
4. Compromise and Release (settlement document)
5. Stipulations with Request for Award (settlement document)
6. Notice and Request for Allowance of Lien

One method for filing documents into the system is Optical Character Recognition (OCR). The documents filed by this method make up a majority of the users filing through the DWC system. The documents are submitted to the courts and they are manually scanned into the system by the staff at the DWC.

The second method is the Electronic Adjudication Management System which requires "large volume organization" to contract with the State of California allowing these users to file their documents in real time over the internet. This eliminates any delay in getting documents directly into the Board file. To date the State of California has only allowed 286 licenses for this form of access.

As of the end of 2009 there had been one million documents processed by the new EAMS system.

The WCAB District Offices are now processing approximately 125,000 documents a month. That translates to between 7,000 to 9,000 per day. Of those documents filed on a daily basis 4,000 of them are scanned documents, or OCR format. The balance represents the electronic online filing.

The main goal in the implementation of this new system has been to become fully paperless and ending the immense backlog at the WCAB offices and hopefully getting the benefits to the injured workers in a more timely manner.

Cheryl Canaday, President
Recovery Resources, Inc.
(510) 569-0755
ccanaday@recres.com