

Returning to work promptly and safely has positive health benefits for workers who have been injured in the workplace. It also reduces interruptions to business operations, resulting in productivity and financial benefits.

Capacity to work

When someone is injured at work the first priority is medical treatment. The worker's treating doctor will issue a 'Certificate of Capacity' that sets out what the worker can do at work. The information on the 'Certificate of Capacity' assists you and your worker to coordinate their return to the workplace.

Your role as the employer

As the employer with control over the workplace, workforce and work duties, you're expected to take a lead role in working out how, when, where and in what way your worker will return to work. You are legally required to prepare a 'Return to Work Program' that sets out these arrangements.



Watch WorkCover WA's Return to Work presentation for more information about supporting a worker's return to work and developing Return to Work Programs

If the nature of your worker's injury is likely to keep them away from the workplace, remember to stay in touch. Talk to them regularly, invite them to staff meetings and encourage them to contact you if they have any concerns.

Worker involvement

As far as medically appropriate, the injured worker is expected to play an active role in their return to work planning and program. If problems arise, or if the worker unreasonably refuses to participate, talk to your insurer.

Open Communication

Workers' compensation claims often involve several parties. This may mean you, the worker, their doctor, your insurer and a workplace rehabilitation provider all need to work together to enable the worker to return to work.

Open communication is key, and if there are any problems, request a case conference to meet with everyone involved in the claim and talk through the issues.

To find out more:



Watch WorkCover WA's Case Conferences presentation



Refer to WorkCover WA's Case Conferences fact sheet and template

Talk to your insurer about a referral to a workplace rehabilitation provider if a worker needs assistance to return to work after an injury.

Monitor Progress

Usually, the worker will gradually increase their hours and duties until they no longer require support or monitoring at work. Sometimes a worker will report an increase in symptoms when at work. If this happens, review their activities and hours of work to find out what may have aggravated their injury. Reassess the suitability of the duties and hours in the Return to Work Program. Encourage the worker to discuss their symptoms with their treating doctor.

Need further assistance?

For information or assistance:



Call our Advisory team
on **1300 794 744**
(8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)



Visit workcover.wa.gov.au