

BUILDING TRADES WORKERS' SERVICES

Workers' Health & Safety Newsletter

The Building Trades Workers' Services Association ("BTWSA") is a legal services organization providing assistance to members of participating local unions with their workers' compensation claims.

BTWSA was established by the founding group of Business Managers as a not-for-profit corporation, incorporated in Ontario, with a board of directors and officers elected from among member unions according to the corporation's by-laws. The members of the corporation are persons nominated by the participating local unions in writing.

List of BTWSA Directors and Officers for 2018

Joe DiMaso, UA Local 46	President and Director
John Lawrie, Unifor Local 591G	Vice-President and Director
Ed Spence, Millwright Regional Council	Treasurer and Director
Bruno Mittica, SMART Local 285	Secretary and Director
Barry Brown, IBEW Local 636	Director
Marc Arsenault, Ironworkers District Council of Ontario	Director

Becoming a BTWSA Member

Membership in the BTWSA organization is open and available to local unions in Ontario who may apply for and receive acceptance by vote of existing member local unions. There are currently 48 local unions that are BTWSA members.

Membership in the BTWSA entitles a local union access to experienced and professional legal representation for its members before the WSIB and WSIAT. Services are only available through referral by authorized local union officials. No service is available to any individual on any other basis and no non-members receive service.

As a not-for-profit organization BTWSA operates on a cost of operations basis. Recovery expenses are shared among member local unions. This results in affordable fees and results for participating local unions.

Our legal professionals represent injured workers in all matters relating to workers' compensation. This includes preparing and filing submissions, as well as appearances at all levels of appeals. We also assist workers in disputes over returning to work, modified duties, and other accommodation issues.

We also offer assistance with CPP, CPP-D, and EI denial appeals.

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Over our 20+ years of existence, we have amassed the institutional resources to deliver powerful and effective representation in the increasingly complex battles to gain fair WSIB benefits for injured and/or diseased members.

BTWSA Legal Professionals

BTWSA employs a well-trained and multi-experienced group of professionals with a history of working individually and collaboratively to deliver results to its client base. Working full time and singularly focused on workers' compensations issues all day every day, we provide real value to member local unions. All BTWSA employees are unionized (Unifor Local 252) and are licensed to practice with the Law Society of Ontario.

Jennifer Aziz, Lawyer. Jennifer is a graduate of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law. She has previous experience in human rights advocacy.

Ken Burkimsher, Paralegal. Ken has been representing workers at BTWSA since 2005. He previously worked for the WSIB for 23 years and retired from the Occupational Disease branch.

Steve Johnson, Paralegal. Steve has worked for BTWSA since 2013. Steve was previously a Director at the WSIB and has over 40 years of WSIB experience.

Tracey Lowe, Paralegal. Tracey has represented workers at BTWSA since 1996. She is an executive board member of Unifor Local 252 and a board member of West Scarborough Community Legal Services.

Christine Ritchie, Paralegal. Christine has been with BTWS since 2001.

Brad Valley, Lawyer. Brad is a graduate of the University of Toronto's Faculty of Law, where he was the co-director of the Advocates for Injured Workers legal clinic.

Contact us to learn more about how we can serve you

Because member local unions own and operate the service within a not-for-service model BTWSA is able respond to the needs of each local union while delivering quality service at a reasonable cost. With a combined experience of over 100 years, BTWSA delivers positive results through oral and written advocacy for your members with workers' compensation issues.

Contact one of our directors for more information and/or to learn how to become a member.