

2023 DMEC ANNUAL REPORT



Dear DMEC Members, Stakeholders, and Partners,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce the Disability Management Employer Coalition's (DMEC's) 2023 Annual Report — a comprehensive overview of the strides, achievements, and advancements we have witnessed over the past year. DMEC is committed to fostering excellence in absence and disability management. This report encapsulates the substantial growth in membership, the expansion of impactful programs, and the introduction of new resources that empower our community. DMEC's commitment to providing valuable insights, fostering collaboration, and addressing the evolving needs of our diverse membership is evident throughout this report. Join us on a journey through the accomplishments and initiatives that defined DMEC in 2023, reaffirming our dedication to supporting employers, individuals, and suppliers in navigating the dynamic landscape of absence and disability management.

Sincerely,



Bryon E. Bass, CLMS

Chief Executive Officer
DMEC



The 2023 Annual Report highlights each of DMEC's major programs and services, the growth we've experienced, and updates and enhancements we've made over the past year.

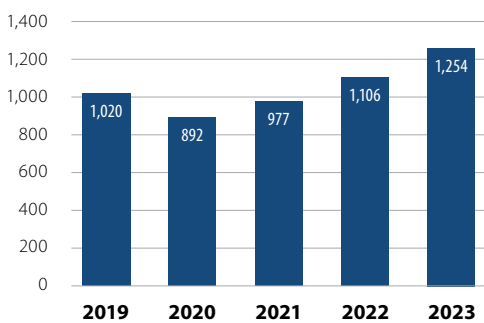


DMEC MEMBERSHIP

MEMBER COMPANIES & INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIPS

DMEC continues to expand its reach, offering memberships to both [individuals and organizations](#), and has observed a noteworthy rise in membership numbers. In 2023, the organization reached a milestone of 1,254 memberships, encompassing both individuals and organizations. This rise represents a significant 14% increase in overall membership when compared to 2022.

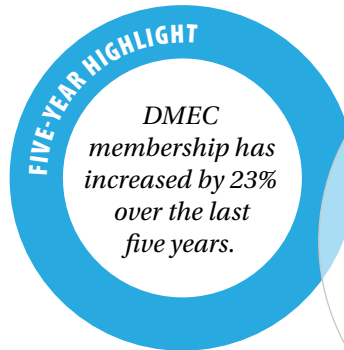
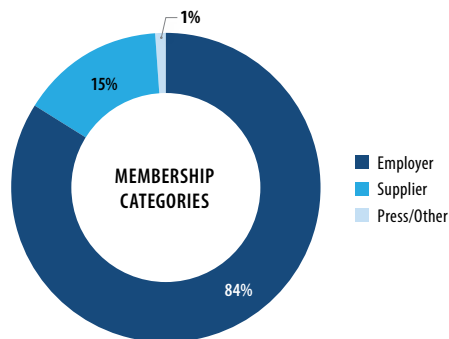
TOTAL MEMBERSHIPS: INDIVIDUALS & ORGANIZATIONS



In addition, 2023 was a remarkable year for new memberships, with 533 organizations and individuals choosing to join DMEC. This marked a 19% rise in new memberships when compared to 2022, demonstrating a strong appeal to prospective members.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

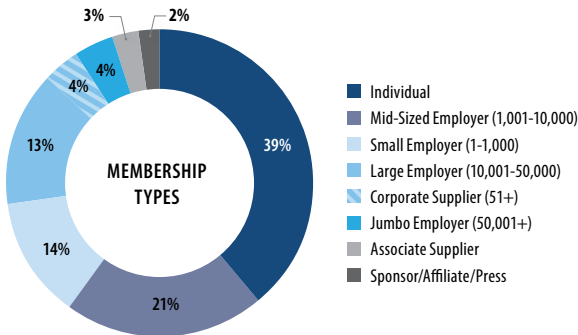
DMEC classifies its members into two main categories: employers and suppliers. In 2023, 84% of our members were employers.



Since 2019, there has been a 29% increase in the rate of new members joining DMEC annually. This indicates a consistent success in attracting new members and expanding the organization's network and influence.

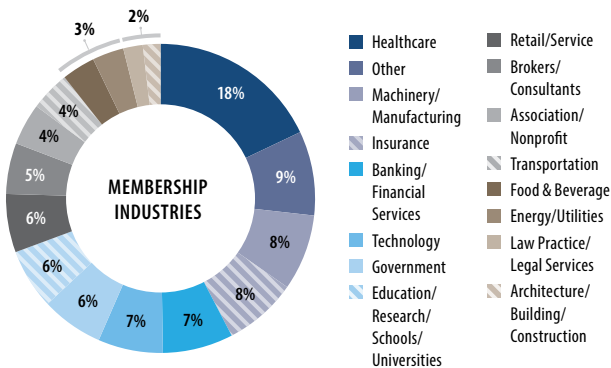
MEMBERSHIP TYPES

DMEC has a variety of memberships based on the size and type of organization. Individual membership represents the largest membership type at 39%, and mid-sized employers (1,001-10,000) is second at 21%.



INDUSTRY CATEGORIES

DMEC members represent a variety of industries. The top three industries for 2023 are healthcare (18%), machinery/manufacturing (8%), and insurance (8%).

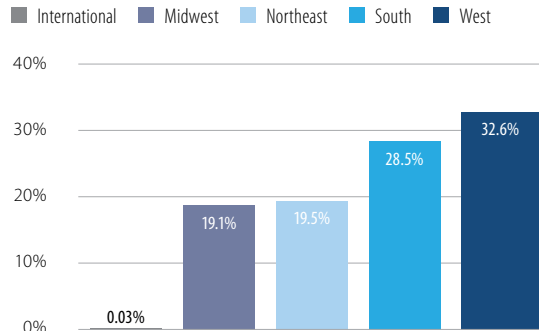


"Other" includes agriculture/farming/fishing/forestry, apparel/fashion, biotechnology, chemicals, consumer goods, defense/security, electronics, engineering, entertainment/recreation, environmental, hospitality/restaurants/tourism, mental health/wellness, real estate, telecommunications, third-party administration.

REGIONS

DMEC member organizations are located throughout the United States and Canada. Below is a breakout of member organizations by region.

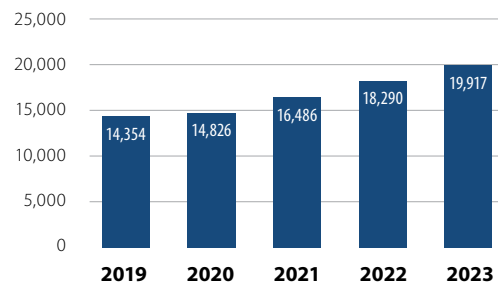
MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS BY REGION



MEMBER CONTACTS

Expanded organizational membership resulted in additional member contacts who take advantage of DMEC resources. The total number of member contacts increased by 9% in 2023, expanding the reach and visibility of DMEC's education and services.

MEMBER CONTACTS

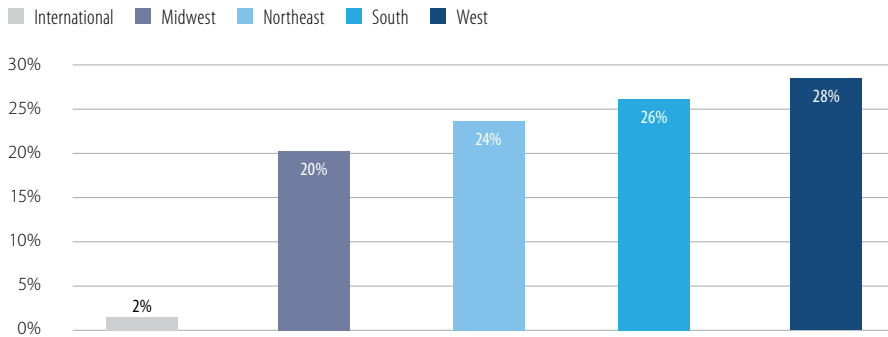


FIVE-YEAR HIGHLIGHT

The number of member contacts has increased more than 39% in the last five years.

Just as DMEC member organizations are located throughout the United States and Canada, member contacts are dispersed throughout North America. Below is a breakout of member contacts by region for 2023.

MEMBER CONTACTS BY REGION



NEW MEMBER BENEFITS IN 2023

ABSENCEEXEMPLAR™ BENCHMARKING DASHBOARD

In 2023, the introduction of the [AbsenceExemplar™ Dashboard](#) marked a significant advancement in benchmarking specific to employee benefit plan and program design. This innovative tool, available to members who have engaged in the [DMEC Absence Plan Design and Practices Benchmarking Survey](#), offers dynamic benchmarking capabilities. It revolutionizes the approach of both employer and supplier organizations in gathering and analyzing data. By using this dashboard, these organizations can now more effectively align their benefit portfolios with industry benchmarks, ensuring they remain competitive and relevant. This alignment is crucial for attracting and retaining top talent, as well as for maintaining operational efficiency and employee satisfaction. The [AbsenceExemplar™ Dashboard](#) thus serves as a vital resource in optimizing benefit plan design based on comprehensive, real-time industry standards.

NEW GUIDES & TIP SHEETS

In 2023, DMEC enhanced its member offerings by releasing three invaluable resources: [Finding Your Trade-Off — A Guide to Workforce Flexibility](#), [A Flexible Approach to ADA Medical Documentation](#), and [Starting Conversations About Presenteeism](#). These additions, coupled with our extensive content library of over 60 forms, templates, and checklists, empower our members to address current industry challenges effectively and confidently. These resources are meticulously designed to provide practical solutions and insights, enabling employers to navigate the complexities of workforce management with greater ease and expertise. They not only facilitate compliance with evolving regulations but also foster a more adaptable, inclusive, and productive workplace. By accessing these tools, DMEC members gain a significant advantage in enhancing their organizational strategies, ensuring they stay ahead in a rapidly changing business environment.

DMEC CONFERENCES

DMEC members derive exceptional value from face-to-face events, which stand as a cornerstone of our membership experience. These events offer unparalleled opportunities for industry leaders to convene and engage in deep discussions about the latest trends and challenges in absence and disability management.

The [2023 DMEC Employer Compliance Conference](#), held in Orlando from March 27-30, showcased 28 educational sessions. Topics ranged from pandemic-related considerations and compliance to accommodation solutions and paid leave best practices, drawing a significant audience. Additionally, a one-day virtual conference on May 3 featured four top-rated sessions from the live event, further enhancing accessibility and learning opportunities. The combined attendance for these events was 660 registrants, underscoring their popularity and relevance.

Similarly, the [2023 DMEC Annual Conference](#), held in San Diego from Aug. 14-17, offered an expansive program with 43 educational sessions. These sessions covered critical areas such as the employee experience, long COVID, Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) challenges, and caregiving. To extend the reach of this content, a one-day virtual event on Sept. 20 shared four top-rated sessions from the in-person event. The combined attendance at these two formats was 894 registrants.

These face-to-face events, along with their virtual extensions, not only facilitate direct engagement and networking among professionals but also ensure that a wider audience can benefit from DMEC's expert content. This hybrid approach demonstrates our commitment to providing flexible and accessible educational resources, reinforcing the value of DMEC membership in staying at the forefront of industry developments.

DMEC ONLINE EVENTS

DMEC is continuously enhancing its online events program, broadening its educational scope and extending its reach to a greater number of professionals in the absence and disability sector.

WEBINARS

In 2023, DMEC successfully hosted 35 live webinars, attracting a substantial total of 24,906 live and on-demand registrations. This impressive participation highlights the growing interest and need for online learning and networking opportunities in this field.

The top five webinars of the year, reflecting the most pressing topics and trends in the industry, were:

- 1 **"Benefit Evolution: The Next Generation of STD, WC, and PFML"** (2,013 registrations)
- 2 **"Navigating the Intersection of Paid Leave and Disability Plans"** (1,535 registrations)
- 3 **"FMLA Administration in the Digital Age"** (1,004 registrations)
- 4 **"Undue Hardship: In the Eye of the Beholder"** (886 registrations)
- 5 **"Statutory Paid Leaves: What You Need to Know for 2024"** (833 registrations)

These figures and topics underscore the value and impact of DMEC's commitment to providing cutting-edge, relevant online learning experiences for absence and disability management professionals.

AWARD WINNERS AT THE 2023 CONFERENCES

EMERGING LEADER AWARD



Ashleigh Brock, JD, lead compliance coordinator at the City of Memphis, and Keemia Vaghaf, director of analytics at Alight, were the 2023 recipients of the [DMEC Emerging Leader Award](#), which honors contributions to innovative and creative solutions for leave and disability management challenges.

PARTNERSHIP AWARD



Debbie Jacobs, compliance leader at Amazon, and Marti Cardi, vice president of product compliance at Reliance Matrix, were the 2023 recipients of the [DMEC Partnership Award](#), which recognizes long-time DMEC members for their exemplary support and dedication to the organization and the industry.

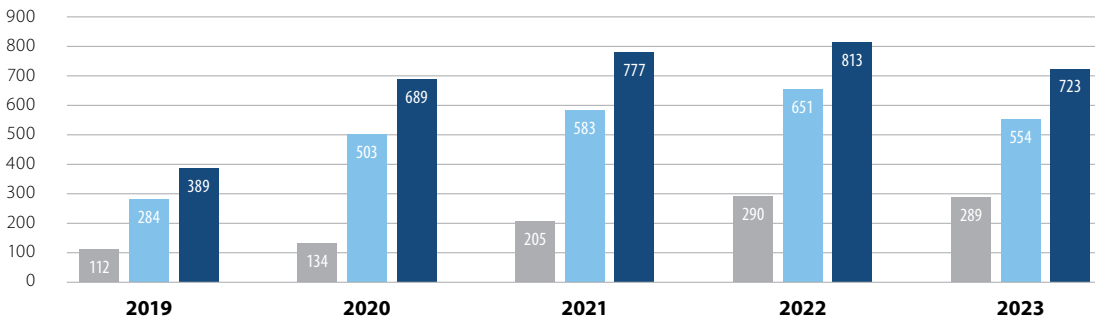
DMEC CERTIFICATIONS & TRAININGS

CERTIFIED LEAVE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST (CLMS) PROGRAM

Since its inception in November 2016, the [Certified Leave Management Specialist \(CLMS\)](#) program, offering an online course and a distinctive designation, has established itself as a standout training program in the leave management industry. In 2023, the program witnessed substantial growth, with 554 individuals achieving their CLMS designation, bringing the total number of designees to 3,165.

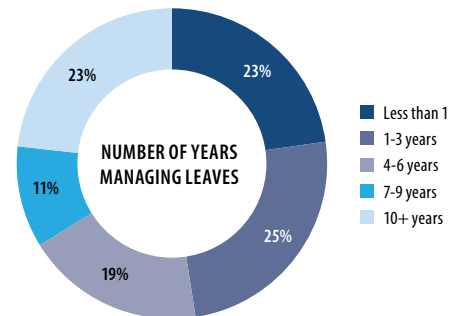
CLMS PROGRAM

■ Recertifications ■ Designations ■ Registrations



CLMS DESIGNEES: DEMOGRAPHIC SPOTLIGHT

The CLMS program is widely embraced by both employers and suppliers, with 48% of employers and 47% of suppliers leveraging it to educate their teams on the complex aspects of leave management. CLMS designees are geographically diverse, hailing from across the United States and Canada, and they embody a broad spectrum of experience in leave management.



FIVE-YEAR HIGHLIGHT

Reflecting on the past five years, there has been a remarkable increase in engagement with the CLMS program.

Registrations for the course have surged by 86%, while the number of professionals who have earned the CLMS designation has soared by 95% since 2019. This significant growth highlights the program's increasing relevance and value within the industry.

FMLA/ADA TRAINING FOR SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS: ESSENTIAL FOR COMPLIANCE

The importance of DMEC's [FMLA/ADA Training for Supervisors and Managers](#) is underscored by insights from FMLA and ADA court opinions, as well as guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which have highlighted inadequate training as a significant issue in managing absence and disability accommodation responsibilities.

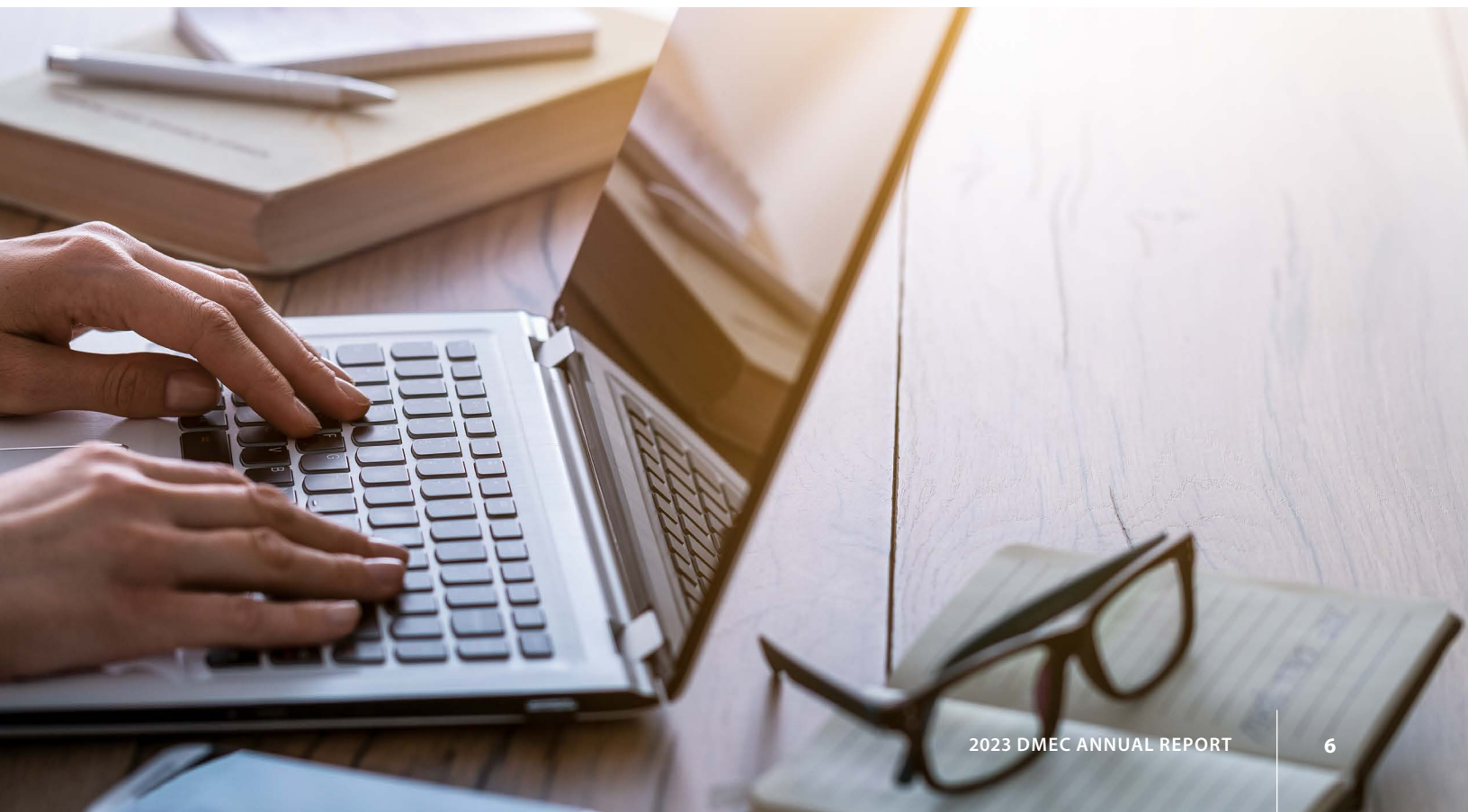
Available as an annual subscription or a one-time purchase for integration into an organization's learning management system, this training equips frontline managers with essential knowledge. It not only helps them recognize potential FMLA or ADA requests but also provides crucial insights into their responsibilities following such an identification.

In 2023, recognizing the importance of thorough training in ensuring compliance, 59 companies of varying sizes adopted this training for their supervisors and managers, either through the subscription model or the SCORM package. This proactive approach by these organizations demonstrates their commitment to complying with FMLA and ADA regulations and underscores the value of proper training in effective leave management.

MICROCREDENTIAL COURSES: SHARPENING THE SAW

In 2023 DMEC expanded its innovative professional development offerings by creating three new [microcredential courses](#), bringing the total number of such courses to 12. Each of these concise and interactive online trainings culminates in a digital badge and certificate, symbolizing the participant's expertise and commitment to continuous learning. The courses cover vital topics such as Building a Return-to-Work Program, various State Leave Laws, and effective claim management best practices, each designed to provide in-depth knowledge and practical skills.

The response to these courses has been exceptional, with over 502 individuals from a diverse range of organizations registering in 2023. Notably, 62% of these registrants are from employer organizations, while 35% represent supplier organizations. This broad interest highlights the value and relevance of these microcredentials, as they equip professionals with essential, up-to-date knowledge in specific areas of absence and disability management, enhancing their effectiveness and credibility in their respective roles.



DMEC SURVEYS & WHITE PAPERS

EMPLOYER LEAVE MANAGEMENT SURVEY

In April, DMEC rolled out the [2023 Employer Leave Management Survey](#), which was completed by 721 employer participants. These respondents collectively represent a wide spectrum of organizational sizes, various U.S. states, and a diverse array of industries. The insights gathered from this survey are scheduled to be published in 2024.

ABSENCEEXEMPLAR™ - ABSENCE PLAN DESIGN & PRACTICES BENCHMARKING DASHBOARD

October 2023 marked the debut of the [DMEC AbsenceExemplar™ Dashboard](#), featuring two dynamic, self-service benchmarking dashboards tailored to support the needs of companies as they build their plan design and practices. These dashboards showcase data from the *2022 DMEC Absence Plan Design and Practices Benchmarking Survey*, encompassing insights from over 1,100 companies. These companies represent a comprehensive mix of organizational sizes, U.S. states, and various industries. In June 2024, DMEC plans to initiate a campaign to gather updated survey responses from both current participants and new contributors.

LONG COVID: ASSESSING AND MANAGING WORKFORCE IMPACT

Released by DMEC and Sedgwick, this white paper addresses the critical challenge of long COVID in the workplace. It reveals the significant health and productivity costs associated with long COVID and underscores the inadequacy of current employer strategies to accommodate affected employees. Through expert analysis and survey data, the document provides actionable recommendations for employers to better support employees with long COVID, suggesting a shift toward more effective and flexible accommodation practices. This work not only aims to improve the immediate response to long COVID but also encourages a more comprehensive approach to disability and illness management in the workplace, highlighting the importance of innovative and informed strategies for future health challenges.



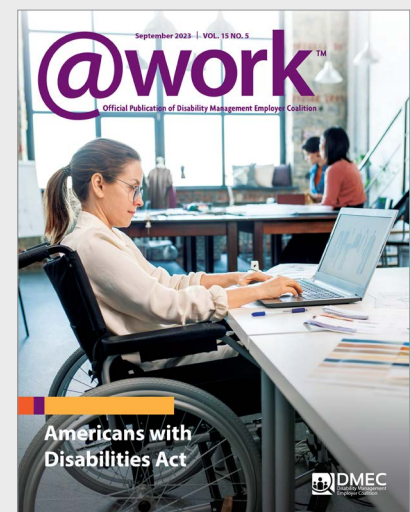
DMEC READERSHIP & VISIBILITY

@WORK MAGAZINE

DMEC continued to deliver best practices and strategies on a variety of topics in the six issues of *@Work* magazine. Readership has grown 60% in the last five years from 24,424 page views in 2019 to 33,291 page views in 2023.

EXPANDED PERSPECTIVES: @WORK TO SHARE

In 2023, DMEC enhanced this *@Work* magazine section by adding more content, including insightful articles and podcast episodes. These additions broaden perspectives on integrated absence management trends and challenges, and also highlight DMEC's initiatives. This content, open to everyone, is ideal for sharing with colleagues and on social media. DMEC members are using this content during staff meetings and for online dissemination. Additionally, this section of the magazine opens the door for DMEC to receive and incorporate timely submissions beyond its standard annual process.



ABSENCE MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVES: A DMEC PODCAST



In 2023, DMEC successfully launched the second season of its podcast, "[Absence Management Perspectives: A DMEC Podcast](#)." This podcast series has been gaining significant attention, ranking within the top 50% of all podcasts

due to its unique listener base and download numbers. Throughout the year, DMEC released 19 episodes, which collectively amassed 6,442 downloads, marking an impressive 132% increase from the previous year. This growth underscores the podcast's growing relevance and impact in the field of absence management.

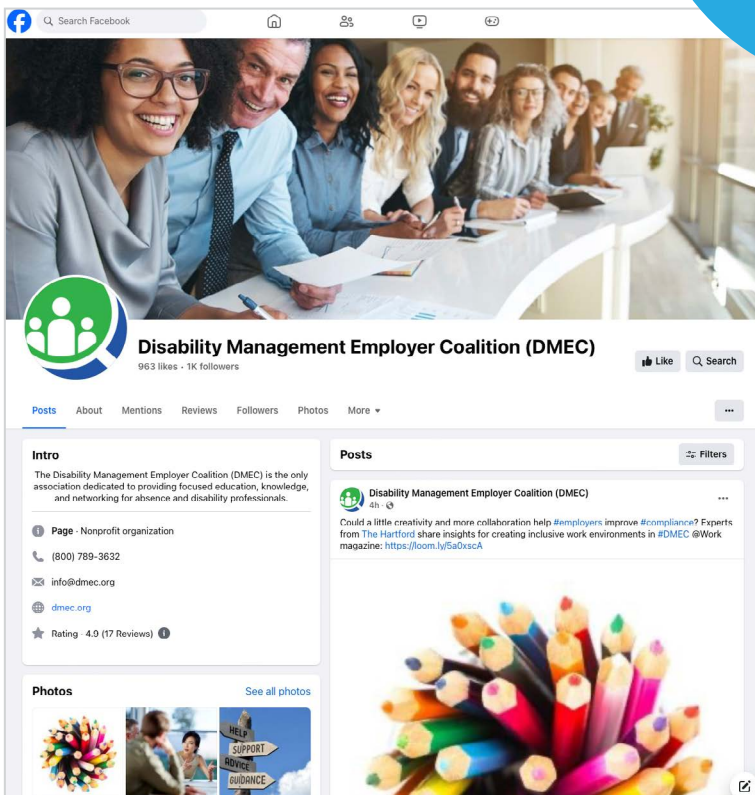
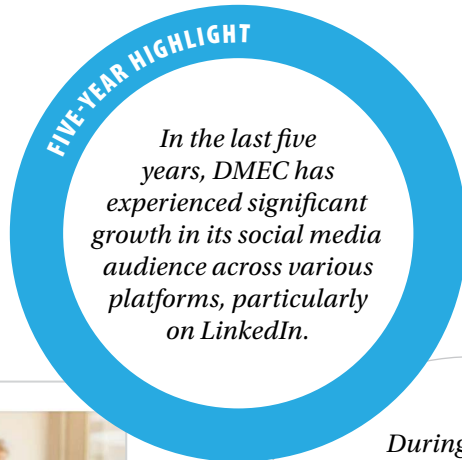
SOCIAL MEDIA

Through enhanced engagement and posting, DMEC continues to see an increase in social media followers; [Facebook](#) has 1,000 followers; [X](#), formally known as Twitter, has 787 followers; the [LinkedIn Group](#) has 3,557 followers; and the [LinkedIn Company Page](#) has 6,636 followers.

IN THE NEWS

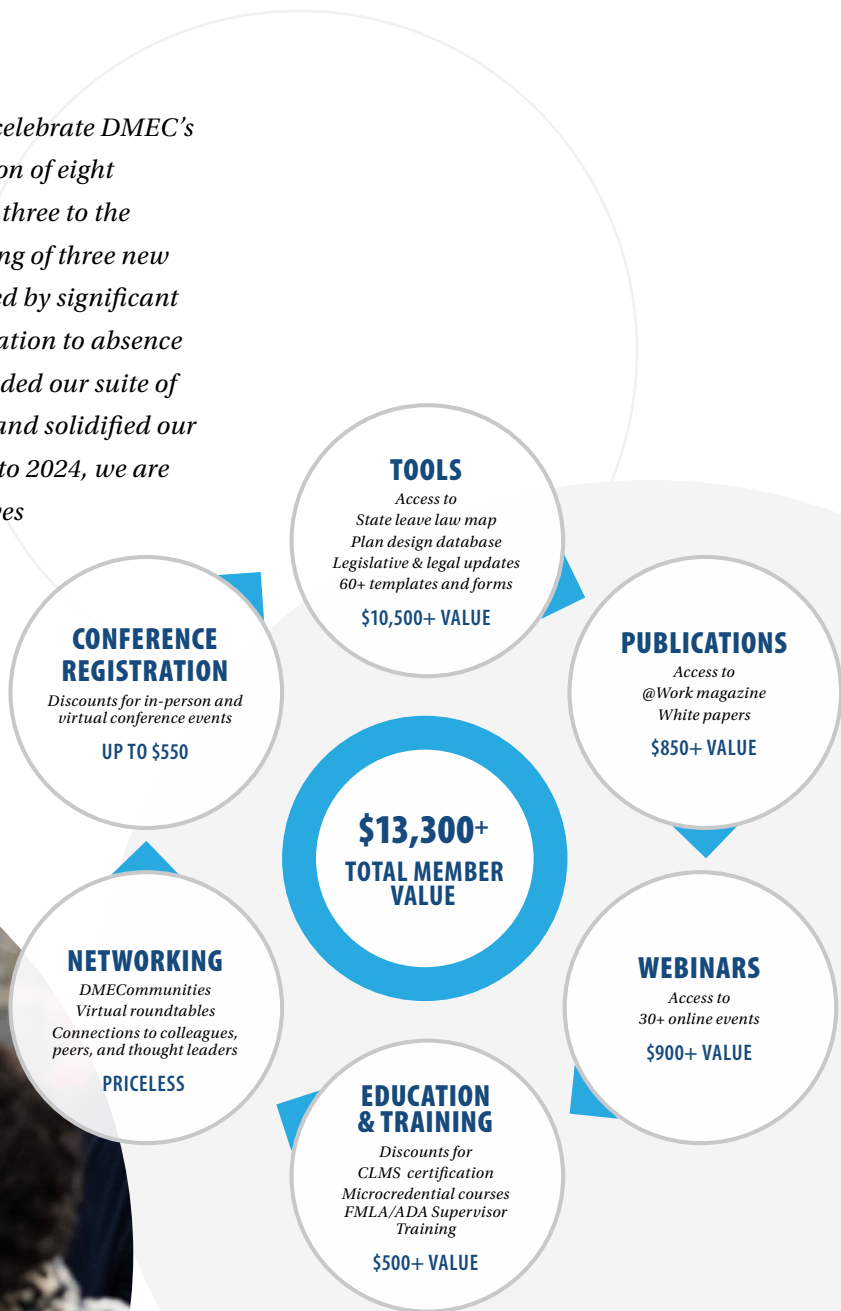
DMEC continues to build its reputation with external media outlets as a go-to source on absence and disability management. DMEC was quoted or written about in articles from a variety of magazines and online publications, including *BenefitsPro*, *Bloomberg Law*, *Business Insurance*, *Forbes*, *HRDive*, *MarketWatch*, *Nextavenue*, *NPR*, *Risk & Insurance*, *Washington Post*, and *WorkersCompensation.com*.

In addition, Terri L. Rhodes, DMEC outgoing CEO, published a series of [2023 trends articles](#) that were republished in *Risk & Insurance*. Several of the 2023 trends were also featured in [podcast episodes](#) throughout the year.



CONCLUSION

As we wrap up the 2023 Annual Report, we celebrate DMEC's expansion and success, including the addition of eight members to the Employer Advisory Council, three to the Editorial Advisory Group, and the onboarding of three new national sponsors. This year has been marked by significant growth and innovation, reflecting our dedication to absence and disability management. We have expanded our suite of resources, increased members engagement, and solidified our role as an industry leader. Looking forward to 2024, we are enthusiastic about introducing new initiatives and further enhancing member value. We are grateful for the continued support and the partnerships that shape our dynamic industry.



The value of DMEC benefits grows with the number of people in your organization who use them.

The Disability Management Employer Coalition (DMEC) is the only association dedicated to providing focused education, knowledge, and networking for absence and disability professionals. Through its education programs, DMEC delivers trusted strategies, tools, and resources to minimize lost work time, improve workforce productivity, and maintain legally compliant absence and disability programs.



Focused Education for Absence and Disability Professionals

888.937.4783
www.dmec.org

