



ALFA International
THE GLOBAL LEGAL NETWORK

**WORKERS' COMPENSATION PRACTICE GROUP
REGIONAL SEMINAR**



Dublin, OH | February 12, 2026

WELCOME RECEPTION & DINNER

Z Cucina di Spirito Dublin

6584 Riverside Drive | Dublin, OH



FEBRUARY 11, 2026

6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M.



ALFA International
THE GLOBAL LEGAL NETWORK

980 NORTH MICHIGAN AVENUE, SUITE 1180 | CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60611 | 312.642.2532

SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Thursday, February 12, 2026

Program at Stanley Steemer

5800 Innovation Drive | Dublin, OH

10:00 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.

REGISTRATION

10:30 A.M. – 10:35 A.M.

WELCOME

Speakers:

Kendra Garstka, *Regional Seminar Program Chair*,
HALL & EVANS, LLC, Denver, CO

Michelle Middendorf, *Host Company*, STANLEY STEEMER,
Dublin, OH

10:35 A.M. – 11:15 A.M.

RETHINKING MEDICARE SET-ASIDES: NEW RULES, NEW STRATEGIES

Speaker:

Julie Murray, SEMMES, BOWEN & SEMMES, Baltimore, MD

The CMS Medicare Set-Aside guidelines that took effect in July 2025 brought important changes for claim handling and settlement planning. This session will break down what's new, what it means for employers, and practical strategies for navigating MSAs while keeping settlements on track.

11:15 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.

EMPLOYEE ADVOCACY & RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM FOR MITIGATING CLAIM EXPOSURE

Speakers:

Tom Rodriguez, *Regional Recovery Coordinator*,
INTERNATIONAL PAPER COMPANY, Memphis, TN

Kenny Veit, LEITNER, WILLIAMS, DOOLEY & NAPOLITAN, PLLC,
Brentwood, TN

This panel will cover practical tips, tactics, and strategies for reducing claim exposure. Topics will include managing temporary partial disability, permanent disability, and medical benefit payments for injured workers.

SEMINAR PROGRAM SCHEDULE

12:00 P.M. – 12:30 P.M.

LUNCH BREAK

12:30 P.M. – 1:15 P.M.

OVERCOMING MEDICAL ROADBLOCKS

Speakers:

Sandi Adkins, *Senior Claims Manager, INS INSURANCE, INC.*,
Green Bay, WI

Claudia Heyman, *HALLORAN SAGE*, New Haven, CT

The presentation will examine common challenges that impact the progression of workers' compensation claims. We will examine treatment delays, lack of provider follow-up, malingering concerns, and difficulties in achieving medical stability, and discuss best practices for navigating these issues to move a case forward to conclusion.

1:15 P.M. – 1:30 P.M.

CLOSING REMARKS

Speaker:

Kendra Garstka, *Regional Seminar Program Chair*,
HALL & EVANS, LLC, Denver, CO

SPEAKERS



SANDI ADKINS is a Senior Claims Manager with INS, Schneider's captive insurance company. Sandi is actively engaged in the strategic direction of legal risk management and is responsible for the oversight of workers' compensation and cargo claims management. Sandi is a naturally analytical person and enjoys investigation and developing end-to-end strategies that enable efficiency, productivity, cost savings, and optimal customer experiences. The most important parts of Sandi's life are her husband and three rambunctious boys. In her free time, Sandi likes to read, cook, play piano, coach, and spend time with her family outdoors.



KENDRA GARSTKA is Special Counsel with Hall & Evans, LLC, ALFA International's member firm in Denver, Colorado. Her practice focuses on the representation of insurance carriers and employers in Colorado and Utah workers' compensation and subrogation cases. Kendra defends and argues cases before the Colorado Division of Workers' Compensation, the Utah Labor Commission and the Colorado Court of Appeals.



CLAUDIA HEYMAN is a Partner with Halloran Sage, ALFA International's member firm in Hartford, Connecticut. As Chair of the Workers' Compensation Practice Group, Claudia understands that in order to achieve the best results for her clients, it is necessary to craft solutions based on their unique needs and challenges. With over twenty-five years of experience defending workers' compensation claims for both mom and pop entities and large corporations alike, she is committed to working collaboratively with clients to help them achieve their desired goals. Claudia recognizes that there is no "one size fits all" solution to legal problems, and uses her nuanced understanding of workers' compensation law to develop creative strategies to resolve disputed issues. Claudia's deep attentiveness to the needs of her clients has led to the development of longstanding relationships in which her guidance is sought on a wide variety of claims. These range from a simple strain to catastrophic injuries involving over a million dollars in exposure. She has exceptional skillfulness in medical-legal issues as they relate to the field of workers' compensation, and uses this knowledge to achieve the best possible outcome for her clients. Whether aggressively litigating a matter or swiftly resolving a claim, Claudia is dedicated to partnering with her clients and providing unparalleled service that exceeds their expectations. She earned her BA from the University of Pennsylvania and her JD from Villanova University School of Law. She is admitted to practice law in the State of Connecticut, the District of Connecticut, and the State of Delaware.

SPEAKERS



MICHELLE MIDDENDORF is the Senior Risk Manager for Stanley Steemer International, the leading surface cleaning and restoration service in the United States. Michelle has more than 27 years of risk management experience, kicking off her career working for a well-known third-party administrator, then transitioning into a 13-year claims and risk role at a global logistics and delivery company where she was named employee of the year two times. Michelle has worked in all aspects of the industry, from risk finance and analysis, to roles as a claims and compliance Manager. She has been with Stanley Steemer for 11 years. Responsibilities include not only management of claims and the third-party administrator, but driver qualification, franchise insurance compliance, vendor and commercial contract management, and implementing all risk and key performance indicator standards. Michelle is also an avid Ohio State Buckeyes fan.



JULIE MURRAY is a Principal and Firm Chair of Semmes, Bowen & Semmes, the ALFA International member firm in Baltimore, Maryland. Julie's practice focuses on the defense of employers and insurers in their workers' compensation claims in Maryland and the District of Columbia and she regularly appears before the administrative agencies and appellate courts in both jurisdictions. Her clients include self-insured employers as well as insurance companies providing coverage for large and small employers across a broad range of industries. In addition to representing clients in the defense of workers' compensation claims, Julie also regularly provides education and training to risk management professionals to help them successfully manage their claims. She received her B.A. from University of Maryland, College Park, and graduated *cum laude* from University of Maryland School of Law.



TOM RODRIGUEZ is a Regional Recovery Coordinator for International Paper Company. He has been in this role for 30 years, beginning with Champion International, which was purchased by International Paper in 2000. Mr. Rodriguez is part of the Occupational Care & Recovery team, located in Memphis, TN. He assists International Paper locations in understanding the WC and Return to Work processes, and ensuring proper communication takes place between International Paper locations, TPA, HR and Legal departments. Tom graduated from Mercy College in Dobbs Ferry, NY with a degree in Criminal Law and Public Safety. Mr. Rodriguez is an active member of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church and is the current Deputy Grand Knight of the Germantown, TN Knights of Columbus, Council #7449. A native New Yorker, Tom has lived in Germantown, TN for the past 21 years.

S P E A K E R S



KENNY VEIT is a Member of Leitner, Williams, Dooley, & Napolitan, PLLC, an ALFA International member firm in Nashville, Tennessee. Kenny has been practicing law since 2003 with a primary focus on workers' compensation defense throughout Tennessee and Kentucky. Kenny represents clients at administrative, trial and appellate levels. He is active member of ALFAI's Workers' Compensation Practice Group steering committee. Kenny is also a member of the American Bar Association, Tennessee and Nashville Bar Associations, Kentucky Bar Association, Defense Research Institute and Tennessee Defense Lawyers Association. Kenny is regularly asked to present lectures on Tennessee Workers' Compensation to employers and insurance companies.

SPEAKERS



SPEAKERS

