

RETURN-TO-WORK POLICY

Policy Statement

It is the _____ policy to retain our valued employees, achieve a safe and timely return of injured or ill employees to the workforce and reduce costs related to disability associated with work-related injuries and illnesses. Procedures have been established to effect this policy.

Employees to Whom Policy Applies

The policies and procedures provided herein apply to employees of _____. This policy shall apply to employees who are restricted in the performance of their essential functions due to compensable work-related injuries, and who are expected to return to their pre-injury position.

Definitions

Return-to-Work Coordinator

Designated agency staff who will act as a primary contact to the Workers' Compensation Program and will facilitate the return-to-work program.

Maximum Medical Improvement (MMI)

Point at which employee has recovered and no further progress is anticipated.

Transitional Duty

A temporary situation when an employee returns from a work-related injury or illness to medically restricted or modified duties. Duties assigned can be those identified in the employee's current job description with restrictions or another assignment.

Transitional Employment Plan (TEP)

Documentation of the duties the employee will perform during the transitional duty period.

Workers' Compensation Program (WCP)

Program administered by the Department of Human Resource Management.

Procedures

Employees must immediately notify their supervisor or departmental designee of any work-related injury. The employee's supervisor will present the employee with the Physician's Form. The completed form should be forwarded to the Human Resources. The supervisor must immediately report any workplace injury to the Human Resources Manager.

Within an established time frame of the injured employee's initial visit to a Panel

Physician, the Return-to-Work Coordinator will communicate with the attending physician to discuss return to work options, including the *name of ER* a ability to provide transitional duty.

If the injured employee is not released to his/her pre-injury position at the initial appointment, the Return-to-Work Coordinator will submit the Physical Demands Form to the physician with the assistance of the employee's supervisor. This should be done preferably before the follow up appointment. The physician is expected to take the enumerated demands into consideration when making a return-to-work recommendation.

If the physician releases the employee to return-to-work and determines that he/she can perform the essential functions of the pre-injury position, the physician will provide a release form that the employee will give to his/her supervisor so a return-to-work date can be set. The return-to-work date should also be communicated to the Worker's Compensation Coordinator.

If the employee is released to work with restrictions, the Return-to-Work Coordinator in coordination with the supervisor will review the restrictions set forth by the physician and determine whether the agency is able to provide transitional duty for the employee. Transitional duty must meet the agency's staffing needs and accommodate the employee's medical restrictions.

The Return-to-Work Coordinator will schedule an initial return-to-work meeting with the injured employee and the supervisor to coordinate the return-to-work. They will together develop transitional duties that recognize both the employee's abilities and medical restrictions.

If transitional duty can be arranged, the Return-to-Work coordinator will review it with the injured employee and supervisor, obtain their signatures, and submit it to the attending physician for approval.

During transitional duty, the Return-to-Work Coordinator will meet with the injured employee to discuss concerns and to evaluate progress every month. The Return-to-Work Coordinator, in coordination with the supervisor, may amend the transitional duties should the employee demonstrate improvement or regression. Any changes must be submitted to the attending physician.

Transitional duty may not normally exceed 90 days. At the conclusion of the 90 days, the supervisor in consultation with Human Resources may terminate the transitional duty assignment with the expectation that the employee will return to his pre-injury position. If the employee has permanent restrictions that result in his/her ability to perform the essential functions of his/her pre-injury position, the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or other applicable laws will be applied to determine the suitability for employment.

