

Toolbox Talks

Weekly Tailgate Topic_

12-26

Discuss with crews on

[INSERT DATE]

"RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM"- WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW IF YOU SUFFER A WORKPLACE INJURY

Injury management is a crucial part of a progressive occupational health and safety program. A Return to Work Program (RTW) is a company-wide initiative that combines a responsible approach towards returning injured workers to work, while maintaining a commitment of protecting the health and welfare, of all employees.

A Return to Work Program is designed to assist injured and ill employees to make an early and safe return to their regular duties. It is a temporary measure that is intended to bridge the gap between injury and return to full duties.

Modified duties are a means of accommodating an employee's temporary restrictions. A broad approach to accommodation will be adopted that recognizes the unique circumstances in each case.

Accommodations can include:

- Working fewer hours,
- Taking more frequent rest breaks,
- Obtaining assistance from a coworker for more difficult tasks,
- Job/responsibility sharing,
- Physical changes to the work environment,
- Assistive devices,
- Assignment to another job,
- Special project work.



A RTW program is beneficial for all parties involved. Some of the time-proven benefits include:

- The Worker's injury recovery time is minimized.
- The Worker's risk of long-term disability is reduced.
- The Worker's stress levels are reduced as they are able to maintain their income levels and job status in the company, while staying active, productive and performing meaningful work.
- Companies benefits as the worker performs meaningful work during the RTW process.
- Companies benefits as they are able to maintain a valued employee.

INJURY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM – RESPONSIBILITIES

Injury Management Coordinator(s)

The Injury Management Coordinator(s) shall be the company's Safety Officer / Coordinator. Their responsibilities are to:

- Establish the Return to Work (RTW) plan with the Supervisor, Worker and Nurse Advisor.
- Coordinate the implementation of the Worker's RTW plan.
- Communicate the RTW plan, including all accommodations, to the Supervisor.
- Liaise with WorksafeBC / Nurse Advisor regarding RTW progress.
- Maintain documentation relating to Worker's injury.
- Maintain regular contact with the Worker during his or her absence from work.
- Discuss progress of the RTW plan with the worker throughout the duration of the program.

Supervisor

- Investigate the injury/complaint and take measures to prevent reoccurrence.
- Ensure immediate completion of incident report.
- Maintain documentation relating to Worker's injury.
- Maintain regular contact with the Worker during his/her absence from work.
- Implement the Worker's RTW plan.
- Discuss progress of the RTW plan with the Worker throughout the duration of the program.

Injured Worker

- Report all work-related injuries to the IMC and Supervisor, as promptly as possible.
- Obtain RTW package to provide to Physician prior to leaving the work-site.
- Advise the treating Physician of the RTW program and the availability of modified duties.
- Return the Functional Abilities Form (FAF) completed by the Physician as soon as possible.
- Participate in RTW plan development.
- Participate fully in the RTW plan.
- Maintain regular contact with the IMC, Nurse Advisor, and Supervisor, advising them of any changes in their physical limitations.
- Communicate any difficulties or concerns regarding their RTW duties to the IMC, Supervisor and WorksafeBC Nurse Advisor.

Co-Workers

• Provide support and encouragement to the employee participating in the RTW program.

RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM PROCEDURES

- 1. The injured Worker shall notify the Supervisor, and the Safety Officer (Injury Management Coordinator) of any injury that may result in lost work days, on the day of injury.
- 2. The Supervisor is responsible for immediately notifying the Injury Management

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Coordinator(s) (IMC) of the incident, injury severity, and possible Return to Work (RTW) date.

- 3. The Supervisor or IMC is responsible for:
 - a. Reporting the incident to WorksafeBC via a Form 7,
 - b. Completing an accident investigation form.
- 4. The Worker will bring a company's RTW package (such as a Letter to Physician / Functional Abilities Form / Letter to Worker) to their Physician and ensure they complete the FAF and return it to your company that day via fax or delivery. (RTW PACKAGE AVAILABLE VIA THE SAFETY OFFICER)
- 5. The IMC will review the Worker's FAF, and if according to medical judgment (Physician / WorksafeBC / Nurse Advisor), the Worker is deemed capable of returning to work, an individual RTW plan will be developed offering suitable and meaningful duties to the Worker. Suitable duties may be provided in different ways:
 - a. Return to regular work duties,
 - b. Return to the same position with different hours and/or modified duties,
 - c. Return to work in an alternative position and/or modified duties.
- 6. The RTW plan will be developed jointly by the IMC and/or WorksafeBC Nurse Advisor, the Supervisor and the Worker. The RTW plan will identify:
 - a. Goals / Timeframes,
 - b. Hours / Locations / Tasks,
 - c. Accommodations,
 - d. Roles and responsibilities of the IMC, Supervisor, Worker and any other parties who may be involved.
- 7. The IMC will provide the Worker with a formal Offer of Suitable Work Letter.
- 8. The IMC will review the RTW plan with all subsequent Worker's Supervisors.
- 9. The IMC will stay in contact with the Worker on a regular basis throughout the RTW process. The Worker is responsible for updating the IMC, Supervisor, and Nurse Advisor of any changes in their physical limitations.
- 10. The IMC will monitor and evaluate Worker's recovery by meeting with the Worker regularly and documenting the injured Worker's progress as well as any modifications made to the RTW plan.
- 11. The IMC should send the completed return to work plan to WorksafeBC Claims Manager and/or Nurse Advisor.
- 12. The RTW program is completed when the employee can perform his pre-injury duties, and their Physician issues a completed FAF stating the Worker can return to his normal work duties without any restrictions.