

**ALASKA WORKERS' COMPENSATION**  
**MEDICAL SERVICES REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING**

**August 8, 2025**

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT  
DIVISION OF WORKERS' COMPENSATION

Telephone 977-853-5247 ID 867 2796 5944

Zoom Conference <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86727965944>

**AGENDA**

**August 8, 2025**

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| <b>9:00 am</b>  | Call to order <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Roll call - establishment of quorum</li><li>• Approval of Agenda</li><li>• Minutes from July 18, 2025</li><li>• Issues from AWCB, DWC staff or MSRC</li></ul> |
| <b>9:50 am</b>  | Break   |
| <b>10:15 am</b> | Public Comment Period   |
| <b>11:15 am</b> | Break   |
| <b>11:30 pm</b> | Overview/Discussion of Draft WC Fee Schedule, Final Draft Approval  |
| <b>1:00 pm</b>  | Adjournment   |

# Alaska Division of Workers' Compensation Medical Services Review Committee Meeting Minutes

July 18, 2025

**Friday, July 18, 2025**

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Director Charles Collins called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Participation was via video conference only.

## **II. ROLL CALL**

The following Board Members were present:

|                     |              |                |                     |
|---------------------|--------------|----------------|---------------------|
| Dr. Mary Ann Foland | Jeff Gilbert | Susan Kosinski | Valerie Mittelstead |
| Dr. Jeff Moore      | Pam Scott    | Misty Steed    |                     |

Member Mason McCloskey was excused; a quorum was established.

## **III. Approval of June 27, 2025 Meeting Minutes**

Member Foland moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Member Steed. The minutes were adopted without objection.

## **IV. FEE SCHEDULE DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION**

Director Collins proposed the following dates for the 2026 MSRC meeting season: June 5, June 26, July 17, and August 7, with the Joint MSRC-Board meeting scheduled for August 28. The Committee approved the proposed dates.

The Committee reviewed a state-by-state comparison of IME reimbursement practices, noting that many states do not use CPT codes 99455/99456 and instead bill by report, time, or documentation volume. Members expressed concern that Alaska's current fee schedule does not reflect the complexity of IMEs and noted that subjecting IMEs to the medical fee schedule may disincentivize provider participation.

The Committee agreed that IMEs and SIMEs should be excluded from the medical fee schedule, clarifying that their costs are determined by report and arranged by the payer at a reasonable time and place. Following public comment, this item was tabled pending data from Memoree Polleys.

The Committee revisited home health. Members noted limited provider availability and emphasized that these services are typically arranged through direct agreements between the payer and the agency or caregiver. The Committee supported including general language in the fee schedule indicating that home health services are not

subject to standard fee schedule rates and are reimbursed based on negotiated agreements.

The Committee discussed ambulance services. Members expressed concern about the current reimbursement of 85% of billed charges, particularly for ground transport. The Committee discussed potential alternatives, including adopting CMS ambulance rates with a multiplier or establishing flat rates. Carla Gee and Misty Steed agreed to analyze additional NCCI data and CMS benchmarks to inform potential revisions. Further discussion and recommendations are expected at a future meeting.

*Break 10:07 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.*

**V. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: 10:15 AM- 11:15 AM**

- Memoree Polleys – Claims Director for Pensar, TPA for the State of Alaska
  - Provided public comment regarding the rising costs of IMEs and SIMEs. Stated that Alaska is paying significantly more than other states, citing average IME charges of at least \$3,300 and SIME costs ranging from \$20,000 to \$86,000. Expressed concern that the high costs are becoming normalized and suggested the Division consider caps or hourly rate limits to contain expenses.
  - Director Collins invited Ms. Polleys to share additional data for analysis, and she agreed to coordinate with the State’s risk manager to provide supporting documentation. The Committee expressed interest in continuing the discussion.

**VI. FEE SCHEDULE DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION CONTINUED**

Carla Gee provided a follow-up to the June meeting discussion on inpatient hospital reimbursement. She noted that most states, including those using CMS or Medicare-based systems, exclude critical access hospitals (CAHs) from the fee schedule and negotiate directly with those facilities. The Committee generally agreed that the current model is unsustainable. Member Kosinski noted that 85% of billed charges incentivizes facilities to inflate their prices and suggested aligning with CMS methods using a multiplier. Carla will draft rate proposals using a CMS-based approach with multipliers for inpatient and outpatient services, excluding CAHs.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Director Collins reminded the Committee that the next meeting is scheduled for August 8, 2025.

Motion to adjourn by Member Gilbert, seconded by Member Mittlestead. Motion passed unanimously.

*Meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.*



**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
& WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

# Workers' Compensation Medical Services Review Committee

## Medical Services Review Committee Members

Charles Collins, Chair  
Jeff Moore, MD  
Mason McCloskey, DC  
Mary Ann Foland, MD  
Jeff Gilbert  
Misty Steed  
Pam Scott  
Valerie Mittelstead  
Susan Kosinski

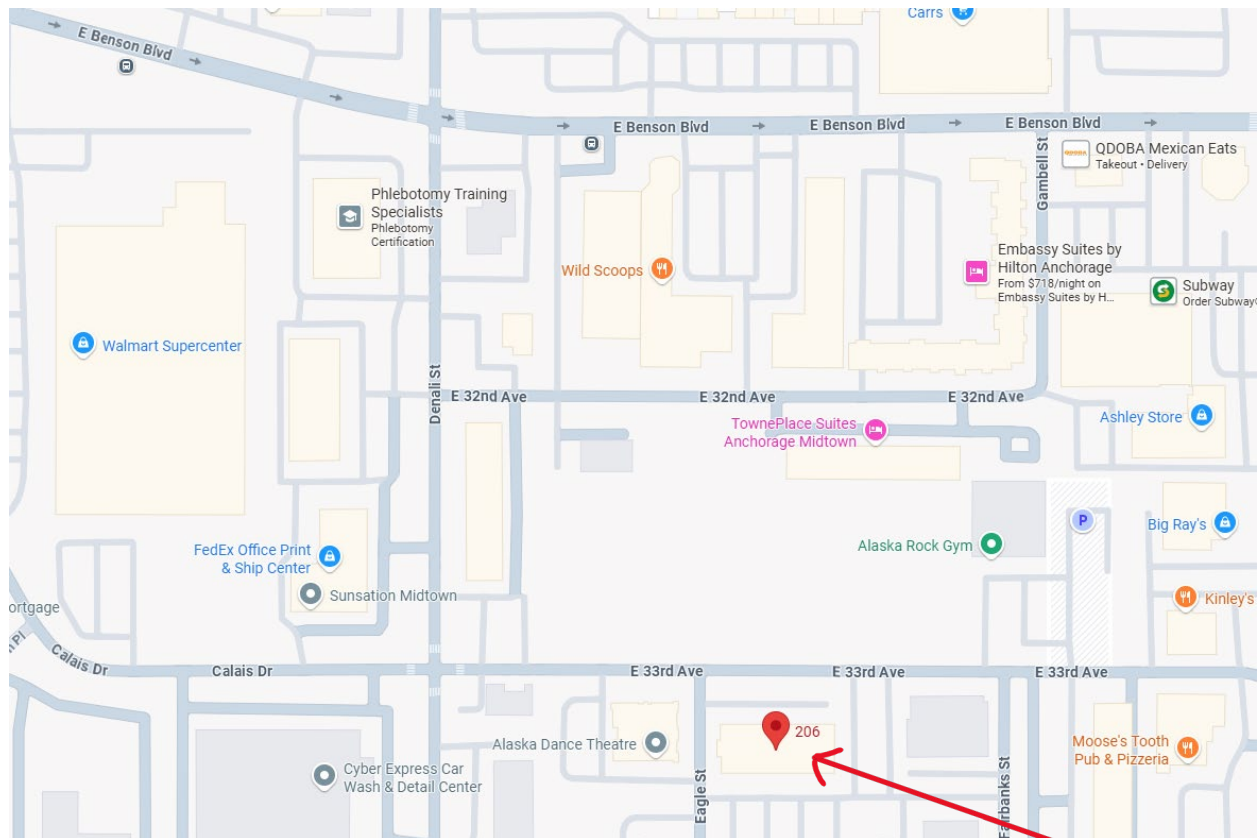
# Final Meeting Schedule for 2025

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Our **August 8th** meeting at 9am will be in person at the Eagle St. building. All meetings will be broadcast with Zoom and a quorum must be present for all meetings. Public comments will be allowed at all meetings and recorded in the minutes.

A joint AWCB/MSRC meeting will be held in person on **August 22nd**, 2025, in the same location. The committee recommendations will be presented at this meeting.

The address is Department of Labor and Workforce Development 3301 Eagle St., suite 208 Anchorage, AK 99503.



Front of the building is on Denali St, parking on both sides if attending in person.

## Alaska Workers' Compensation Medical Services Review Committee

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A few of our committee members have expressed their intentions of stepping down from the committee at the end of this service year. No doubt 2026 will bring some change into the work this committee has performed and as we begin to ponder on those future changes, I will include the guiding statute for the members of the committee.

**AS 23.30.095(j)**

The commissioner shall appoint a medical services review committee to assist and advise the department and the board in matters involving the appropriateness, necessity, and cost of medical and related services provided under this chapter. The medical services review committee shall consist of nine members to be appointed by the commissioner as follows:

- (1) one member who is a member of the Alaska State Medical Association;
- (2) one member who is a member of the Alaska Chiropractic Society;
- (3) one member who is a member of the Alaska State Hospital and Nursing Home Association;
- (4) one member who is a health care provider, as defined in AS 09.55.560;
- (5) four public members who are not within the definition of "health care provider" in AS 09.55.560; and
- (6) one member who is the designee of the commissioner and who shall serve as chair.

**Committee Membership as of August 1, 2025**

| <b>Seat</b>                                      | <b>Last Name</b> | <b>First Name</b> | <b>Affiliation</b>                          |
|--|------------------|-------------------|---|
| Chairperson                                      | Collins          | Charles           | Director, Division of Workers' Compensation |
| Alaska State Medical Association                 | Moore, MD        | Jeff              | Orthopedic Physicians Anchorage, Inc.       |
| Alaska Chiropractic Society                      | McCloskey, DC    | Mason             | Kanady Chiropractic Center                  |
| Alaska State Hospital & Nursing Home Association | Gilbert          | Jeff              | St. Elias Specialty Hospital                |
| Medical Care Provider                            | Foland, MD       | Mary Ann          | Primary Care Associates                     |
| Lay Member – Industry                            | Steed            | Misty             | PACBLU                                      |
| Lay Member – Industry                            | Scott            | Pam               | Northern Adjusters, Inc.                    |
| Lay Member – Labor                               | Mittelstead      | Valerie           | IBEW  |
| Lay Member – Industry                            | Kosinski         | Susan             | ARECA Insurance Exchange                    |

# 2025 Medical Fee Schedule Changes

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A historical table of adjustments included:

| Alaska Conversion Factors and Multipliers for Medical Fee Schedule              |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
|---|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
|   | 2017   | 2018   | 2019   | 2020   | 2021   | 2022   | 2023   | 2024   | 2025   |        |
| Medicare Part B Average Sales Price   | 3.375  | 3.375  | 3.375  | 3.375  | 3.375  | 3.375  | 3.375  | 3.375  | 3.375  | 3.375  |
| Clinical Diagnostic Laboratory Fee Schedule                                     | 6.33   | 6.33   | 6.33   | 4.43   | 4.43   | 4.43   | 4.43   | 4.43   | 4.43   | 4.43   |
| Durable Medical Equipment, Prosthetics, Orthotics, and Supplies                 | 1.84   | 1.84   | 1.84   | 1.84   | 1.75   | 1.75   | 1.75   | 1.75   | 1.75   | 1.68   |
| Surgery   | 205.00 | 174.00 | 165.00 | 132.00 | 125.00 | 119.00 | 119.00 | 119.00 | 119.00 | 119.00 |
| Radiology   | 257.00 | 206.00 | 196.00 | 141.00 | 134.00 | 121.00 | 121.00 | 121.00 | 121.00 | 121.00 |
| Pathology and Laboratory  | 142.00 | 142.00 | 135.00 | 122.00 | 122.00 | 122.00 | 122.00 | 122.00 | 122.00 | 122.00 |
| Medicine  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  |
| Evaluation and Management   | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  | 80.00  |
| Anesthesia  | 121.82 | 121.82 | 121.82 | 110.00 | 105.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 | 100.00 |
| HCPCS (RBRVS) (relative values > 0 but no AKCF; defaults to 85% billed charges) |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |
| Outpatient Facility   | 221.79 | 221.79 | 221.79 | 221.79 | 221.79 | 221.79 | 221.79 | 221.79 | 221.79 | 221.79 |
| Ambulatory Surgical Center  | 221.79 | 221.79 | 221.79 | 177.00 | 168.00 | 168.00 | 168.00 | 168.00 | 168.00 | 168.00 |

No changes in multipliers or conversion factors have been forwarded by MSRC members.

## Proposed Schedule for 2026

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**AS 23.30.097(j)** The board shall annually renew and adjust fees on the fee schedules established by the medical services review committee under (a)(1)(A) of this section by a conversion factor established by the medical services review committee and adopted by the board in regulation.

The 2026 Medical Services Review Committee will hold its inaugural meeting on June 5, followed by the dates of June 26, July 17 and final committee only meeting of August 7. The joint MSRC and AWCB meeting is tentatively scheduled for August 28, 2026.

## Discussion Ideas

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Language for inclusion on billing for medical evaluations by employer physicians and Alaska Workers compensation Board, (AWCB), medical evaluators. These evaluations known as EME, Employer Medical Evaluation, sometimes referred to as IME or Independent Medical Evaluators, are invaluable to offer an opinion from the non-treating physician. Second Independent Medical Evaluations or SIME, are performed by specialists from a list of providers available to the AWCB who can offer medical opinions to assist the AWCB in determining a proper decision outcome in contested hearings.

Carla is researching other states' policies and procedures around the IME/SIME reimbursement schedule. Further discussion on long-term care facilities and proper reimbursement is also ongoing. Language to organize the method of billing and reimbursement for these services is proposed for discussion, Carla will have examples. Thank you to Susan for working so diligently on the subjects.

At this meeting we should conclude with most of our updates and changes included, and August 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting, with the Board, will be our discussion and presentation of the 2026 Medical Fee Schedule.

Some concerns have been shared over inflation costs I medical and I am sharing this update from the State's actuary NCCI. NCCI actively monitors economic pressures, including inflation and tariffs, that could affect

costs in the workers' compensation industry. A recent presentation was shared at a regulators meeting and these slides were provided for detail.

