

NYSIF DIVISION 240
L/M MEETING AGENDA
199 Church Street, New York City
1/25/18

<u>PEF</u>	<u>MANAGEMENT</u>
Prashant Singapura - Co-Chair	Cliff Meister – Co-Chair
Dan Warren	Alyce Siegel
Karen Walter– via conference	Armin Holdorf
Katherine Czachorowski	Heather Woolfolk
Patty Mason	Karen Anderson
Radhakrishna Mohan	
Clifvon Jones	
David Dubofsky	
Charles Termini – via conference	
Lisa Quarles – PEF Field Representative	Patti Albert – via conference

1.) Minutes: Previous October 12, 2017 minutes have been approved.

2.) Next Meeting: PEF proposes the next meeting to be held on April 26, 2018 at 10:00.

3.) Local L/M Meetings: PEF representatives individually reported the status of the local LM meetings for their respective district offices (specifics intentionally omitted from these minutes.)

4.) Statewide Staffing Levels -

PEF asserts the following: Underwriters have recently been directed to sacrifice additional time out of their days to field customer service calls. Since the inception of this directive over a year ago, this is not done on a rotation basis, but "volunteer", whereby Underwriters are "selected" to participate. This is placing an undue burden on Underwriters.

PEF requests additional support staff for the NYSIF Call Center. If Underwriters are to continue to be part-time Call Center staff, additional Underwriters should be hired or a lighter work load for Underwriters should be implemented.

Automated processing, maintenance, and new business pricing has not alleviated the Underwriters to a degree that enables them to dedicate their workday to answering call center queries.

PEF presents additional concerns via handout questioning a permanent change in their job duties, out of title work, back log of their own work while tending to call center over flow, and de-professionalization of these titles. Also, call center coverage needs have increased as witnessed by additional unscheduled days being requested to man call center phone lines.

PEF requests management consider the following:

- Call center reps reverting to the duties of only shepherding calls to the appropriate CSRI or Underwriter.
- Hiring permanent rather than temporary Call Center Customer Service Reps who create high turnaround
- Rotate or have all CSRI's and UW's participate.
- Special email address for Disability Underwriters
- Disability Underwriters should be listed on the NYSIF website.

Management's response: The Customer Service Call Center handles a large volume of calls, resulting in fewer calls directed to our Underwriters. The recent and temporary increase in call center participation involving our Underwriters was necessary due to a substantial increase in call volume resulting from the rollout of the NYS Paid Family Leave Act and a Premium credit

billing issue. Members of NYSIF's Claims Dept., Finance Dept. and Disability Dept. also participated in assisting the call center.

The tasks performed on the call center are essentially limited to answering a customer call and assisting the customer by answering questions, providing information and/ or shepherding a customer's call. Underwriters have not been asked to work overtime or perform tasks outside the scope of their normal duties.

On the issue of rotation, each local business office or department is responsible for providing participants to assist Customer Service. As such, business offices may rotate staff; however, the business office or department is responsible for securing access to the software program and proper phone necessary for participation, as well as training the individual on the operational protocols involved. Modified case loads and/ or comp time for participants should also be discussed at the local level as well.

5.) Update on RFP's -

PEF requests any changes and updates regarding the Triad program since the last meeting. PEF has an interest in the cost/benefit of third party administrators, as that can have a direct impact on members' jobs.

Management reports that nothing has changed since the last meeting.

6.) Underwriting -

a.) PEF thanks management for the new format of the Underwriting Manual and requests ongoing updates on the progress and expected end date of the new programs and procedures.

b.) Has an analysis been started regarding whether new Underwriters will be hired, or duties reassigned to lower titles?

Management responds: The Underwriting manual will continue to be updated on an as needed basis. There is no end date for updating; it will remain a work in progress as things are constantly changing in Workers' Compensation. Regarding staffing, we are regularly analyzing staffing levels and hire as operational needs warrant.

7.) Communications going out in members names -

PEF asserts:

CSRs are aware of queries sent on behalf of SIF to claimants. These queries bear our names but not our input. At present, S32 queries are being sent to claimant's where it has already been deemed that an S32 is not feasible. Issues are arising.

PEF requests that management consider alerting the CSRI in some manner prior to sending these letters so that the CSRI can justify with an explanation of denial IF it is Not advantageous for SIF to settle a certain claim via S32.

It was determined that this is more troublesome in the pension units.

Management responds that at PEF's request, they will discuss with IT the possibility of having a diary sent to the pension case managers as an alert that a S32 letter will be automatically generated unless they cancel it. Management advised they will also look into changing the automated letter to send to the attorney and state that the claimant should contact their attorney.

8.) Long Island Relocation -

Members at the Melville location have been told they will be moving. PEF thanks management for soliciting their opinions. PEF is seeking confirmation that this SIF location will remain in Long Island.

Management responds that the lease for our Melville building is up in October 2019 and that the intent is to remain on Long Island. If the office is relocated, we will be considering where employees currently reside.

9.) Virtual Hearing Reps -

Due to the WCB's implementation of the virtual hearing process, SIF has begun to prepare in some offices by constructing new, very small 6'x8' "cells" for the Hearing Reps, not just for virtual hearings, but as a permanent work station.

PEF members have advised of an abundance of additional concerns with these cells as presented to the Albany BM that are both SWL&M and SWH&S concerns. This item is also on the SWH&S agenda.

Management responds that they will continue to evaluate and update re: these modifications and adjustments.

b.) PEF would also question why virtual hearings are not being done via telecommuting. Rather the state wastes money constructing cells.

Management responds that it is not feasible for hearing reps to be on camera in their homes, which could be filled with various distractions.

10.) New Blood Donation documentation requirements -

PEF members have been advised by Ms. Woolfolk that an "official blood donation receipt" is required in order to be approved leave for blood donation. This is not consistent with SIF's employee manual which states:

" BLOOD DONATIONS

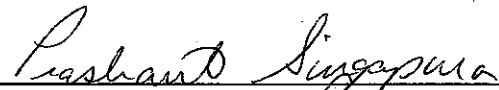
Employees who donate blood during working hours will be excused for the time it takes to donate, including reasonable travel time to and/or from the donation site not to exceed a combined total of two hours. In order to be excused without charge to credits, the employee must provide documentation that he/she has donated blood."

Management responds that blood donation documentation must have the name, date, and entity at which the blood was donated. Examples are: official blood donation card, a copy of a form showing that you signed in, or an email verifying you donated blood.

11.) MAD – Mandatory Alternate Duty - PEF requests information on NYSIF's policies and procedures concerning Article 13 and modified alternate duty.

Management advised their regular program is implemented. They will research and advise further. Management advised that Carol Filkins handles workers' compensation issues and she should be consulted.


4/18/18
Cliff Meister, Management Co-Chair


Prashant Singapura, PEF Co-Chair