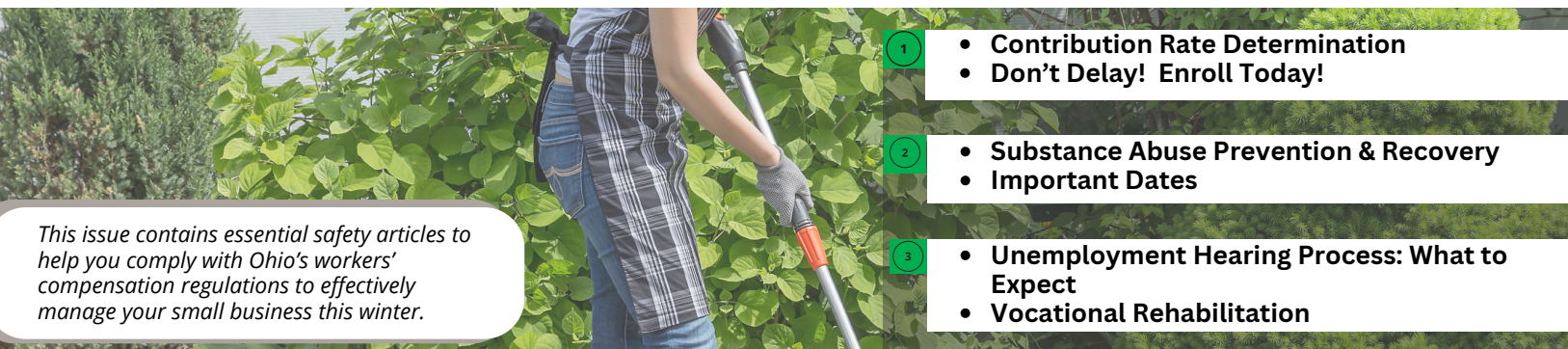




NFIB Ohio Workers' Compensation Program

SAFETY RESOURCES

Fall 2025



This issue contains essential safety articles to help you comply with Ohio's workers' compensation regulations to effectively manage your small business this winter.

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Contribution Rate Determination

-Voluntary Contribution Analysis-

NFIB works with Sedgwick to aid in helping to control your company's unemployment tax rate. Members who participate in the NFIB/Ohio Group Rating Program, Group Retrospective Rating Program, or Select Program Plus have unemployment services included at no additional cost. Sedgwick offers an unemployment compensation service separately if your business is not currently utilizing the service through one of these programs.

The Contribution Rate Determination will provide the following information:

- Your company's unemployment account balance;
- Total charges removed from your unemployment account for the fiscal year; and,
- The company's 2026 tax rate.

Beginning in November, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) will issue your company's 2026 Contribution Rate Determination. This document will be mailed directly to employers.



If eligible, the contribution rate determination will notify employers of a voluntary amount they can pay by the end of 2025 to potentially lower their rate for 2026. Sedgwick can provide a voluntary contribution analysis to the employers that utilize the unemployment service.

If your company is interested in having Sedgwick conduct a voluntary analysis, please email the Contribution Rate Determination to Staci.Schwartz@sedgwick.com.

For more information: Email Staci.Schwartz@sedgwick.com or call (614) 932-1540.

Don't Delay. Enroll Today!



Sedgwick, the administrator of the NFIB/Ohio Workers' Compensation Group Rating Program, recently sent invitations to companies that qualify for the 2026 NFIB/Ohio Workers' Compensation Group Rating Programs. The deadline will be here before you know it! Please send your completed enrollment documents to Sedgwick as specified on the invoice.

If your company is not already in an NFIB sponsored program and would like to be evaluated for the NFIB group rating program or group retrospective rating program, please fill out the electronic [AC-3 form](#).

Please refer to your enrollment packet for more details. For more information, email Zachary_Stewart, or call (614) 932-1565.

Recently, the Ohio Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) announced changes to the Drug-Free Safety Program (DFSP). The program has been renamed the Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (SUPR) Program. The program combines the DFSP, DFSP Safety Grants, and Substance Use Recovery and Workplace Safety Program into one single program designed to address workplace use of alcohol and other drugs.

Substance Abuse PREVENTION & Recovery



For more information: Email [Zachary Stewart](#) or call (614) 932-1565.

The SUPR Program will include four levels of participation:

Basic Level - which offers a 4% premium refund

Advanced Level - which offers a 7% premium refund

Comparable Level - which allows employees to be included on the list of approved state construction contractors

SUPR Reimbursement Only - which offers funding via reimbursement to help employers cover the costs of:

- Developing or reviewing a drug-free workplace policy.
- Employee and supervisor training.
- Drug and alcohol testing.
- Substance abuse assessments.

To be eligible to participate in the SUPR program, employers have to be:

- Current on all premium payments to BWC.
- Be in active policy status.
- Reported the company's actual payroll and paid any additional premium from the previous policy year.
- Have no more than 40 days of lapsed coverage for their workers' compensation policy within the previous 12 months.

More information about the SUPR Program, including the link to enroll into the program, and other program requirements can be found [online](#).

IMPORTANT DATE:

December 12
Deadline to request an
unemployment voluntary
contribution analysis from
Sedgwick.





What to Expect

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) allows employers and claimants to file an appeal to a claim determination or redetermination and request it be reviewed by the Unemployment Compensation Review Commission (UCRC). The appeal must be filed by the deadline date indicated on the claim document. All parties involved in the claim will receive a notice that the appeal has been transferred from ODJFS to the UCRC to schedule an unemployment hearing. This document will also explain the issues to be discussed at the hearing. The UCRC will schedule the hearing and send notices to all parties, which will include the date, time, and location of the hearing.

Some things to keep in mind when you have an unemployment issue that will be scheduled for a hearing include:

- All hearings will be scheduled as daytime telephone hearings, unless a request was made for an in-person hearing or an evening telephone hearing within 10 days of the mailing of the transfer notice.
- Hearings are scheduled for 45 minutes (may go longer if time permits).
- Witnesses must register with the UCRC prior to the scheduled hearing. Witnesses have two options to register, either [online](#) or by calling the UCRC at least 15 minutes prior to the scheduled hearing time.

If the appealing party fails to register for the hearing, the hearing will be dismissed.

In preparation for the hearing, it's a good idea to do the following:

- Prepare a timeline of events leading up to the separation of your former employee.
- Review your records prior to the hearing.
- Submit the appropriate exhibits to the Hearing Officer and interested parties prior to the hearing. Examples include: a termination letter, copies of warnings, company policy and signed acknowledgment form, attendance records, performance reviews.
- Make sure to have key witnesses available to testify (and registered prior to the scheduled hearing).
- Prepare a list of questions you may want to ask the former employee.
- Have a pen and note pad available to take notes during the hearing.

Although the hearing process may vary by Hearing Officer, **generally the Hearing Officer does the following to begin a hearing:**

- Verify all relevant parties are present and begin recording the hearing.
- Summarize the issues and parties.
- Provides hearing instructions explaining how the hearing will proceed.
- Swear in witnesses; and,
- Begin the initial questioning.

For more information email Sedgwick's Unemployment Team Lead, [Staci Schwartz](#) or call **(614) 932-1540**.

Vocational Rehabilitation



Vocational rehabilitation is a voluntary Bureau of Workers' Compensation (BWC) program designed to help eligible injured workers safely return to work after their injury. Injured workers receiving compensation for a workers' compensation lost-time claim may be deemed by the BWC, to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services. Once BWC has determined eligibility, the injured worker will be contacted by the appropriate Managed Care Organization (MCO) to determine if vocational rehabilitation would be beneficial. If the BWC approves eligibility and the MCO determines vocational rehabilitation to be beneficial, the injured worker may participate in this program. The main goal of the program is to have the injured worker return to work in their original position, with their original employer.

Injured workers participating in the vocational rehabilitation program can also receive Living Maintenance compensation. Unlike Total Temporary compensation, Living Maintenance compensation is charged to the BWC's surplus fund, not the employers workers' compensation experience. This feature of the program may financially benefit the employer of the injured worker, as it reduces the compensation costs of the claim.

For more information: Email [Zachary Stewart](#) or call **(614) 932-1565**.

