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MONTANA STATE FUND
OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE
March 7, 2024

The Montana State Fund (MSF) Operational Excellence Committee meeting was meeting was held March 7, 2024 via Zoom with public participation in the MSF Board Room at 855 Front Street, Helena, Montana 59601.

Committee Members Attending

Dexter Thiel, Chair, Sidney
Michael Marsh, Billings

Nancy Butler, Helena

Board Members Attending

Richard Miltenberger, Helena
Karen Fagg, Billings

John Maxness, Helena

MSF Staff Attending

Holly O'Dell, President/CEO
Nick Mazanec, VP, Legal Services
Verena Maeder, VP, Organizational Health
Wayne Bunch, Assistant VP
Pam Byers, Assistant VP
Rene Martello, Director, Finance & Actuary

Verna Boucher, Executive Assistant
Matt Mandell, Assistant VP
David Jordan, Assistant VP
Ryan Sanders, Enterprise Solutions Engineer
Bruce Johnsen, Chief Strategy Officer

Others Attending

Steve Crawford, Division of Criminal Investigation

I. Meeting Preliminaries – Dexter Thiel

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m.

B. December 7, 2023 Operational Excellence Committee Meeting Minutes

The Committee took action to approve the minutes. Ms. Butler made the motion, Mr. Thiel seconded; the motion passed unanimously.

II. Scorecard – Ryan Sanders, Enterprise Solutions Engineer

Staff provided a review of the internal metrics, financial and customer metrics and the learning and growth metrics monitored and depicted in the Scorecard Report. Committee members asked multiple questions.

III. 2024 Strategic Plan – David Jordan, Assistant VP and Verena Maeder, VP, Organizational Health

Staff provided a review of the four pillars of the strategic plan.

- The first strategy revolves around pricing and how MSF assures that pricing is not a barrier to partnership with Montana employers. Focusing on key results has led staff to develop multiple projects that intend to optimize pricing tools and enhance our underwriting tools to balance competitive pricing.
- The second strategy is focused on building relationships with our customers. Management recently hired a Policyholder Experience program manager to help develop a program that helps MSF understand our customers and their evolving needs, along with providing MSF the ability to respond to their concerns.
- The third strategy revolves around MSF's key partners, our agents and understanding the agent perspective, providing tools and processes they can work with, and aligning our compensation approach to be competitive. Commissions is a key part of this work.
- The fourth strategy is to share our story with our customers, prospective customers, partners and all of Montana. MSF wants them to know who we are and why we are here for MSF to be valued members of the community across all of Montana.

The increased call volume project was formed in response to MSF call volume, particularly first quarter of 2022, compared to 2023. The project purpose was to reduce the total number of calls and began by developing an understanding of the nature of the calls, who is making the calls, the root cause of the calls, and, once identified, implement solutions around friction points.

The project is accomplishing its original intent and overall incoming call volume is trending down.

IV. Cannabis, Narcotics and Sex Trafficking in Montana – Steve Crawford, Narcotics Bureau Chief for the Division of Criminal Investigation

Steve Crawford reported on the trends and issues regarding fentanyl, carfentanyl, cocaine, methamphetamines, black market marijuana, and human sex trafficking and addressed questions.

V. Customer Safety Enhancement and Customer Return-to-Work Programs – Wayne Bunch and Pam Byers, Assistant Vice Presidents

Staff reported that leaders and claims examiner developed a strategic team-based approach to specific claims providing for individualized strategies and addressing the overall duration by focusing on tools to aid in return-to-work, working to develop an earlier understanding to return-to-work barriers/challenges and proactively addressing them.

A strategic partnership has been developed with MSF's largest customer to:

- Create programs providing value to our largest customer
- Promote a safe work environment for each employee
- Assist in risk management and mitigation
- Optimize claim management and outcomes
- Identify opportunities to scale offerings to other customers

This includes a behavioral health offering. Current literature and NCCI reports indicate that adding a behavioral health component to the claims handling process can have a positive impact on overall injured worker well-being and recovery.

VI. Old Business/New Business

The Chair called for any Old or New Business.

Committee Member Marsh requested and staff discussed information on two additional topics: audit as a marketing tool and clarification and plans for handling language translations for non-English speaking policyholders and injured workers.

VII. Public Comment

The Chair called for public comment; there was none.
There was none.

The meeting adjourned at 3:52 p.m. The next scheduled Operational Excellence Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, June 13, 2024 at Montana State Fund, 855 Front Street, Helena, Montana in the Board Room.

Respectfully submitted,

Verna Boucher
Special Assistant to the President/CEO