

WCB - Return to Work Definitions

Disability: Within the context of RTW and the workers' compensation system, any restriction or lack of ability to perform normal work duties because of a work-related injury.

Injury: Means "all or any of the following arising out of and in the course of employment:

- (i) the results of a wilful and intentional act, not being the act of the worker;
- (ii) the results of a chance event occasioned by a physical or natural cause;
- (iii) a disabling or potentially disabling condition caused by an occupational disease;
- (iv) any disablement."

The Workers' Compensation Act, 2013

Injured worker: A worker who has been injured as the result of a work-related circumstance

Within the context of RTW, an injured worker is one who has not recovered from his or her injury and not able to return to normal work duties yet but capable of some form of employment.

Temporary disability: Any disability from which an injured worker is expected to recover to his or her pre-injury level.

Permanent disability: Any disability from which an injured worker is not expected to recover to his or her pre-injury level.

Medical restrictions: Clear and specific limits, including, but not limited to, specific work activities, exposures, body motions, positional tolerances (i.e., ability to sit, stand, stoop for a protracted time, etc.), timeframes, lifting and material handling capabilities. The injured worker's health care practitioner identifies medical restrictions in order to protect the worker from further injury.

Medical restrictions arising from an injury may be physical, cognitive and/or psychological and be of a temporary or permanent nature.

Return-to-Work Program: A planned process to manage the impact of disability in a workplace. The documented processes are for the purpose of identifying and providing alternate or modified work (temporary or permanent) for injured workers, if necessary with a progression to pre-injury work when appropriate.

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Return-to-Work plan: A planned process to manage the impact of one individual injured worker's disability, including the documentation of the specific alternate or modified work identified and provided to him or her.

A RTW plan options must:

- Be productive (i.e., contribute to the objectives or operations of the company)
- Be within the medical capabilities of the injured worker
- Be within the skills and abilities of the injured worker
- Not endanger the health or safety of the injured worker or his/her coworkers

When identifying RTW plan options, follow a hierarchy:

1. Pre-injury job modified
2. Another job in its entirety
3. Another job modified
4. A bundling of suitable duties

You may provide any or all of these options to an injured worker while under treatment or rehabilitation.

Alternate work: The duties or job tasks normally not performed by the injured worker.

Modified work: Modification of work can include, but is not limited to, changes to the work environment, work hours, tools and equipment used, and job design and work organization.

RTW committee: You may assign a committee the responsibility of developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the RTW program. Ideally, the committee includes a RTW coordinator, management representation and worker and/or union representation. In some cases, the responsibility of developing and implementing a program may fall to specific HR positions instead of a committee.

RTW coordinator: The worker assigned the responsibility of overseeing the day-to-day functioning of the RTW Program (actual job titles vary depending on the company).

HCP: Health care provider. It "means a physician, dentist, chiropractor, optometrist, psychologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, nurse or any other person who is registered or licensed pursuant to any Act to practice any of the healing arts".

The Workers' Compensation Act, 2013