

Lewis Center for Educational Research

BP 4261.12: PERSONNEL WORKERS' COMPENSATION TRANSITIONAL RETURN-TO- WORK PROGRAM

Adopted: June 5, 2003

Revised:

A return-to-work program is a widely recognized management tool for reducing Workers' Compensation expenses.

Following a work-related injury, employees should be returned to the work site as soon as possible subsequent to determination of medical and vocational compatibility.

This Transitional Return-to-Work Program is designed to move employees from a "disability" environment to a position of "productivity". When properly administered, programs of this nature have improved employee relations, as well as reduced overall costs of work injuries.

In order to assist industrially injured employees with the recovery process and to encourage an early return to unrestricted duty status, the LCER will implement a program which utilizes temporary return-to-work (transitional) assignments to accommodate workers who are unable to perform their normal duties. This may be structured as follows:

1. Restricted duties within the same work area
2. Different duties within the same work area
3. Different duties in a different work area
4. Restricted duties in a different work area

Definition and Parameters

Transitional assignments are temporary assignments of modified or light duty to assist the injured or ill employee to progressively escalate to full-duty status and is only available for approved Workers' Compensation claims. This type of duty is a "transitional" process, which enables the employee to gradually resume their full-time duties. The maximum duration of the transitional assignment period will not exceed 60 calendar days per injury or illness.

Program Objectives

1. Provide a means for an injured/ill employee to remain in the workplace as soon as safely possible without danger of re-injury.
2. Provide a means of maintaining the employee's job skills, self-esteem, and morale while enabling him/her to progress to full-duty status.
3. Maintain organizational productivity by allowing the employee to perform tasks that would normally go undone or would require extra help.

4. Reduce the number of lost-time injuries thereby reducing the amount of temporary and permanent disability costs.
5. Reduce the number of litigated claims.
6. Reduce the need for temporary help due to the absence of the injured worker.
7. Improve communication with the injured employee and enhance their perception of the LCER's concern for their well-being.
8. Reduce the use and cost of outside rehabilitation vendors and the overall costs associated with rehabilitation.
9. Reduce extended periods of medical treatment and associated costs. Injured employee recovery periods are lessened if temporary transitional assignments are made available in lieu of remaining at home.
10. Reduce outstanding claim reserves which will ultimately favorably impact LCER experience modification factors.
11. More effectively discharge the LCER's obligations under the Labor Code and Education Code.

Program Provisions

1. Under no circumstances does this program intend to permanently establish new assignments or displace other employees. Its intent is to utilize the resources of an employee for the LCER.
2. The LCER recognizes the benefits of implementing a Transitional Return-to-Work Program in accordance with the aforementioned terms and, therefore, agrees to voluntarily participate in adopting such a program. Individual claim circumstances will dictate assignment availability and placement.