

Quick Guide

Steps to Creating a Return- to-Work Program

*We can
help!*

BEFORE the Injury Occurs

STEP 1: Create your Return-to-Work Policy and Procedures.

Having a written policy and procedures developed in advance is the first step to a successful return-to-work program. Your finance, legal and human resources team should be involved with its development. The policy should be part of your new employee orientation and should also be presented to all active employees. 📄 See page 20 for a sample policy.

STEP 2: Maintain and update job descriptions and a job analysis form for each type of employment position.

Complete and keep up-to-date and on file a detailed job descriptions and job analysis forms, including documenting all physical requirements of the jobs. Determine if any position requires a pre-employment physical. If possible, create a short video showing the typical physical duties of each job. These job videos can help the treating physician to better understand the physical requirements for each job function. 📄 See pages 21 & 22 for this two-page form.

STEP 3: Establish a relationship with a medical provider for the treatment of injured employees. Chesapeake Employers can recommend providers.

For a courtesy recommendation of quality medical providers in your area, please contact your Chesapeake Employers' claims staff. Maryland state law gives injured workers the right to seek medical treatment from any doctor they choose. We cannot direct medical care, but we can recommend medical providers.

Meet with your medical provider and inform the physician of your desire for both timely medical care but also your desire for a timely return-to-work release. Having up-to-date job descriptions and transitional task analysis forms completed are valuable tools to provide the medical provider.

STEP 4: Create and maintain your "Idea Bank of Transitional Duty Jobs."

Be creative with identifying transitional job tasks. Schedule a meeting of supervisors and employees to suggest transitional duty jobs. Encourage everyone to come up with as many suggestions as possible. Be creative and look at what meaningful work/job tasks need to be done in your workplace. List the physical activities for each task, as this will assist the physician in understanding the transitional duties.

STEP 5: Create a positive and consistent workplace culture for both safety and return-to-work.

Your first priority is a safe workplace at all times. But in the event of a workplace injury, you also want to promote a positive culture for an early return-to-work. Publicize to all employees that you have a return-to-work program. Ensure the entire process, transitional job duties, and supervision are positive, constructive and never demeaning. When your employees see and hear firsthand that the return-to-work program is applied fairly and uniformly to all injured employees in a positive manner, you'll have less resistance and more acceptance to return-to-work.

STEP 6: Communication is important.

An essential requirement for a successful return-to-work program is prompt and frequent communication between the employer, the injured worker, medical provider and your Chesapeake Employers' claims team.