

AGENCY WORKFORCE PLAN

I. OVERVIEW

OIEC Mission

To assist, educate, and advocate on behalf of the injured employees of Texas.

OIEC Strategic Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 -- To assist injured employees in the workers' compensation system and protect their rights.

Objective 1.1 -- To provide assistance to all unrepresented injured employees requesting assistance each year.

Goal 2 -- To increase injured employee education regarding their rights and responsibilities and refer them to local, state, and federal programs.

Objective 2.1 -- To increase the knowledge of all injured employees and refer them to local, state, and federal programs each year.

Goal 3 -- To advocate on behalf of injured employees as a class.

Objective 3.1 -- To advocate on behalf of injured employees as a class in judicial, legislative, rulemaking, and administrative processes and ensure injured employee's rights are protected each year.

Core Business Functions

OIEC was established to assist and provide services to unrepresented injured employees when assistance is requested. OIEC's core business functions include:

- Assisting injured employees in the workers' compensation system by providing free ombudsman services in TDI-DWC's administrative dispute resolution system;
- Educating injured employees about their rights and responsibilities and improving their ability to effectively navigate through the workers' compensation system; and
- Advocating on behalf of injured employees as a class within the Texas workers' compensation system.

OIEC also refers injured employees to the Texas Workforce Commission, TDI-DWC or other social or regulatory services.

Additionally, OIEC provides outreach presentations, workshops, seminars to workers' compensation system stakeholders regarding OIEC, its role, and its services.

Anticipated Changes to the Mission, Strategies, and Goals Over the Next Five Years

The 2020-21 budget structure was reviewed and recommendations for changes to the 2022-2023 budget structure were submitted and have been approved by the Legislative Budget Board and the Governor’s Office of Budget, Planning, and Policy.

II. CURRENT WORKFORCE PROFILE (SUPPLY ANALYSIS)

Demographics information, including age, gender, and length of service

Five percent of the employees at OIEC are under the age of 30 and 45 percent of the agency’s employees are 50 or older. The average age of an OIEC employee is 47 years. OIEC employees have an average of 10 years of state service.

Office of Injured Employee Counsel – Workforce Statistics by Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Category

Category	Black	Hispanic	Anglo	Male	Female
Officials, Admin. (A)	9%	64%	27%	18%	82%
Professional (P)	14%	60%	25%	21%	79%
Technical (T)	0%	0%	100%	0%	100%
Para-Professional (Q)	26%	63%	11%	7%	93%
All Categories	17%	60%	22%	16%	84%

Employee Turnover. OIEC’s turnover rate in FY 2019 was 34.75 percent and in FY 2020 it was 21.62 percent. Reasons for the departures cited on exit interviews include low salary, high workloads, and retirements. OIEC’s most vulnerable program area is the Ombudsman Program because all ombudsmen must complete the 16-week internal training program before they can be released to handle cases independently.

Projected Employee Turnover Rate over the Next Five Years

Approximately five percent of all agency staff are currently eligible to retire. The percentage increases to 15 percent through August 31, 2027. One of the OIEC management staff is currently eligible to retire. The percentage of management eligible to retire remains at eight percent through August 31, 2027.

Workforce Skills Critical to the Mission and Goals of the Agency

OIEC by statute requires staff who have knowledge of Texas workers' compensation laws and rules and are able to clearly and effectively communicate that knowledge on behalf of and to system participants. OIEC also needs staff to learn or possess an understanding of reviewing medical documentation and the ability to present legal arguments, articulate business writing skills, and time management skills.

III. FUTURE WORKFORCE PROFILE (DEMAND ANALYSIS)

Expected Workforce Changes Driven by Factors such as Changing Missions, Goals, Strategies, Technology, Work, Workloads, and Work Processes

OIEC does not foresee the elimination of any of its responsibilities over the next five-year period nor a change in its mission and goals. In fact, on the contrary OIEC has seen a steady increase in the number of disputes it participates in on behalf of injured employees.

Future Workforce Skills Needed

OIEC will also need staff who possess all the workforce skills listed above and in addition are able to embrace and utilize new technology.

Anticipated Increase or Decrease in the Number of Employees Needed to Do the Work

Additional employees are currently not necessary.

Critical Functions that Must Be Performed to Achieve the Strategic Plan

- Customer service functions;
- Ombudsman functions;
- Legal research and analysis functions;
- Training and professional development;
- Workers' compensation research and analysis functions;
- Audit, quality assurance, and administrative functions.

IV. GAP ANALYSIS

Anticipated Surplus or Shortage in Staffing Levels

There is currently no surplus or shortage in staffing levels.

Anticipated Surplus or Shortage of Skills

As experienced staff leaves the agency, OIEC anticipates a greater need for training, mentoring, and transferring workers' compensation knowledge to less-experienced employees in all program areas.

V. STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

Specific Goals to Address Workforce Competence Gaps or Surpluses

Recruitment and Retention. Recruiting and retaining the depth of knowledge and experience necessary to navigate the complexities of the workers' compensation system is a key factor in fulfilling OIEC's mission of assisting, educating, and advocating for Texans who are injured on the job.

OIEC utilizes various tools to retain its staff such as job audits and reclassifications, alternative work schedules, telecommuting and continuing professional development opportunities.

Succession Planning. OIEC is working to develop and update a succession plan. The scope of OIEC's succession planning includes identifying and developing key talent within the agency as well as addressing the unique geographical needs of the agency.