



State of New Mexico

## **WORKERS' COMPENSATION ADMINISTRATION**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Rachel Bayless Appointed Workers' Compensation Judge**

**Albuquerque, N.M.** – New Mexico Workers' Compensation Administration (WCA) Director Darin A. Childers announced the appointment of Rachel A. Bayless to serve as a workers' compensation judge for the WCA. She will assume her new position on April 8, 2017, replacing retiring Judge Terry Kramer. Open cases currently assigned to Judge Kramer will be reassigned to Judge Bayless.

A native New Mexican from Clovis, N.M., Bayless said "I am honored to receive the appointment and look forward to fairly and faithfully serving New Mexico's citizens in my new position as a workers' compensation judge." Bayless graduated from Eastern New Mexico University in 2001, *summa cum laude*, with a bachelor of business administration degree and minor in political science. She graduated *magna cum laude* from the University of New Mexico School of Law in 2005, where she received clinical honors and was nominated to the Dean's List and Order of the Coif.

Bayless began her legal career as an assistant district attorney with the Second Judicial District Attorney's Office. While serving as an assistant district attorney she prosecuted various misdemeanors and crimes against children, including crimes involving sexual and physical abuse. In 2008, Bayless joined the law firm of Madison, Harbour & Mroz, P.A., where she gained experience in the areas of insurance defense, personal injury, and workers' compensation. From 2011 to 2014, she was a staff attorney for The Hartford Insurance where the majority of her cases involved representing employers in workers' compensation matters.

Bayless joined the WCA in February 2014 and has served as the agency's General Counsel since that time. As the agency's chief legal advisor, she advised the director on a vast array of legal issues affecting the WCA and the workers' compensation system, in addition to often serving as an expert advisor on workers' compensation law during legislative sessions.

There are currently five workers' compensation judges in the WCA's Adjudication Bureau based out of Albuquerque. Workers' compensation judges hear and decide disputes over benefits due to injured workers throughout New Mexico.