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March 19, 2009

Amy T. Masters, Chairwoman
Illinois Workers Compensation Commission
100 W. Randolph St., #8-200
Chicago, IL 60601-3227

Re: Illinois House Bill 2137 - Certified Vocational Service Provider Provision

Dear Ms. Masters:

Illinois House Bill 2137 states 8(a)

"Any vocational rehabilitation counselors who provide service under this Act shall have appropriate certifications which designate the counselor as qualified to render opinions relating to vocational rehabilitation".

The Board of Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Professionals recommends the rule for the Illinois Workers Compensation Commission be specific to "Certified Rehabilitation Counselor" (CRC) for the following reasons:

1. A Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) is required to pass a national examination which addresses content areas of: assessment, vocational evaluation; medical and psychosocial aspects of disability; interpersonal communications skills; federal and state laws ; service delivery systems; occupational and labor market information; vocational planning, report writing; job development; and case management.
2. Most CRC counselors obtain the credential by completing a graduate degree in rehabilitation counseling from a program accredited by the Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE). It typically includes clinical experiences supervised by a current CRC. The CRC professional is required to obtain 100 clock hours of continuing education over each five year credentialing period.
3. The Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC) has a well established and enforceable Code of Ethics which is updated to reflect a fast changing and diverse environment.
4. The credentialing process of CRCC protects the public by assuring a minimum level of competency.
5. Other certifications used in the industry are less applicable to the vocational needs of the industrially injured.
6. At this time there are 546 Certified Rehabilitation Counselors in the State of Illinois prepared to meet the needs of private industry.

Thank you for your consideration of this change.

Sincerely,

Michael M. Mooney, MS, CRC, CCM, CDMS, LCPC
President, Illinois Association of Rehabilitation Professionals