Summary of the Proposed District of Columbia Workers Compensation Loss Cost and Assigned Risk Rate Filing Effective January 1, 2027

The National Council on Compensation Insurance (NCCI)[1] is pleased to provide this summary of the proposed workers compensation insurance loss cost[2] and assigned risk rate[3] filing, which was submitted to the District of Columbia's Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking for its review and approval under separate cover on August 13, 2026.

The filing proposes a –4.3% decrease to the current loss costs for the voluntary market and a –3.2% decrease to the assigned risk market rates, effective January 1, 2027.

District of Columbia Overview

The current proposed filing is based on premium and loss experience from Policy Years 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024, evaluated as of year-end 2025. The proposed filing maintains the practice of considering claims experience over a longer period to account for potential year-to-year volatility in loss ratios. In recent loss cost and assigned risk rate filings, the experience period consisted of the latest five policy years, with Policy Year 2020 excluded due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. Because Policy Year 2020 is now the oldest policy year within that five-year time frame, our selection has changed to utilize only the latest four policy years, again excluding Policy Year 2020.

The proposed loss cost and assigned risk rate decreases are driven by improving experience in most of the recent policy years. In addition, the worsening experience in the leisure and hospitality industry, which was observed in Policy Year 2023 in last year's filing, has improved during Policy Year 2024.

The District of Columbia has a high proportion of office and clerical exposure on both a payroll and premium basis; therefore, the office and clerical sector has a larger impact on the overall proposed filing indication. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a significant shift to telecommuting, which put downward pressure on the filing indication. With more employees returning to the office, the experience in the office and clerical sector has become more consistent with historical experience.

The proposed assigned risk rate change includes an overall increase in the assigned risk expense components, with the increase slightly mitigated by a decrease in the profit and contingency provision.

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[1] NCCI is a licensed rating organization authorized to make recommended loss cost and assigned risk rate filings on behalf of workers compensation insurance companies in the District of Columbia. NCCI's filings are objectively prepared, using widely accepted actuarial ratemaking methodologies.

[2] "Loss cost" refers to the portion of workers compensation rates that are filed by the rating organization and are allocated to pay losses but not carrier expenses. Some states include certain carrier expenses and assessments in the definition of "advisory loss costs." Carriers can use the approved loss costs as the basis for their rates, typically adjusting them for expenses with a loss cost multiplier.

[3] The assigned risk rate is filed for use on policies written through the Assigned Risk Plan, a program established by state insurance regulatory authorities that sets the rules and procedures for providing insurance coverage to parties that are unable to obtain coverage in the voluntary market. For the assigned risk market, NCCI files a full rate that includes the Servicing Carriers' expenses.

Countrywide Overview for NCCI States

The Calendar Year 2025 combined ratio (a measure of overall underwriting profitability) for workers compensation was 91%, a change from 86% for Calendar Year 2024. The change is primarily due to an increase in the loss and underwriting expense ratios.

In 2025, voluntary market net written premium decreased by 1.5% from 2024. Residual market premium in states where NCCI serves as Plan Administrator also continued to decline—a trend that has persisted since 2014.

Payroll, as the exposure base, is a key component of workers compensation premium. From 2024 to 2025, payroll increased 4.8%, while employment rose just 0.5%. A significant portion of payroll growth appears to have come from higher wages, which were up an average of 4.3% in 2025. Employment growth was largely driven by the health care sector.

Claim frequency and severity reflect both the incidence of workplace injuries and the cost of those injuries when they occur. Lost-time claim frequency (claims with days away from work) continues its long-term decline across all NCCI states, decreasing by 2% from 2024 to 2025, after accounting for changes in pay levels. This decline is more moderate than the long-term average and the experience in recent years.

Lost-time medical claim severity in 2025 grew by 4%. Increased utilization of medical services remains the primary driver, though results vary by state based on the mix of services used and applicable medical fee schedules. Lost-time indemnity claim severity in 2025 is also estimated to be 4% higher than in 2024 because indemnity benefits largely reflect wage growth.

Conclusion

Overall, the workers compensation system remained healthy in 2025. Long-term declines in lost-time claim frequency continued to help offset upward pressure on system costs from higher medical and indemnity claim severity. Payroll growth and a combined ratio below 100% are further indicators of the system's overall financial soundness. Collectively, these trends point to a well-functioning workers compensation system, recognizing that results can vary based on industry composition, carrier experience, and state-specific factors.