In the words of Bob Dylan: "the times they are a-changin." For anyone who deals with labor and employment issues in the workplace, Dylan's words are particularly true. Human resource professionals, supervisors, and company executives face a constantly changing and evolving legal landscape. Verrill Dana's Labor and Employment Group blog is here to keep you up to date on the newest and most important legal developments in the labor and employment world. We intend this blog to serve as a thoughtful resource for clients, professionals and others who are interested in labor and employment law.

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IS THE MAINE WORKERS’ COMPENSATION BOARD “OPEN FOR BUSINESS” IN 2012?

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What’s New?

- Personnel:
  - Executive Director Paul Sighinolfi, Esq.
  - Kevin Gillis, Esq., WCCC
  - Doug Lotane, Esq., Worker Advocate
  - Dayton Haigney, MD, as 312 Doc
More New People

- Gary Koocher, Management
- Glenn Borroughs, Labor
- Anthony Peverada, Esq., Mediation
New Policies at the Board

- New Wage Statement policy, effective 6/15/2011
- New Mediation policy, effective 4/12/2011
Areas of Focus for the WCB 2011-2012

- 312 IME panel
- Amendment to Rule 1.1
- Debit cards as benefit delivery devices
- Section 213 and permanent impairment thresholds
- Paying for non-treating PI
- Medical Fee Schedule
Areas of Focus for Employers in 2011-2012

- What’s Old Is New: Cost Management
  - Cap on Benefits
  - Interactive process
  - Transitional Duty Programs
  - Medical/medication management
Recent Legislation

- Public Law, Ch 215, emergency signed on 6/3/11
  - An Act to Increase the Availability of Independent Medical Examiners under the Workers’ Compensation Act of 1992
- Public Law, Ch 338, signed on 6/14/11
  - An Act Regarding Payment of Medical Fees in the Workers’ Compensation System
Recent Legislation

- Public Law, Ch 361, An Act to Allow the Repayment of Improperly Awarded Workers’ Compensation Benefits, signed on 6/15/11
Pending Legislation

- LD 1571, An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Workers’ Compensation
What Employers Can Do in 2011-2012

- Hearing Officer reviews
  - Jerome
  - Greene
  - Pelletier
  - Goodnough

- Return of the Appellate Division?

- Stakeholder meetings concerning LD 1571