



Stakeholder Meeting Minutes

August 22, 2025

Call to Order: The meeting convened at 10 a.m. with the following participants:

Holly Kessler
Isabel A. M. Cole
Bob Battles
Anita Booker-Hay
Brian Watkins
Kylee Redman
Jane Dale

Katherine Mason
Robert Silber
Chris Bishop
Ryan Miller
Lonnie Ladenburg
Shawna Fruin
Lionel Greaves IV

Jason Dickey-North
Dane Henager
Sarah Kortokrax
Morgan Irwin
Sarah Jackson
Cindy Gaddis
Rose Gundersen

BAMS (Board Appeals Management System) Update from Anita Booker-

Hay: Thank you to all of you. It has not been easy and has impacted everything. Some of you sent questions; it's not really feasible to answer the case-specific questions here, but I'll try to weave in information. We launched BAMS June 23. It's a "customizable off the shelf" product and implementation has been a lot bumpier than anyone expected. It has gotten incrementally better. Mail has been a significant challenge as well as the effect it has on your receipt of notices. We had some slower starts in getting new appeals and scheduling mediation conferences, and those are related to reports.

Between June 23 and July 17, we had problems with the mail. It was a technological issue—BAMS didn't function the way we were told it would. As a result, a lot of mail didn't go out. Also, sending mail to L&I required the addition of a new attribute, which we have implemented. Yesterday, there were only three mailing errors, so we feel we have overcome the technological problem.

Another problem early on was our filing portal. It was either not receiving your information or not giving you the email confirmation of your filing. Those are both fixed.

Where we are now: When we retired the old system, we copied the data from the old system to the new system. One of the things people liked about the old system was that, after close to 30 years of using it, everything was automated. The new system requires more manual entry. Someone asked if grants were slowing down, and the answer is yes, due to the manual entry and the way we now have to transmit appeals to L&I, grants are slowed down. We are working with our L&I partner to figure out how to efficiently get the information to them. We are also adding two temporary employees to the New Appeals section

and two temporary schedulers to help overcome some of the slowing caused by the manual processes.

There is a report that helps track what appeals have been granted, and there's another report that identifies appropriate venue so we can assign mediators. When we launched, those weren't ready. We were told we could extrapolate the information from the system, but we could not. We now have the reports, and these items are moving again.

Claim allowance date on CRSA filing: We received a question about what to enter if you don't have the order; use the date allowance is confirmed.

Mr. Miller: When inputting CRSAs, we have to enter each claim number. Is it necessary to enter?

- Yes, it's a way to make sure what you are submitting fits with what is on the agreement. The claim numbers have to be input by someone, and we felt there was a smaller chance of mistake if they were input by the submitter.

Mr. Bishop: But there is a time constraint. Has that changed? It will take longer if we enter more information. We don't want to be rushed and make mistakes.

- We will follow up on this.

Ms. Fruin: It's tedious, entering all the claim numbers, but I understand someone has to do it.

There was a question about whether OAPs and PDOs are being delayed. With staff learning how to use the new system, we extended some of the timelines by which they submit orders. We are not altering statutory deadlines, but some items could be taking a little longer. Some of you have asked questions about specific orders taking an extraordinarily long time. If you provide a docket number to Anita we can research those.

Mr. Dickey-North: I want to express my thanks for working with us. Our interactions have been excellent. One question is regarding the backlog and the mailing issues. Are we still working through those things that didn't successfully mail out? Are we expecting old mailings to still be re-sent? It seems our caseload is down.

- The transmittal of appeals have been challenging. It was greatly tied to the mail and a lack of our ability to do a data dump. Historically with L&I we would take information about new appeals and do a nightly data dump so L&I could figure out what to return to us. Now we have to rely on our staff to do the transmittals. There has been a learning curve. Our I.S. department is working on a solution to transmit it in larger pieces. Yes, there is a bit of a backlog. It will take at least a couple of weeks.

Ms. Jackson: Is this the new way, a paper stack of new appeals? Is this the official communication from the Board to the Department?

- This is our workaround, and we will continue to meet with the Department to try to make it as efficient as we can so the Department gets communication about appeals that have been filed.

Ms. Jackson: If something comes up regarding time frame or communication, please reach out. Our caseloads are increased because of this.

Mr. Bishop: Thank you to Judge Booker-Hay and her staff. We've brought a lot of these concerns to them, and I've seen emails from her past work hours trying to help us out.

BIIA Staff Update: Since our last meeting:

New hires:

- IAJ3 Meggan Blankenship
- IAJ3 Courtne Eastman
- Welcome back IAJ 4 Knowrasa Patrick
- LA3 Julia Gonzalez
- Welcome back LA2 (Scheduler) Julie Karlson

Departures:

- Robert Jimerson
- Ann Riedel-Thomas.

We are in the process of hiring two non-permanent legal office assistants in New Appeals, two non-permanent schedulers, and an LA3.

Kudos:

Mr. Greaves shared: Judge Redman assisted in identifying outstanding appeals for a decertified employer that the Department assumed management of their claims so that we could file notices of appearances; Beth Blue and Jasmine McLaughlin have been very responsive with concerns that have been raised; Judge Booker-Hay has been very prompt in getting back to us; and the line staff working for the IAJs are doing their utmost to assist all their stakeholders. Their professional behavior and assistance in getting problems solved, copies mailed out etc. is really phenomenal.

Kudos to Diana Cartwright: she provides details that allow us to research issues.

Mr. Miller got kudos from a staff member--she appreciated it so much when you emailed your understanding about the difficulties the staff is dealing with.

Ms. Kortokrax: JAs have been so helpful, but we are getting inconsistent information about in-person filing. There is confusion over when staff is available or who to call.

- We will follow up with our Chief of Administrative Services so we are clear on the procedure.

Kudos to the Department staff and the team led by Sarah Jackson that we are communicating with on the transmission of appeals. They are being so gracious. We are aware of the frustration.

Board Members: From head to toe, all of our staff have been amazing with the new system. Thank you, staff, for sticking with us and sometimes working overtime to get it done. We appreciate it.

Stakeholder Q&A:

Mr. Silber: Is there a discussion of going back to what it was? I'm not seeing the benefits of the new system on our end. You're hiring staff member after staff member to administer it.

- It was considered, but no. We can't go back. Our previous system was basically obsolete because it was based on a Microsoft product that no longer exists. We had already experienced a Microsoft update that broke access to the whole system. This system will eventually get things right, but it may take a while. We finish projects and get updates every day. We're at the hard part of being patient right now.
- Also, we can't develop a system that has an outward-facing portal for parties to access appeal documents with the old system. We don't have it yet, but that's what we are working toward.

Mr. Miller: I'm noticing morale is down more than I have ever seen. From my perspective, the Board has been amazing at addressing things. From the kudos side, we really want the staff in the trenches to know we appreciate all their work. Also, FYI to the private sector: in October Microsoft is phasing out Windows 10. Take a look at your machines to make sure they accommodate Windows 11.

Mr. Dickey-North: There have been a few instances where the parties have an agreement and when the judge issues the order it doesn't match what the parties agreed on. Can the judges send the language back to the parties for final review?

- I'm surprised that is not occurring because that has been the long-standing process. We will review. In the meantime, ask the judge to send the language to you before the order is issued in order to remind them.

Ms. Mason: While we can be patient and supportive, there's a lot of unhappy people. A lot of people's jobs and lives and clients and court reporters have been affected. Why were you on your back foot from the beginning, when it had been discussed for so long? How did this happen? It feels like it happened and now we have to adjust or find workarounds. People are really disappointed.

- We're not trying to sugarcoat it, yes, it has been a problem. Yes, everybody's frustrated. So why did this happen? This was not a failure of people to be prepared for implementation. What we had was a gate-funded project. They are budgeted for a period of time, and if

you don't launch, you lose the funding. We had a situation where people could not be working in two systems simultaneously. There was no way to pilot. It's too bad because it would have been lovely, but we had to migrate the data from one system to another. When we launched, it was a topsy-turvy nightmare. Those weren't things we could know until launch, and that was the problem.

- You previously gave input about the outward-facing portal, and we still have that for when we are ready to address it.
- We are all disappointed, we are here to serve and our hope is that we will get back to where we were with our service.
- If you have specific issues, the best way is to send it and the docket number to Anita so we can research.
- We're not resting here. We know it's painful and we will continue to make improvements. We are hiring temporary staff to help us find solutions and get back up to pace.

Mr. Dickey-North: Are you able to pull a report on orders granting appeal since launch, and can I have it? Yes, we have a report. I don't know if it can be exported. Please reach out to Lisa Krause-Winders.

Next meeting: We proposed November 21, 2025, at 10 a.m. Please email jay.raish@biia.wa.gov if you have conflicts.

Hiring Exception: Due to the Governor's Executive Order on hiring, Anita Booker-Hay requested an additional temporary scheduler. After discussion, the request was unanimously approved.

Public Comment: If you have a comment, please email jay.raish@biia.wa.gov and the Board will review it.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Jay Raish, Confidential Secretary