

## Are You Still Spending Too Much on Workers' Comp? ...Summit can help you save



**Rick Hodges**  
Summit President and CEO

For the past few years, state legislators throughout the United States have been working on various workers' compensation insurance reforms, many geared toward making rates more reasonable for businesses.

There have been varying degrees of success, and it's safe to say that today's work comp rates—in just about every state—are lower than they've been in years. Unfortunately, the economic crisis has made it hard for

business owners to properly applaud low rates.

### Cutting costs

Companies are struggling to stay afloat, and many of you have already trimmed your operating budgets and have begun to pull your belts tight.

But there's one area you may not have thought about—and we can help. Done right, proactive management of your comp program can impact your bottom line. Even though your premium looks like a fixed cost, you can minimize the dollars your company spends—without jeopardizing the value.

### Now's the time

Business is slow for many, so it's a great time to implement cost-saving strategies. In this issue of COMPpress, we've outlined quite a number of ways to help you better manage your workers' compensation program and potentially cut your overall costs for years to come.

If you need assistance, or if you have concerns, call us here at Summit or talk to your agent. Remember that the best workers' comp program is built on a partnership between all parties involved—let's build this one strong.

### Ways to save

#### 1 Start with safety

Workplace injuries directly affect premium, which makes safety the most obvious key to saving money. If you

want to spend less on workers' comp, create specific safety initiatives for every job. They can be as simple as correcting ergonomic issues or requiring safety goggles. Put safety rules in writing. Enforce them. Offer incentives for accident-free performance. Cheerlead. If you need safety ideas, check with your agent, visit our website or call your Summit loss control representative.

#### 2 Take advantage of available credits

Setting up a drug-free workplace takes commitment and time to meet some state regulations, but the premium savings—depending on your state—can be up to 7.5 percent. The programs are not difficult to implement, and Summit can help. *(Note: Florida employers can access an additional 2 percent savings for maintaining a workplace safety program and completing the Workplace Safety application process.)*

#### 3 Plan (and improve) your immediate response

Statistically and practically speaking, the faster you respond to a workplace accident, the better and less costly the outcome. Designate a person to immediately report workplace injuries. Contact the nearest in-network doctor's office or clinic, and prearrange any documentation you may need in the event of an injury. Explain your company's workplace accident procedures to your employees. And be prepared to stay in the communication loop that includes the injured employee, the physician and Summit. Laws differ by state, but if you take time to put procedures into place right now, you are guaranteed more control of any workplace injury—and the chance to keep costs from spiraling.

#### 4 Check your classification codes

Business classification codes are based on the level of hazard that jobs in a particular industry typically involve—and they are a key factor in determining the cost of your workers' compensation premium. It's a good idea to check your employee classifications because improper coding can cost thousands. Visit the Employer Resources section of our website to learn more. Click on **Workers' Comp Basics**, then **Cost**.

“It's a great time to implement cost-saving strategies.”

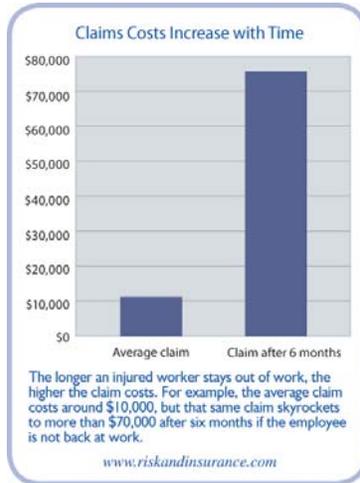
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### 5 Get started with Back2Work

Return-to-work programs work, but they've got to be in place *before* an injury. It's a fact that employers with established return-to-work programs can minimize the costs of claims and that working employees heal faster. Check out the rest of this issue for more information about Summit's Back2Work program.

### 6 Keep an eye out for fraud

Fraud is everyone's problem. It's a huge drain on resources, and it touches all of us and our bottom lines. If one of your employees is injured at work, follow the recommended workers' comp accident procedures. If an employee does not cooperate, call your adjuster and your agent. If you suspect fraud or suspicious activity, notify Summit immediately at 1-800-282-7644.



These are simple ways to cut your costs, and they're effective. We want your company and your employees to be safe and accident free, and for your workers' compensation program to work for you. And we'll work with you to get there.

## Our Philosophy

Summit and our parent company, Liberty Mutual Group, have a commitment to a single core value—doing the right thing. It's a fundamental business practice that Summit has subscribed to since our inception more than 30 years ago.

## How does that look?

With workers' comp insurance, doing the right thing means being a proactive partner, and here are some of the ways we do it—

- Helping policyholders understand the factors that mitigate costs
- Providing viable, smart workers' comp programs for injured workers and their employers
- Paying claims and dividends
- Working toward a common goal of creating safe workplaces
- Taking care of injured workers

It's tough sometimes to view an insurance company as a partner. And I get that. But we're here to help. Here at Summit, comp is all we do, and we take a long-term approach to our business practices. We don't take the easiest or the cheapest route—we try to always take the right one. And that means taking a long-term approach to our business relationships, too. ■

## Return to Work Basics

- **Have a transitional duty policy** that requires participation if an employee is injured on the job. Employees who refuse to participate in such a policy may forfeit their workers' comp benefits.
- **Communicate your program positively;** make Back2Work part of your corporate culture.
- **Develop a transitional duty job bank** for employees who cannot return to their original jobs immediately. Put at least five possible assignments on this list. Ask supervisors and employees for suggestions.
- **Meet with employees who are on transitional duty** regularly to discuss progress and obstacles to return to work. Provide transportation if needed.
- **Consider working with a vendor that temporarily provides off-site employment.** Think out of the box, from community service to school mentoring. And remember, statistics show that employees who are active actually heal faster.
- **Coordinate your transitional duty policy with all other state and federal leave and absence regulations,** such as the ADA and FMLA. ■

## BACK2work™ Transitional Duty

### IS

- Temporary
- Therapeutic (helpful for healing)
- Meaningful and productive for business
- Time to connect with the injured worker
- A way to reduce the cost of a claim
- Modified or alternate tasks that can change from day to day and vary depending on the type of injury and the injured worker's abilities

### IS NOT

- Full production
- A punishment
- "Busy" work
- Wasted time

# The Father's Table Makes Back2Work a Sweet Success

If healthy, happy employees make better cheesecakes. The Father's Table is in great shape! Located in the heart of Florida, The Father's Table bakery makes thousands of cheesecakes most every day.

Thanks to HR Specialist Desiree Chambers, the company's insurance agency and Summit, The Father's Table is also helping its 220 employees feel great about their workers' compensation benefits.

## The story

In 2008, Desiree grew concerned when five of the bakery's workers' comp claims that year ended in litigation. It didn't make sense, so she called their insurance agency (Kuykendall Gardner) and spoke with Jim Peterson (AVP risk mgmt.) for help. The two sat down to review the bakery's approach to injury management from top to bottom. Jim has extensive experience with return-to-work programs and recommended that Desiree take advantage of Summit's Back2Work program.

According to Jim, "Employees who come back to work as quickly as medically possible do indeed heal faster, and they lose fewer wages—and those are good things for everyone."

Desiree also knew that the medical care center where they sent injured employees was part of the problem. The company's injured workers were waiting hours to see a doctor, were made to feel unimportant and were leaving dissatisfied. Plus, when injured employees came back to work, supervisors weren't sure how to handle their work restrictions and medical needs.

## Finding the right medical care center

Desiree's first move was to find a medical facility that cared. Starting with a provider list from Rafael Zavala, her Summit adjuster, she and Jim visited doctors near The Father's Table factory. In the end, Dr. Jonathan Waldbaum at Florida Orthopedic Associates seemed like the best fit; he even toured the factory to better understand potential injuries.

Desiree smiles, "Dr. Waldbaum even had some advice on preventing repetitive motion injuries—and we've already incorporated them into our production process."

## The transition

The next step was to set up a written plan for injured workers. Desiree worked with Jim to document transitional duty job descriptions, and then they looked for transitional duty jobs that could apply to different departments.

"That was tough," Desiree remembers, "Jim encouraged us to make the Back2Work program part of a change in our perspective," Desiree says. "We had been emphasizing what our injured employees couldn't do, based on their restrictions.

With Summit's help, we looked for things they *could* do!" She continues, "For instance, an employee who can't lift a bread tray *can* put cardboard into the baking pans."

Jim and Desiree went to each supervisor for answers to operations-related questions. They also asked for specific job descriptions for all staff positions. For instance, was there a job that could be done without lifting

more than 10 pounds?

What jobs could be done with one hand? How about jobs that could be done either sitting or standing?

Desiree grins, "It was a whole different result. It was like we had pulled back a

curtain and the ideas flowed

in! We got several jobs in each area—and even the plant manager was impressed! In the end, Back2Work helped create a new position. An injured employee can now work as a floater performing various jobs throughout the company, depending on medical limitations. A key point was to make it clear that this position is temporary." She and Jim also adapted the employee handbooks and even created PowerPoint presentations to reflect return-to-work expectations and benefits.

## Training is key

Next, they set up a management training seminar to explain the Back2Work concept. Supervisors learned how to manage workflow and documentation, to work with injured employees and to keep the process flowing.



The team that whipped up a successful return-to-work mix includes, clockwise from left, Steve McKillop (attorney, with Jones, Hurley & Hand), Jim Peterson (agent with Kuykendall Gardner), Rafael Zavala (Summit claims adjuster), Desiree Chambers (The Father's Table HR specialist) and Sue Raskie (Summit's Back2Work manager).

The Father's Table, in Sanford, Florida, rolls out thousands of cheesecakes every day and ships their wonderful desserts nationwide. The company's mission is "to bring family and friends together any time of the day with desserts that are baked from scratch using only the finest ingredients." The company also makes a variety of specialty cheesecakes, such as key lime, chocolate swirl and fudge brownie, in addition to seasonal flavors.

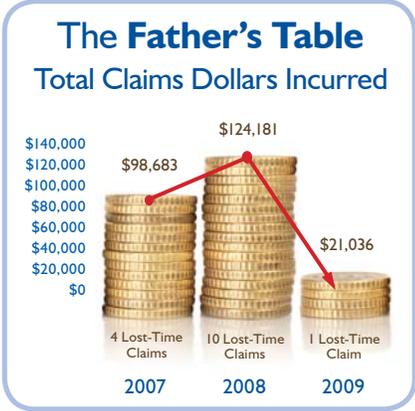
Finally, Rafael invited Steve McKillop with Jones, Hurley & Hand, a law firm that works with Summit and The Father's Table, to help identify and eliminate behaviors that might encourage employees to litigate.

Desiree adds, "Jim compared our company's payout of indemnity benefits to a profit margin our supervisors could relate to. When they realized how many of our cheesecakes it took to cover the cost of just one employee's lost wages, everyone jumped on board with enthusiasm!"

### It's working!

This year, with only 10 reported injuries, The Father's Table has one lost-time claim and loss ratio of 22 percent (down from 64 percent in 2008). Add that to more than \$100,000 savings in this year's claims costs, and it's easy to see that Back2Work is another ingredient success at The Father's Table bakery! ■

*The Father's Table gives 50 percent of its profits to charity, primarily through The Father's Table Foundation. Please visit their website at [www.thefatherstable.com](http://www.thefatherstable.com) for more information about this remarkable company.*



## Get Back2Work!

### And get certified

Do you need help putting together your Back2Work program?

Now you can be sure you have implemented a comprehensive return-to-work program for your company by becoming a Summit-certified Back2Work employer!

Check out our step-by-step tutorial "How to be a Summit-certified Back2Work Employer" accessible at any time from our website, [summitholdings.com](http://summitholdings.com). Log in to Summit's Online Business Center and click on **Back2Work**, then **Get Certified**. ■



## The Short List for Cutting Costs

### Ways to save on your workers' compensation

- Maintain a drug-free workplace.
- Establish and enforce your formal safety program.
- Identify a key person to manage work injuries.
- Establish a return-to-work culture.
- Share information with your staff. Display workers' compensation information for employees. You may also want to put basic information on the visors of company vehicles.
- Teach your managers what to do when an injury occurs.
- Report injuries immediately. You can report workplace injuries to Summit 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, via phone, fax or online. Also, be aware that your state may have a limited time in which a claim may be reported—if you miss that window, your business may be subject to fines.
- Perform a thorough investigation of all injuries—immediately. Important details are forgotten with time. Many states also have a time limit for disputing claims, so be sure to have accident details documented.
- Stay in communication with your Summit claims adjustor.
- Provide transitional duty. Plan to bring your injured worker back to work as soon as medically possible (offer modified or alternate work).
- Contact your injured worker regularly. Send get well cards or flowers—they need to know you care! ■



## How to Find the Network Doctor You Need

It's easy. Log in to [summitholdings.com](http://summitholdings.com) and click on **Find a Medical**

**Provider**. Click on your state and then your county. A current list of our network medical providers in your area will pop up, complete with contact information. ■



## How to Track your Workers' Comp Claims with Summit

Your company's up-to-the-minute claims history is available online—any time.\* When you log in and pull up your claim search, you'll see a list of your company's claims paid to date (and broken down by policy period), along with details that list the monetary allocations, e.g., indemnity (wage replacement), medical and legal costs.

What's more, you can create custom claims searches and download your data into an Excel file for further graphing and analysis. There is also a helpful link to make contacting your adjustor quick and easy! For claims of \$10,000 or greater, you can view the adjustor summary which is updated monthly and gives you the latest detailed information about your employee's injury and the claim's status.



### Identify and solve safety problems

Checking your comp claims regularly may uncover safety needs or trends, and you could use the information to make your employees safer and improve your bottom line. Summit's online claim search is just one more way we make workers' comp work for you.

### Log in to our Business Center

If you haven't yet checked out the services available online with Summit, go to [summitholdings.com](http://summitholdings.com) and request a password. ■

*\* Service may not be available during monthly IT network updates.*

## What Can Summit Do for You?

Summit offers a variety of programs aimed at keeping your workers' compensation costs low. Here's a sampling of some of the tools and services we have available to make the most of your workers' compensation dollars.

- **Online Business Center**, where you can—
  - Check claims activity
  - Print and download loss runs
  - Print certificates of insurance (COIs) or waivers
  - Find a doctor in our workers' comp network
- **Back2Work™**, Summit's return-to-work program
- **Open for Business**. Create and save your own detailed plan for disaster recovery online—it's free!
- **Easy claims reporting**. We offer three easy ways to report a claim 24 hours a day, seven days a week—
  - Call our hotline at 1-800-762-7811
  - Visit us at [summitholdings.com](http://summitholdings.com) and click on **Report an Injury**
  - Fax your report to (863) 667-1871
- **Specialized provider network**,\* consisting of more than 16,000 doctors and specialists experienced in occupational medicine and workers' compensation
- **Tailored loss-control services**, including—
  - Safety consultations
  - Drug-free workplace assistance
  - Safety education, training materials, classes and webinars
- **For more information**. For tips on workers' comp and frequently asked questions, visit our website at [summitholdings.com](http://summitholdings.com).

\* Proprietary network in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and Tennessee. In Arkansas, Summit uses a contracted network that offers our clients the same benefits as our proprietary arrangement.

## How to Reach Us

### Customer Service

1-800-282-7648

### Injury Reporting Hotline

24 hours a day, 7 days a week  
1-800-762-7811

### Florida/Corporate Office

1-800-282-7648 • (863) 665-6060

### Southeast Region

Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina,  
South Carolina, Tennessee  
1-800-971-2667 • (678) 450-5825

### Southwest Region

Arkansas, Alabama,  
Louisiana, Mississippi  
1-800-421-2944 • (225) 926-3264

[summitholdings.com](http://summitholdings.com)



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