Risk Management Workshop: Insight and Inspiration

MMRMA’s Risk Management Workshop is fast approaching: this signature event will be held March 7–8 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel West in Lansing. Presenters will offer insights, information, and inspiration about practical risk management issues facing Michigan public entities.

Governance Matters
In recent years, the MMRMA Board of Directors began holding its March meeting in conjunction with the Risk Management Workshop. Everyone is encouraged to sit in on the Board Meeting to see MMRMA’s governance in action and get updates on the organization and the work of those who lead it.

Breakout Training
In the morning, guests can choose from these tracks:
> Recreational Marijuana. Attorney Laura Brown from Rosati, Schultz, Joppich and Amtsbeckler (RSJA) will discuss the results of the November 2018 referendum and what it means for public employers.

> Risk Avoidance Program (RAP) Grants. Cara Kowal, MMRMA’s Manager of Risk Management Services, will give an update on new grant criteria, best practices, and a case study.

> Good Ethics is Good Risk Management.

These three tracks will take place after lunch:
> PTSD and Public Employees. Greg Young, a law enforcement chaplain and crisis responder, provides stress debriefings for agencies following critical incidents. Young has seen firsthand how stress and trauma can affect public employees and their mental health. He’ll share valuable insights gleaned from his years of experience.

> Special Events. As spring and summer approach, many members will host or put on community events. MMRMA Risk Control Consultant Terry VanDoren and Regional Risk Manager Craig Manser of Ibex will share guidelines for safe, successful events.

> Succession Planning and Transitioning.

General Sessions
After lunch, attorney Carlito Young from RSJA will conduct a general session on Michigan’s Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), recent updates to the law, and how members can understand and navigate its requirements.

Later, another general session will feature a Legal Update on recent activities with implications for MMRMA and our members. Starr Kincaid, Esq., MMRMA’s Legal Services Manager, will moderate the panel, which includes attorneys Jeff Clark (CMDA), Margaret Debler (RSJA), MMRMA general counsel Jim Mellon, and retired Judge Daniel P. Ryan.

All in all, it’s a not-to-be-missed event!

For more information, download a brochure at mmrma.org. We look forward to seeing new friends and familiar faces again!
Onboarding and Orientation Boost New Employees' Success

by Cindy C. King, Director of Membership Services and Human Resources

CITY COUNTY INSURANCE

Services (CIS), a public entity risk pool in Oregon, defines four distinct stages of the "employee life cycle": hiring, onboarding/orientation, retention, and retirement/transition. When CIS noticed a spike in its members’ employment claims—including illegal hiring practices, wrongful termination, and discrimination—they developed strategies to help reduce these claims.

An article in the December 2018 Risk Journal focused on the hiring stage. Once we’ve carefully evaluated candidates and selected one to hire, next comes onboarding, which actually begins when an employment offer is made.

Effective onboarding serves to engage the new hire, establish trust and open communication, and retain talent. While onboarding is a critical factor in new employees’ success, some employers struggle to manage it well.

Onboarding is a Process

Onboarding is not an isolated event—it could last weeks or even months. Some organizations provide orientation on a new hire’s first day or week and consider onboarding complete. But, according to yourtrainingprovider.com (March 1, 2017), “Orientation ... is just one piece of the onboarding process.”

Tom Gaydos (connectedbeneﬁts.com, September 21, 2015), lists five key objectives of effective onboarding:

1. Foster a positive experience with the employer.
2. Confirm that the employee made the right choice in accepting the offer.
3. Help the new hire understand the organization’s vision.
4. Articulate the employee’s role and responsibilities.
5. Explain the employee’s training process.

If effectively carried out, onboarding helps new hires understand how to be successful in their new position and affirm the reasons they decided to accept the offer.

Onboarding can be a make ‘em or break ‘em experience for new employees.

Spotlight on Orientation

Orientation is only one component of onboarding, albeit a crucial one. Orientation is the chance to share the employer’s culture, mission, vision, and values.

In addition to the human resources director, other employees should have a role in orientation, including the new hire’s department director and/or manager, a mentor colleague with similar responsibilities, and perhaps another longtime employee with exemplary skills and attitude.

Orientation procedures typically include these essential elements:

- Tour of the facility and staff introductions to help set a positive tone from day one.
- Information packet with an overview of the organization, policies and procedures, and FAQs. This conveys an investment in the new hire, who is also making an investment by accepting the job.
- Overview of employee benefits, including I-9, withholding, and enrollment forms.

Fostering Connections


O’Toole warns against overwhelming new hires with long presentations or exhaustive lists of facts and figures that...
MMRMA Updates Five Informational Risk Control Brochures

MMRMA’s Membership Services staff and Risk Control Advisory Committees work diligently to provide member resources to help manage and mitigate risks. Thanks to their efforts, MMRMA has published updates to several valuable brochures in recent months. Many thanks to our committees and staff for their contributions to these important resources.

Member employees with an MMRMA.org user account can log in and retrieve these documents on the Members Only dashboard at “Model Policies and Procedure Brochures” and the subject area’s corresponding folder.

Prevention and Response to Workplace Harassment Complaints
In light of member inquiries and response to our Sexual Harassment Active Bystander training sessions, MMRMA is pleased to announce this newly revised document. The model guidelines and sample policy are intended to assist members in formulating their own policies and work rules to prevent and resolve workplace harassment complaints, including complaints of sexual harassment, and implement measures to prevent future occurrences.

Fire/EMS Interaction with People with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or with Diminished Capacity: Guidelines
Many professionals in public service will encounter individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder or other forms of diminished capacity. This document provides guidelines and model procedures for managing such encounters with compassion and professionalism.

Surface Ice/Frigid Water Rescue: Model Policy
The Fire/EMS Risk Control Advisory Committee recently reviewed and re-released this relevant content for the benefit of members as they manage risks associated with bodies of water in winter weather.

Law Enforcement Rapid Response to Active Violence for Law Enforcement and Rescue Task Force
MMRMA has published various versions of a model policy and procedure for rapid response to violence. The Law Enforcement and Fire/EMS Risk Control Advisory Committees recently reviewed and re-released this resource, which reflects the most up-to-date principles for addressing these situations.

If you have questions about these documents or need further risk control assistance, please contact MMRMA’s Membership Services department. Watch for additional updates and new resources in the coming year!

| For downloads, go to “Model Policies and Procedures Brochures” at mmrma.org. | 3
Orientation and Onboarding, continued from page 2

are readily available on the employer’s website or in marketing materials. Conversely, O’Toole recommends recognizing new hires as human beings who are excited and nervous about their new undertaking.

Start with the Basics
Share basic logistics right away, such as the locations of break rooms and restrooms, how to get required uniforms, supplies, and how to access secure areas, if applicable.

Inform new hires of any potential career development opportunities, such as tuition reimbursement and/or professional organization memberships. This communicates your investment in them and their importance to the success of your organization.

Get Specific
Of course, it’s also important to address new employees’ specific position responsibilities. An effective orientation goes beyond a position description, providing work examples and explaining how tasks support the organization’s mission and goals. Make coworkers available for the new hire to ask questions and seek guidance.

Practically speaking, make sure workstations are equipped with needed equipment such as a computer, telephone, notepads, and writing materials. Support your new employee by providing a staff directory, an organization chart or list of primary departmental functions, a calendar of upcoming events, and relevant project deadlines.

Assign Responsibilities for Job Training
Training prepares employees to perform their jobs well and with some level of autonomy. Still, many employers fail to properly train their teams, including new hires.

Important questions include who will train the new hire on their job responsibilities, the organization’s technology systems, employer work rules, and administrative policies. All these training areas are essential for successful performance.

Long term, sound hiring practices are one of the most important risk management tools.

New employee training will also likely include on-the-job and other onsite experiences.

For some organizations, online learning systems might be useful to teach generic “soft skills” like effective customer service—as well as technical skills such as processing an invoice for payment or operating heavy equipment.

Monitor Performance and Offer Feedback
The onboarding process is an employer’s chance to give new hires the tools they need to be successful. Many organizations have a new hire probationary period. This is a natural opportunity to monitor new hires’ progress, provide guidance, and ultimately determine if they have the characteristics, work ethic, and skills to be “hire to retire” team members.

Resource: Webinar by Sharon Harris, Tamara Jones, and Lynn McNamara, Citycounty Insurance Services

| Assign training responsibilities to those most skilled and experienced in the task. | 4 |