

IAIABC 2026 Ombuds Program

Tuesday, October 27, 2026

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Time in CDT	Session
10:30 AM - 11:15 AM	Relocation After Injury: Coordinating Care and Benefits Across Jurisdictions <i>Speakers: Joe Cavalcante</i> When an injured worker relocates, the path to receiving medical care and indemnity benefits becomes significantly more complex. This session explores what really happens after the move: how jurisdictions coordinate (or struggle to coordinate) benefits, how workers find authorized medical providers who understand the rules of the originating system, and how ombuds and claims professionals guide them through their rights. Attendees will gain a clearer understanding of the shared paradigms, the subtle differences, and the practical challenges that arise when an injury crosses borders.
11:15 AM - 11:30 AM	Break
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM	AI for Human-Centered Work: Practical Uses for Ombuds The work of an ombud is deeply human, built on trust, empathy, communication, and helping people navigate challenging situations. Artificial intelligence cannot replace those qualities, but it can help with some of the administrative, analytical, and communication tasks that support them. In this session, we'll explore practical applications of AI in ombuds work, discuss responsible use considerations, and explore approachable ways to get started, whether you're new to AI or already using it in your work. Speaker: <i>Alex Aljets, Artificial Intelligence Strategy Director, SAIF Corporation</i>
12:30 PM - 1:15 PM	Break
1:15 PM – 1:45 PM	The Centered Ombuds: At-Your-Desk Practices to Stay Balanced Compassion fatigue can quietly build for Ombuds who regularly absorb others' stress and conflict, making quick, accessible regulation strategies essential. This session introduces simple, at-your-desk tools — gentle stretching, meditative breathing, and Emotional Freedom Technique — to help reduce tension and restore clarity.

	Alongside these in-the-moment practices, we'll also explore supportive habits you can cultivate outside of work that strengthen resilience over time. By focusing on small, intentional choices both in and beyond the workplace, participants will gain practical techniques to stay grounded, present, and well-balanced throughout the day. Speakers: <i>Caitlin Breitbach, Small Business Ombudsman, Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services & Lorraine D'Angelo, Ombudsman, Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission</i>
1:45 PM - 2:00 PM	Break
2:00 PM – 2:45 PM	Protecting Workers Amid Rising Scams Hispanic injured workers in Oregon are facing new and concerning barriers, including a recent scam targeting Spanish-speaking workers with fake workers' compensation hearings. This session will unpack how these deceptive practices, combined with the broader political climate, immigration-related fear, and evolving state protection laws, influence workers' willingness to report injuries and seek help. Speakers: <i>Barbra Anderson, Ombuds, Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services</i>
2:45 PM - 3:00 PM	Break
3:00 PM - 3:45 PM	Celebrating Impact: Ombudsman Success Stories This interactive session invites Ombuds to reflect on and share moments of meaningful impact in their work. Participants will break into small groups to exchange personal stories of success, accomplishment, and growth. This session provides an opportunity to highlight the practices, approaches, and values that make a difference. <i>Attendees should come prepared to share one or more stories from their own experience.</i>