



Administrative Policy Manual

Policy No: A-27Date: 7-26-11Approved: Don Marting

SUBJECT: POLICY ESTABLISHING RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM. (RTW)

PURPOSE: To return injured employees, who are temporarily precluded from performing their normal duties at work.

I. PURPOSE

The primary goal of the City of Indio's Return-to-Work (RTW) Program is to return eligible employees to the City workforce at the earliest medically allowable date and in accordance with their medical treatment plan. The RTW promotes rehabilitation and enhances the recovery process of employees experiencing an illness/injury, while maximizing productivity and controlling related expenditures. This is accomplished through a partnership, which includes the affected employee, medical providers, and a multi-disciplinary team of key personnel working together toward the common goal of expediting the employee's return to physical and psychological well-being.

II. WHY RETURN-TO-WORK?

Research shows that returning an employee to work as soon as medically possible is essential in properly managing workers' compensation and non-work related disability claims. It is also beneficial for the employee both physically and psychologically.

II. RETURN-TO-WORK GOALS

- Fulfill our moral, ethical and legal responsibilities to our employees
- Provide transitional assignments or temporary modified work while the employee is recovering
- Identify tasks for transitional duty work assignments for injured employees
- Create positive workplace morale through communication and support for the ill/injured worker
- Minimize the potential for re-injury or permanent disability
- Reduce medical and disability costs
- Increase productivity by decreasing lost work time

III. RESPONSIBILITY:

The Human Resources Coordinator will act as the RTW Coordinator. This individual will function as the liaison with the workers' compensation claims administrator.

RTW Coordinator will:

1. Initiates contact with eligible employees and department supervisors to discuss the RTW Program. Provides information about the interactive discussion meeting for the RTW Job Assignment.
2. Receives reports from treating physician indicating current employee medical restrictions. Assures that department supervisor is advised of and understands restrictions and their effect on RTW job assignment. Regularly confers with workers' compensation claims administrator regarding RTW matters.
3. Monitors ongoing RTW job assignment for continuing appropriateness. Notifies department supervisor and workers' compensation claims administrator of any issues or problems an employee may have with his/her RTW job assignment.
4. Maintains database on RTW program, including employee's name, department, and number of working days saved/employee, and potential dollars saved through the RTW program.
5. Maintains documentation in RTW database system to communicate about employees' restrictions, impact on usual & customary duties, accommodations made, release to full duty, and any special circumstances that may arise.
6. Determining whether injured employees should continue participation in a RTW job assignment.

IV. PROCEDURES:

A. Identifying RTW Assignments:

1. Periodically, the RTW Coordinator will request that all departments complete the "RTW Assignment" form. This form assists the RTW Coordinator in identifying before hand possible RTW assignments that are within the work restrictions.

B. Employee placed on RTW by a Treating Physician:

1. If the employee has work restrictions, the work restrictions will be listed on the "Notice of Physician's Recommendations".
2. If the employee's department is able to accommodate the restrictions, the employee's supervisor will notify the RTW Coordinator, and the Coordinator will send a RTW agreement letter to the employee.
3. The employee's supervisor will ensure that the employee is complying with and working within the work restrictions imposed by the treating physician.
4. The RTW program is a temporary program for a period of 90 days with the possibility of one 90-day extension.
 - i. The City Manager or his designee can approve a one-time extension of that time frame where circumstances warrant

- C. Employee's Department Unable to Accommodate the Restrictions:
1. If the employee's department is unable to accommodate the restrictions, the department will notify the RTW Coordinator immediately.
 2. The RTW Coordinator will:
 - i. Check file for previously submitted RTW assignment forms.
 - ii. Contact other Departments for possible RTW assignments based upon the employee's restrictions.
 - iii. Instruct the employee where to report if an assignment in another department is located. (May be delegated to the employee's department)
- D. Unavailable Transitional Assignments:
1. If no transitional assignment is available, the employee will be put off work.
 2. Employees off work are to contact the RTW Coordinator immediately following a change in work restrictions or medical condition as determined by his/her treating physician.
 3. Failure to contact the RTW Coordinator may result in disciplinary action.
- E. Intermittent Assignment:
1. If an employee completes a temporary assignment and there is no additional transitional work available, the employee will be put off work.
 2. If the injury is work related the RTW Coordinator must immediately notify the workers' compensation claims administrator that the employee is not working.
- F. Timesheet Procedures:
1. The time record code "RTW" shall be used to track employees on transitional return to work assignments.
 2. "RTW" time is recorded on the employee's timesheet.
 3. The employee's regular program and account number are used.
 4. The code "RTW" is placed in the work performed column along with a description of the duties performed.

V. REFERENCES:

Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336) Fair Employment and Housing Act.