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YEARS

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THE ALLIANCE ADVISOR

MAY 2025

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NEWS AND SAFETY INFORMATION

Safe Workplace & Loyalty Award Distribution

Eligible members on our June/July cycles will receive Safe Workplace awards over the next few weeks. The monetary award recognizes our members' efforts to maintain a healthy and safe workplace while incentivizing all members to improve workplace conditions and minimize workplace injuries.



Members on the January cycle have one last opportunity to apply for the Safe Workplace Award. Log into the Comp Academy and fill out the survey. The Comp Alliance recently distributed Loyalty Awards to eligible members on the January cycle. Renewing members on the June and July cycles should expect to receive a loyalty award this fall. Together, these awards ensure every member of the Comp Alliance shares in our success as we continue to improve safety for municipal and school employees throughout New York State.

AOT Annual Meeting and Haber Award Recipient

In February, the Comp Alliance had the privilege of attending the New York Association of Towns (NYAOT) Annual Meeting and presenting the 2025 Haber Leadership Award to our recipient, the Town of Ossining. The award recognizes the efforts the town has made to establish a "culture of safety" to keep workplaces safe for employees and reduce the frequency and severity of workers' compensation claims.



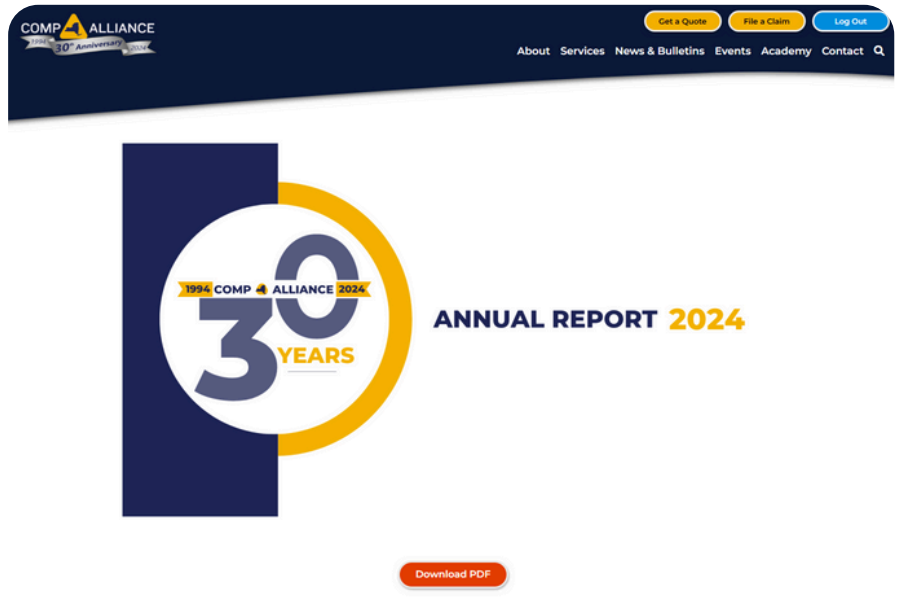
From the left, Board Chairman Christopher A. Koetzle, Town of Ossining Supervisor Liz Feldman, Executive Director Mike Kenneally, and New York State Assemblyman Billy Jones

As a result of the efforts of the elected officials, managerial staff, and employees of the town, Ossining did not experience a workplace injury or accident in 2021. Town Supervisor Liz Feldman accepted the award on behalf of the Town of Ossining. Officials from across the state, including New York State Attorney General Letitia James and New York State Assemblyman Billy Jones, attended the dinner presentation as part of NYAOT's Annual Meeting and Training School, a multi-day training event for town officials from across the state.

Our second recipient, the Town of Irondequoit, was unable to attend the meeting but we intend to present them with their award this summer. Thank you to all who attended our member appreciation reception and the Comp Alliance training sessions on employee well-being and safety culture. If you missed out, we hope you'll join us next year!

NEW: Digital Annual Report

For the 2024 Annual Membership Report, the Comp Alliance designed a new, online version now accessible through our website! The digital annual report includes all the information you're used to and features an easy-to-use clickable menu and scroll-to-top button. We've also added additional video content for your enjoyment! If you're interested in viewing this new version, [click here](#) and log into the Comp Academy.



Legislative Update

As part of our commitment to keeping you informed of key legislative developments, we want to share important changes recently enacted in New York State's FY 2026 Budget that improve injured workers' access to timely medical treatment. Effective immediately, resident and fellow physicians in ACGME-accredited programs may now treat injured workers under appropriate supervision—expanding provider access to potentially 20,000 resident and fellow physicians, training in across nearly 70 teaching hospitals across the state. Additionally, beginning January 1, 2027, insurers will be able to pay for treatment on “medical-only” claims for up to one year without accepting liability, under an expansion of Section 21-a of the Workers' Compensation Law. This change—covering over 60% of claims—aims to reduce delays, avoid unnecessary litigation, and ensure prompt care and payment. We are evaluating these updates closely and remain committed to supporting our members through this transition. If you have any questions regarding the changes to the law, please contact your broker or a Comp Alliance representative.





Mental Health Awareness for Teachers

As the end of the 2024-25 school year nears, year-end stressors can cause teacher burnout. With summer approaching, there is still much to be done. Teachers manage student evaluations, progress reporting, grading, student testing, incoming student assessments, parent-teacher meetings and reviews, and final observations. In addition, instruction continues until the last day of school, so wrap-up activities need to be completed in conjunction with regular responsibilities! These tasks are enough extra weight to create stress, anxiety, and mental health concerns for all classroom teachers. Administrators must acknowledge this health risk and monitor teaching staff who appear overwhelmed.

May is recognized as National Mental Health Awareness Month. Let's look at some exposures and means to control and improve employee mental health. A person's mental health is an important component of their overall well-being and is equally as vital as physical health. A physically fit person, capable of completing any manual task, could still be under mental strain, hurting their work performance. Mental strains are stressors that affect how one perceives and reacts to their environment, impacting an employee's social interactions, productivity, performance, safety, and attendance.



Stress during year-end can expose itself as anxiety, irritability, lack of concentration, deviations from normal behavior such as mood swings, or isolation from colleagues. These harmful physical and emotional responses can occur when job requirements do not match employee capabilities or resources with year-end workloads and timelines. Stress affects people in many ways including muscle tension, headaches, stomach discomfort, high blood pressure, and heart disease. Consequently, ignoring workplace stress can have lasting, harmful effects on individuals, families, coworkers, and school communities.

Acute stress is a dramatic physiological and psychological reaction to a specific event. Examples:

- Presentation at work, parent meeting gone awry, concerns about upcoming situation/event, recent argument, running late

Chronic stress, however, is a consistent feeling of pressure and overwhelm over time. Examples:

- Increased workload and time pressures, bad relationships, stressful jobs, toxic home life, ongoing health concerns, poor sleep habits →

Mental Health Awareness for Teachers (cont.)



Supervisors should take note of these patterns and encourage the use of professional assistance through employee benefit offerings. Additionally, highlight and develop practices and supportive policies for the conclusion of the school year, such as:

- Time management techniques
- Work-life balance
- Relaxation and mindfulness techniques
- Healthy lifestyle choices
- Team building and social support

To determine whether you or someone you know is experiencing symptoms of a mental health condition, take a mental health screening. [Mental Health America](#) offers free screenings for depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other conditions. Additional resources can be found through your school's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or the following sites:

- [CDC](#)
- [OSHA](#)
- [American Institute of Stress](#)
- [Center for Workplace Mental Health](#)

Upcoming Conferences

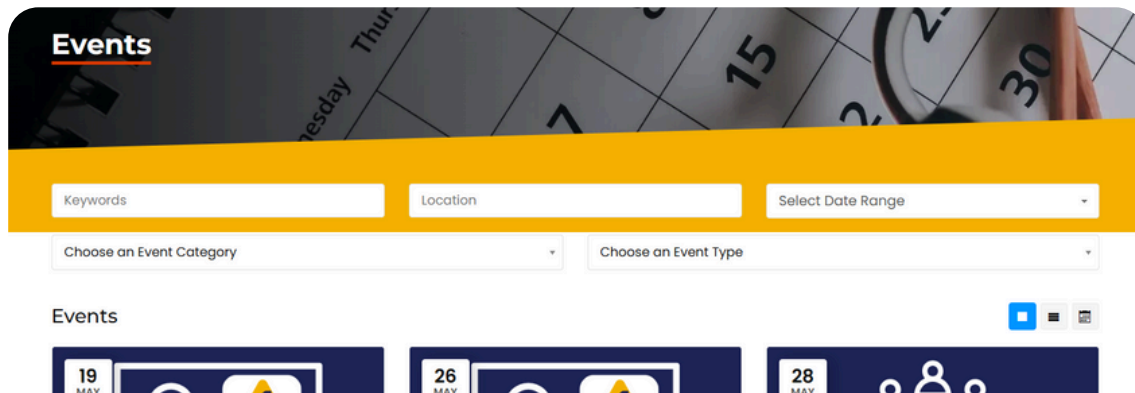


Thank you for visiting our booth and attending our training sessions at the NYAOT Finance and Personnel School!

Upcoming Conferences (cont.)



The NYCOM Annual Meeting is almost here! This event will be held Wednesday, May 28-Friday, May 30, 2025 at the Sagamore Resort and Hotel in Bolton Landing. Stop by our booth to say hello and don't miss our presentation on Strategies and Best Practices for Worker Safety on Wednesday afternoon! On Thursday night, join us by the Lake for the annual Fireworks display sponsored by Comp Alliance.



We'll also be seeing you at these conferences. Be sure to check out our booth! Take a look at the [Events page](#) on our website to stay up-to-date on where we're headed next.

6/5 Southern Tier Central Regional Leadership Conference - Corning, NY

6/5 Southern Tier West Local Government Conference - Houghton, NY

6/8 - 6/11 ASBO New York Education Summit & Expo - Saratoga Springs, NY

Upcoming Training Seminars

The Comp Alliance has several live video conference trainings scheduled for members throughout May and June. We'll cover PESH-mandated topics including Workplace Violence, Right-to-Know, and Bloodborne Pathogens. Visit <https://compalliance.org/events> for our full calendar.

HAZWOPER

Monday, 6/9, 8:00 - 8:30 am

Monday, 7/21, 8:00 - 8:30 am

Upcoming Virtual Trainings

- Monday, 5/19: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 5/26: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 6/2: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Wednesday, 6/4: 5 PM - 7 PM
- Monday, 6/16: 10 AM - 12 PM
- Monday, 6/23: 10 AM - 12 PM

Coming Soon: New Comp Academy Features

Behind the scenes, we've been working on some upgrades to the Comp Academy that will make tracking training and recordkeeping easier. We've also made improvements to the registration process. These exciting changes won't impact current users unless your organization requests access. We will release information, including training guides, in the near future.

Be on the lookout for more details soon!

