



**BLEAKLEY
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MICHIGAN WORKERS' COMPENSATION LEGAL TRENDS

January 2018

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Ladies and Gentlemen, we have a new Magistrate! Please see below for full details.

The New Year has also brought a new mileage rate and a new maximum indemnity rate. In addition, the State of Michigan has developed a new online calculator that will be used going forward. Please see the link below.

Finally, it's time to begin planning for BCPWQ's upcoming annual seminars. The Grand Rapids seminar is scheduled for March 16, 2018 and the Detroit/Novi seminar is scheduled for April 20, 2018. Invitations will be sent out shortly. Please email nrisk@bcpwq.com if you know of someone who you think will benefit from this well-received event.

New Magistrate: On January 11, 2018, Gov. Rick Snyder appointed John Sims of Marshall, MI to the Workers' Compensation Board of Magistrates to fill the magistrate vacancy that was created when Magistrate Tjapkes stepped down. Magistrate Sims will split time between the Okemos, Baraga, Escanaba and Sault Ste. Marie Agencies. Magistrate Sims will serve a four-year term expiring Jan. 26, 2021.



Some of you may be familiar with Attorney Sims. He has been a longtime plaintiff's workers' compensation attorney who practiced in the Kalamazoo and Okemos agencies. We are all interested to see his disposition as a Magistrate given his history as a plaintiff's attorney, especially regarding facilitation and trials. We will monitor his tendencies as he takes the bench and keep you advised.

Mileage Rate: The Department of Technology, Management and Budget has advised that the mileage rate has increased from \$0.535 to **\$0.545 per mile**, effective January 1, 2018.

New Maximum Rate: The Bureau of Labor Market Information & Strategic Initiatives has reported the state average weekly wage for 2018 is **\$999.31**. In accordance with Section 418.355(2) of the Workers' Disability Compensation Act, the 2018 maximum weekly benefit based on 90% of that state average weekly wage is **\$900.00**. The discontinued fringe benefit ceiling has increased to **\$666.21**.

Online Rate Calculator: The new online calculator will be used going forward and all updates to rates and calculations will be made via the website – there is no longer a need to download a new calculator each year. The calculator can be found at: <https://w2.lara.state.mi.us/WORCS/BenCalc/CalculationOptions>

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This Newsletter is meant to highlight developments in the workers' compensation arena and to elaborate on general concepts. If you would like to discuss in more detail this issue or any other issue please do not hesitate to contact any of the attorneys at Bleakley, Cypher, Parent, Warren & Quinn, P.C., directly.