



2026 Annual Conference

Charleston, South Carolina
October 28 & 29, 2026



National Workers' Compensation Defense Network 2026 Annual Conference

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October 28 & 29

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

The National Workers' Compensation Defense Network (NWCDN) is a unique and dynamic organization consisting of attorneys representing 47 states, Washington DC and Canada.

The Annual Conference is designed specifically for employers, insurance carriers, claims professionals, and risk manager as this event offers timely legal updates, practical insights, and opportunities to connect with peers and industry leaders.

The program will kick off on the USS Yorktown, an aircraft carrier built in 1941 during World War II for the US Navy. She was later decommissioned in 1970 and has been a museum ship on the RIVER since 1975.

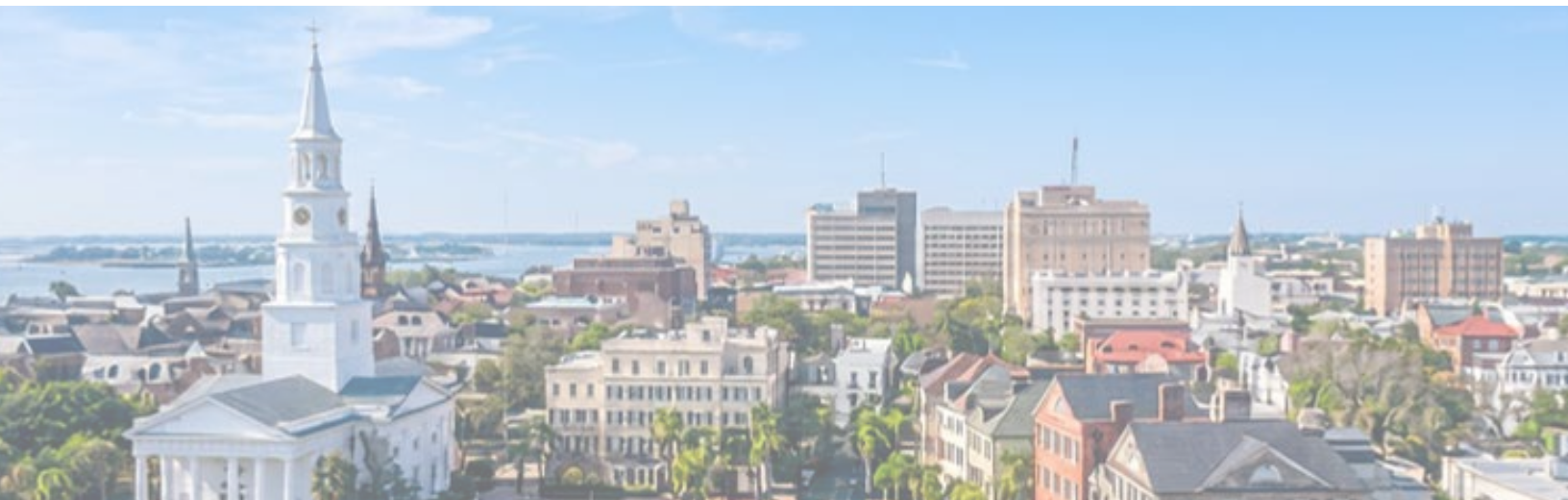
The educational program will be conducted at the Francis Marion hotel in historic Charleston. The opening keynote will be delivered by the lead prosecutor in the Alex Murdaugh trial, Creighton Waters. Other sessions will include MSAs, FCEs and a presentation by a leading orthopedic professional.

There will be lots of opportunity to network with our industry sponsors and catch up with the NWCDN members representing your states of interest.

We hope to see you in Charleston!
NWCDN Annual Conference Planning Committee

Dill Battle, West Virginia Member
Kyla Block, North Carolina Member
Michelle Broadhurst, New Hampshire Member
Nick Haigler, South Carolina Member

Josh Holden, Alabama Member
Tracey Jones, North Carolina Member
Beth Smith, Maine Member
Diana Wann, Indiana Member



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ACCOMMODATIONS

The 2026 Annual Conference will be held at the Francis Marion Hotel located at 387 King Street in historic Charleston, South Carolina.

NWCDN has arranged a specially discounted rate of \$289 that will be available until September 27 or until the guest room block sells out. You can reserve your room by calling the hotel directly at 843/722-0600 and mention that you are attending the NWCDN meeting to receive the group rate. Check in begins at 4:00 p.m. and check out is at 12:00 noon.

The hotel has valet parking for hotel guests and can be billed to the guest room. There is a garage that provides hourly and daily rates adjacent to the hotel that is owned and managed by the City of Charleston.

If you are unable to stay at the Francis Marion, there are many hotels within easy walking distance - they include Courtyard By Marriott, Embassy Suites and Hampton Inn. NWCDN does not have a negotiated rate at these hotel.

REGISTRATION

Registration is complimentary for invited clients, NWCDN Members and approved vendor sponsors. You can register for the conference at <https://www.nwcdn.com/seminars>.

If you plan to bring a guest to the Wednesday night event or to the conference on Thursday, please register them as well as the following associated fees will apply:

Wednesday Night Reception on the USS Yorktown \$150 per guest

Thursday Conference
(includes breakfast, lunch, breaks and cocktail reception) \$200 per guest

OTHER DETAILS

AIRPORT: The Charleston International Airport (CHS) is just over 11 miles from the Francis Marion hotel and is about a 20 minute commute, depending on traffic.

DRESS: The opening event on Wednesday is smart casual, whereas the meeting attire is smart business. Light sweaters or sport coat are generally suggested as meeting room temperatures can be on the cool side. Weather in Charleston in late October tends to be highs in the low 70's and lows in the high 50's. More details will be distributed as the meeting dates approach.

PROGRAM AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28

- 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.** NWCDN Registration Desk - Francis Marion Hotel
- 5:30 p.m.** Transfer departure from the Francis Marion Hotel to the USS Yorktown.
- 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.** Welcome Reception - USS Yorktown
- 8:00 p.m.** Return transfer to the Francis Marion Hotel



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29

- 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.** Breakfast
- 9:00 a.m.** Welcome and Opening Remarks
- 9:05 a.m.** ***Keynote Presentation: Prosecution of Alex Murdaugh for Murder of his Family and Theft from his Clients***
Lead prosecutor Creighton Waters will provide an inside look at one of the most closely watched criminal trials in recent history. Drawing from his firsthand experience prosecuting Alex Murdaugh, Mr. Waters will discuss the investigative process, development of the prosecution's case, management of complex evidence, witness preparation, and the strategic decisions that shaped the trial.
- Creighton Waters**, Senior Assistant Deputy Attorney General and Chief Attorney for the State Grand Jury at the South Carolina Office of the Attorney General
- 10:35 a.m.** Networking Break
- 11:00 a.m.** **FCEs in Action: Bridging Medicine, Work, and Law**
This interactive session explores the role of FCEs at the intersection of medicine, workplace demands, and legal decision-making. Gain practical insight into when an FCE is appropriate, how to interpret results, and how those findings can influence return-to-work planning, claim resolution, and litigation strategy.
- Carrie Manges**, Executive Director of Workers' Compensation
CORA Physical Therapy

PROGRAM AGENDA

- 12:00 p.m.** **Lunch** Sponsored by NWCDN
- 1:30 p.m.** **MSA Spin Offs: Settlement Alternatives**
This session will examine current MSA considerations, common compliance challenges, and best practices for protecting Medicare's interests while facilitating timely claim resolution.

Rafael Gonzalez, Cattie & Gonzalez, PLLC
- 2:30 p.m.** **Networking Break**
- 3:00 p.m.** **Operation: Winning the Causation and Knee Replacement Game**
This session will examine the medical and legal issues that drive these cases, including the role of pre-existing conditions, degenerative disease, mechanism of injury, and competing medical opinions.

Peter Ramsey, M.D., OrthoSC
- 4:00 p.m.** **Cocktail Reception** at the Francis Marion
- 5:00 p.m.** **Program Concludes**

Getting the most out of the networking breaks

During the meal functions and organized breaks, attendees are invited to connect with NWCDN members and vendor sponsors alike.

All attending NWCDN members will be provided with an exhibit area for them to answer questions on their respective states, hand out their rate sheets along with any other giveaways.

Same for our sponsoring vendors, they will also have exhibit areas for attendees to connect and learn of the exclusive areas of service they represent.

Mark Your Calendar for 2027!

NWCDN Annual Conference
September 22 & 23, 2027
Loews Hotel - Chicago, Illinois

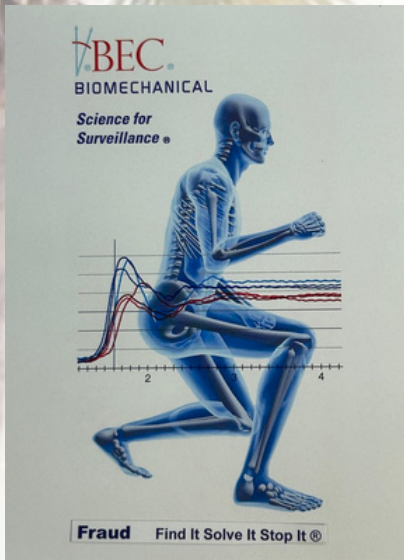
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