

PRIMA PRESS

A QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER FOR OUR MEMBERS

texasprima.org
Texas Chapter Public Risk Management Association

September 2020

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President's Message



In a typical September newsletter, I would be reminding each of you to secure your room reservation, get your costume ready and prepare for three days of education and networking at our annual conference. However, we all know this year has been anything but typical and while COVID-19 may have ruined our chances for an onsite conference, I still want to encourage each of you to join us for TWO days of education and networking. You can simply stay in your office or favorite room at home as Texas PRIMA goes totally virtual this year! And, in keeping with the theme, feel free to don your favorite 1920's attire!

Although we have been living in uncertain times in recent months, you can be certain the Texas PRIMA Board of Directors and staff have been busy behind the scenes ensuring the virtual experience will be worth your time and resources. As we get closer to our conference dates, November 9-10, look for additional information to assist you in taking full advantage of all our virtual event has to offer. We've all heard the term "social distancing" and that simply doesn't work for Texas PRIMA. COVID-19 may force us to "physical distance" in the name of public health, but we all still need the vital social interaction this association has long offered. Knowing our conference is not just about education but also about being with each other, our goal is to capture a similar spirit through our virtual offering. Look for unique ways to interact with other members and our loyal sponsors, just in a virtual setting!

Texas PRIMA Committees have been hard at work helping deliver the many great benefits of this association. Although we will not be meeting in person, we still plan to host our Risk Management Award ceremony and offer virtual scholarships. The Awards Committee would like to recognize our industry's top professionals and programs. Nominations for the [Risk Management Awards](#) are now being accepted. The Scholarship Committee will soon be accepting applications for our [Virtual Scholarship Program](#) funded through the association and our generous sponsors. The Webinar Committee still has several webinars planned in 2020, so make sure you register! Our Newsletter, Website and Social Media Committees are striving to keep you informed and to highlight the many benefits available to you as members. We hope you are taking advantage of the many resources available to you through Texas PRIMA!

While going virtual was not our preferred choice and is somewhat out of our comfort zone, it is the safest choice to keep you, our members, safe and healthy. On behalf of the 2020 Board of Directors, we hope to "see" you virtually in November!

Lesley Ward
2020 Texas PRIMA President



Our virtual conference will be held on Texas PRIMA's new Learning Management System! Sessions will be live and will be recorded for those who are unable to attend during the specified time. Select sessions will be pre-recorded. Texas PRIMA's virtual conference is about more than just education - it is about being with each other! Our conference platform allows for a virtual exhibit hall, networking with exhibitors and attendees as well as a bit of fun - who doesn't love door prizes? Sponsor and exhibitor information can be found on our [website](#). [Register HERE!](#)

Facing the Pandemic with a Return to Workplace Plan

It is amazing how quickly six months has changed the way America works. Faced with unprecedented risks under the Covid-19 pandemic, all companies have been faced with orchestrating critical realignments to meet their commitments to both employees and clients. And it is hardly over. Companies must work diligently to manage the next wave of challenges that include how to return employees to the workplace with confidence and fresh perspectives. There are some practical first steps to take including the guidelines provided by OSHA and the CDC...[\(read the full article\)](#)

*Rebecca Mitchell & Lucy Dominguez
The Lighthouse Group – an Affiliate of Injury Management Organization, Inc.*

Texas PRIMA Educational Programs

Regional Risk Management Seminars

The Regional Risk Management Seminars for August and September were cancelled due to COVID-19 concerns. We are currently working to put together virtual educational opportunities during these uncertain times. Stay tuned and stay well!

A friendly reminder to please follow us on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter to keep up with information regarding upcoming regional seminars, webinars, and all that is happening with Texas PRIMA!!

*Belinda Raindl
Education Committee Chair*

Webinars

Offering education to our Texas PRIMA members is a large part of our mission. Webinars are a vital component of this objective. Texas PRIMA has hosted seven webinars, listed below, this year. If you missed any, the recordings and PowerPoints shared by the presenters are available in the Member's Only section of our [website](#).

- General Risk Management – Property Insurance Market
- COVID-19 and Its Impact on Texas Workers Comp
- Be a Better Problem Solver
- Insight into Coronavirus Aid – Keys to Understanding the Benefits and Limitations of Available Federal Funding
- Texas Workers' Compensation and The Impact of Medicare
- Penetrating the Cone of Silence: Communicating with Police and Fire
- Ethical Hazards of Workers' Compensation

We have additional webinars scheduled with continued plans for more.

- Wednesday, September 09 at 10:00 a.m. – [Drug and Alcohol Employer Programs, CBD Laws & FMCSA Clearinghouse](#) (CEU available)
- Tuesday, September 15 at 10:00 a.m. - [Managing Performance without Reviews](#)
- Wednesday, October 14 at 9:30 a.m. – [Don't Pay Twice](#)

Please continue to watch the Texas PRIMA website for additional learning opportunities.

*Melissa Steger
Webinar Committee Chair*

Is Your County Prepared for Hurricane Season?

September not only brings the start of school, fall, and football but also the peak of hurricane season. The Atlantic hurricane season runs from June 1 through Nov. 30 each year and anyone within 100 miles of the Texas coast should be reviewing their plans and preparing for any storm that may come their way.

Hurricanes bring a variety of weather issues that can severely affect counties and their operations. These named storms can include wind, rain, tornadoes and flooding. As Hurricane Harvey demonstrated in 2017, all four issues affect a wide area in southeast Texas. Prepare for these storms by reviewing your emergency plans and ensuring procedures are in place to protect employees, property, vehicles and other county infrastructure. Counties should also be prepared to provide support to residents affected by the storms.

The calm before the storm

Preparing for the next storm shouldn't take place when you hear on the news that a storm is approaching. The emergency planning process is a year-round process that can help prepare the county for various weather and non-weather emergencies. Emergency response staff are monitoring weather and other weather-related resources like the National Weather Service (NWS) and National Hurricane Center for up-to-date information on impending events.

It is important to understand and recognize weather terminology used to describe events, such as alerts, watches and warnings. Each has a distinct meaning that requires different actions and communication to staff and residents. These warnings can also affect operations and activities, especially outdoor activities that may need to be changed or cancelled. Knowing the difference can help in responding to changing weather conditions as well as monitoring of roads, facilities and other high risk areas affected by severe weather. Know your flood risks, have a response plan and work on mitigating flood-related risks. ...[\(read the full article\)](#)

*Texas Association of Counties
Risk Management Pool*

Texas PRIMA Awards Program

Who's the Bee's Knees in Risk Management? You or some of your colleagues are! Don't let those Sockdollagers go unnoticed and unrecognized. It's that time, take a moment to spotlight an individual or Risk Management Program by nominating yourself or a colleague for the Risk Professional of the Year, the Rising Star, or the Risk Management Program Achievement Awards.

Risk Professional of the Year – Recognizes an individual who exemplifies excellence, innovation, and commitment to the risk and insurance management industry.

Rising Star – Honors someone with 2-7 years of professional experience in the risk and insurance management industry who exemplifies leadership potential, and professional development.

Risk Management Program Achievement Awards – Celebrates programs, projects, or products that are creative and highlights the success of our public entity organizations.

The successful award recipients are recognized at the awards celebration during Texas PRIMA's annual conference in November. Additionally, recipients will receive a wall plaque and recognition in the PRIMA Press newsletter. **The Risk Professional of the Year and the Rising Star recipients both receive complimentary conference registration.**

Get your Cake Walk on and visit www.texasprima.org/awards for more information to nominate yourself, someone else, or a program. **Application deadline is September 15, 2020**, so get hopping! If you have any questions give me a shout at donna@pocca.com.

Donna James-Spruce, A.R.M.
Awards Chair

Conference Scholarship Program

This year Texas PRIMA is offering two types of conference scholarships, our Annual Scholarship for new conference attendees and our COVID-19 Assistance Scholarship for current members. The Texas PRIMA Conference Scholarship Program is designed to assist public entity professionals whose entity could not otherwise afford to pay the cost of "attending" Texas PRIMA's annual conference. [Watch this video](#) to see how the Texas PRIMA Scholarship changed one recipient's career! Scholarship applications will open at the end of August and the application deadline is October 1, 2020 (NO EXCEPTIONS!).

To be eligible for an Annual Conference Scholarship, an applicant:

- Must be an employee of a public entity
- Shall have direct or indirect responsibility for the risk management, insurance, employee benefits, loss prevention and/or safety function(s) for the organization
- Must not have attended a Texas PRIMA annual conference during the previous (2) years and must not have received a Texas PRIMA Conference scholarship in the previous (5) years

To be eligible for a Conference COVID-19 scholarship, an applicant:

- Must provide a letter from the Public Entity Member's supervisor explaining the need
- Must have paid 2020-2021 membership dues
- Must have attended 2 of the last 3 conferences

To learn more about conference scholarships, visit texasprima.org/scholarship.

Jason Hardy
Scholarship Chair

Board Nominations

Throw your hat in the ring! [Nominate](#) yourself or a colleague to champion the importance of Texas Public Risk Management Association. This year we are seeking to fill two Director Positions.

To be eligible, a nominee must be a member of Texas PRIMA with responsibility for risk management functions, insurance, benefits and/or safety management within your governmental entity. Board members are also required to attend four board meetings throughout the year and also our annual conference. Travel and hotel costs for attending the board meetings is paid by the organization. Consideration for election includes experience, demonstrated leadership, participation in the Chapter and a proven commitment to the organization and the profession.

It is important to note the Board of Directors is a working board and there are duties and responsibilities to fulfill with a commitment to serve.

[Click here](#) to complete the nominations form. The deadline to submit your name is September 4, 2020 and the ballot email to vote for our two new board members will be sent September 30th and due October 30th. Newly elected board members are announced during Texas PRIMA's Annual Conference in November 2020. The Board term commences January 1, 2021.

This opportunity will also provide invaluable experience impressive on any resume, all while providing networking opportunities with other risk management professionals. We are available to discuss any questions you may have. Contact Texas PRIMA at info@texasprima.org or by phone at 512-394-0719.

Norma Martinez
Nominations & Elections Committee Chair

Membership News

Texas PRIMA Membership has so much to offer, including webinars, a community forum and a job postings board. Please remember we are always here for our members. Texas PRIMA offers a free transitional membership for our current and former members who are temporarily unemployed due to COVID-19. The membership committee recently made calls to many Texas PRIMA members and we love the response from the membership sharing their experiences through these unusual times. Staying connected and sharing information are a few of the membership committee's core objectives.

We hope you enjoyed our Coffee Talk! We had great attendance and wonderful responses from those who attended. We look forward to networking with you again soon!

The Texas PRIMA membership year runs from October 1st through September 30th. Membership renewals were

emailed August 1st. Be sure to renew your membership to continue accessing your Texas PRIMA benefits. If you are planning to attend Texas PRIMA's Annual Conference, your dues will be itemized in your conference registration. If you renew prior to registering for conference, the dues portion will be deducted from your total conference fee. You can always check your membership status on the "My Profile" tab in the member's only section of texasprima.org. You can view invoices and receipts by hovering your mouse over the "My Profile" tab.

James Alvarez
Membership Chair

Members On The Move

Congratulations to **Cynthia Bentley** (Workers Compensation and HR Specialist) on her retirement from Hays County. Cynthia Bentley was employed for five years with Hays County, and previous to that she was employed for 40 years with Louisiana Workforce Commission/ Louisiana Department of Labor as a Sub Regional Manager.

Congratulations to **Scott Payne** on his new role as Texas Political Subdivisions JSIF, Executive Director/CEO. Current Texas Political Subdivisions JSIF, Executive Director/CEO Randal Beach, is retiring at the end of the year. Scott was previously an Account Executive with McGriff, Seibels & Williams, Inc.

Welcome New Members

Vaun Murphrey, Benefits Specialist - Lubbock Independent School District
Trang Nguyen, MD, PhD, President - MedicusRx
Lisa Thompson, CPHRM-CPHQ-CJCP-TQMC, Executive Director of Risk Management and Payroll - Lubbock Independent School District
Melissa Trevino, Work Compensation/Return To Work Specialist - Texas Health and Human Services

Keep Texas PRIMA members informed by sending your "Members on the Move" updates to our newsletter, PRIMA Press. Tell us about your new position, promotion or designation. Send submissions to info@texasprima.org.

Sponsor Highlight



TRISTAR transforming risk into opportunity for 30 years! TRISTAR is the largest independently-owned P&C claims administrator in the country. We provide best-in-class third-party administration, medical management, and benefit administration — serving self-insured public entities and corporations, captives, program managers, insurers and reinsurers. TRISTAR provides workers' compensation, liability, employee benefits, FMLA, excess, and catastrophic claims management. We combine proven claim fundamentals with flexibility and freedom to customize. Our comprehensive approach is designed to reduce your overall cost of risk, helping to protect your bottom line and support your long term success. The TRISTAR team is proud to support Texas PRIMA!



UnitedHealthcare is a diversified health and well-being company dedicated to designing products, providing services and applying technologies that improve access to health and well-being services, simplify the health care experience, promote quality, and make health care more affordable. UnitedHealthcare designs comprehensive, flexible and affordable health care benefit plans and services.



PMA Management Corp., a third-party claims administrator, has been partnering with public entity risk managers since 1991. We work with many different types of public sector clients, including state, county, city, public education and utility employers. We are part of PMA Companies, a subsidiary of Old Republic International Corporation, a Fortune 500 Company with consolidated assets of approximately \$20.29 billion as of March 31, 2019. Our Texas operations are headquartered in Irving, Texas. PMA Management Corp. offers employers a unique 3-step integrated model that incorporates pre-loss, loss-reduction and post-loss strategies tailored for the needs of clients. This holistic approach is designed to create safer, healthier workplaces through risk assessment, cost reduction and education. Our model includes robust data analytics, assisting in trend identification and achieving actionable results.

Our clients have won national risk management awards. Our successes include:

County Government Builds Sustainable Workers' Comp Success

With 4,100 employees, the County partnered with PMA Management Corp. to achieve stronger workers' compensation outcomes, protect employees and control costs. Return to work, worker safety and wellness programs generated outstanding results from 2007 to 2017, including:

- o 40% decrease in new claim volume
- o 56% decrease in lost-time claims
- o Incurred losses reduced by \$3.7 million
- o Open litigated files decreased by nearly 38%

School District Reduces Lost-time Claims

A city school district partnered with PMA Management Corp. to transform their workers' compensation program. Using PMA's holistic approach, the school district created a safer, healthier workplace for employees, with powerful results from 2007 to 2018:

- o 22% lost-time claims frequency reduction
- o Claim reporting time improved to 1.9 days
- o 25% reduction in "struck by or injured by" lost-time claims
- o \$1.7 million in medical savings in 12 months

Our focus is delivering return on investment and value to you! To learn more about how we could help your public entity, contact your local Texas PMA Management Corp. representative, Wes Jordan, 469-886-4632 or email Wesley_Jordan@PMAGroup.com. Visit our website, www.pmacompanies.com.

Thank you Sponsors!

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Diamond

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