

Office of the Commissioner of Insurance: Wisconsin Insurance Commissioner makes leadership appointments

Posted on Monday, Jan 9, 2023

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Madison, Wis. — The Wisconsin Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) today announced appointments to the agency leadership and senior management team.

Governor Tony Evers has reappointed Nathan Houdek as Commissioner of Insurance. Commissioner Houdek has served as Commissioner since January 2022, and previously served as Deputy Commissioner for three years under former Commissioner Mark Afable.

“I look forward to continuing to serve in Governor Evers’ administration and remain committed to fulfilling our agency’s mission as we begin a new 4-year term,” said Commissioner Houdek. “We are fortunate to have a talented and dedicated leadership team at OCI, and I appreciate their commitment, and the commitment of all OCI employees, to protecting consumers and ensuring that our insurance market remains strong and competitive.”

Rachel Cissne Carabell will continue to serve in her role as Deputy Commissioner managing the day-to-day operations and supervising the regulatory, public information, legal, legislative relations, and administrative responsibilities of OCI. Deputy Commissioner Cissne Carabell is an experienced health insurance and employee benefit expert who has held leadership roles in both the public and private sectors.

Sarah Smith will continue as the Director of Public Affairs for the agency. Smith has previously served as Communications Director for former state Senator Patty Schachtner and Chief of Staff for former State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski.

Lauren U. Van Buren has been appointed as Chief Legal Counsel to replace Richard Wicka, who is departing to pursue opportunities in the private sector. Van Buren has served as an attorney at OCI for over five years prosecuting administrative actions with a focus on financial advisor fraud, securities fraud, and life insurance suitability. She has been active with the National Association of Insurance Commissioners, with a focus on the use of big data and artificial intelligence.

Amy Malm and Rebecca Rebholz will continue serving as the Administrators for the Division of Financial Regulation and the Division of Market Regulation and Enforcement, respectively. Kristina Thole serves as the Director of the Office of Administrative Services and oversees the Injured Patients and Families Compensation Fund and the State Life Insurance Fund. Jesse Patchak serves as the Director of the Office of Operational Management overseeing the budget, finance, procurement, and information services for the agency.