



POLICY	
Policy Number: HS2020-042	Date Approved: August 2007
Department: Health and Safety	Date Reviewed: October 2020
Return to Work	

### 1. Policy Statement

The Corporation is committed to the successful return to work and recovery of municipal employees who sustain personal injury arising out of and in the course of their employment with the Corporation or who suffer from an occupational disease by assisting in early intervention and safe return to work. It is our policy to take all responsible steps to return injured and ill employees to their pre-injury job as quickly as possible. The Corporation and its employees are committed to co-operate and participate in the success of the Return to Work Program. The Corporation will ensure the privacy and confidentiality of the injured employees to the extent possible.

### 2. Purpose

The objective is to increase the awareness of disability issues for all employees and reduce the days lost due to absences from injuries and illness. Where the employee is unable to return to their pre-injury employment as a result of an occupational or non-occupational injury, the goal will be to return them to alternative work, which is consistent with their functional abilities. Establishing a fair and consistent process for employees returning to work in compliance with current and future legislative obligations will result in reduced WSIB costs.

### 3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Town of Kirkland Lake (the Corporation).

### 4. Definitions

**Alternative Work** - Offering the employee a position other than his/her regular job to meet the temporary restrictions. This can be within their current department of work, other departments or other work that is available based on suitability of jobs available to meet the worker's needs.

**Available Work** - Available work is work that exists with the injury employer at the pre-injury worksite, or at a comparable worksite arranged by the employer. In determining if availability of work, WSIB considers:

- Whether a job vacancy has been posted, advertised or otherwise communicated, or,
- Evidence of hiring or transfers that occur on or after the date the worker is fit for suitable work.

**Functional Abilities** - This indicates what the injured employee's present physical capabilities are, as per their treating physician's recommendations. This form can also be used when a physician visit is not required. When no treating health professional is used, the form is completed jointly with the injured employee and their Supervisor to determine what they are capable of doing. Always with the understanding that any work that causes an increase in pain or soreness is to be immediately stopped and reported to the Supervisor/Department Head.

**Health Professional** - Includes a medical doctor, chiropractor, registered nurse (extended class), physiotherapist and dentist.

**Medical Aid / Health Care** - When an injured employee requires aid beyond First Aid by a Health Professional.

**Modified Work** - Modified work is any job, task, function or combination thereof that an employee who suffers from a diminished physical capacity may perform safely without risk of re-injury, exacerbation of disability or risk to others. It is also commonly referred to as "suitable work".

**Permanent Accommodation** – When WSIB assesses an injured employee and determines they have reached a plateau (i.e. their injury is not expected to get any better or worse), they are considered at MMR – Maximum Medical Recovery. If the employee still has limitations, they are considered to have a Permanent Impairment (PI) and WSIB will ask the employer to permanently accommodate this employee. When determining if XXX can accommodate the employee on a permanent basis, the following must be considered:

- The **availability** of a permanent position within the employee's limitations.
- The **medical evidence** supporting the employee's ability to perform the essential duties of the position.
- The **qualifications** of the employee to meet the minimum requirements of the position.

- Any **training** that may be required for the employee to meet the minimum requirements of the position.

**Physical Demands Analysis** - The evaluation and assessment of the physical strength, mobility, coordination and vision required to perform a particular job and the assessment of physical and chemical hazards that an employee is subject to when performing the regular duties of that job.

**Reduced-Hours Work** - Less than full-time work to meet the temporary restrictions. In the case of a part-time employee, this could result in a shorter work week or a vacation of days off during the week.

**Return to Work (RTW)** - Return to work is the process or strategy of safely returning employees to the workplace on a timely basis. The goal is to assist in the employee's active recovery and to work towards the resumption of the essential duties of their pre-injury job whenever possible.

**Suitable Work** - Suitable work means post-injury work (including the employee's pre-injury job) that is safe, productive, and consistent with the worker's functional abilities, and that, to the extent possible, restores the worker's pre-injury earnings.

**Temporary Accommodation-** Modified work is considered to be temporary, up to 6 months, however it may be extended if warranted by medical evidence. The duration of a temporary placement shall be discussed with the employee, Health Professional, Supervisor/Department Head responsible for the establishment of the modified work program.

**Work Reintegration** – A set of guidelines mandated by WSIB, aimed at ensuring that a worker has the best opportunities available for successful return to work with their employer. If the workplace parties have not been successful in returning the injured employee to work, WSIB will meet with them no later than 12 weeks from the date of injury.

**Work Transition** – A Plan that outlines the assistance and services an employee requires to enable a return to work with the employer or, if required, to re-enter the labour market. WSIB will provide specialized work transition services between six and nine months from the date of injury.

## 5. Policy & Procedures

### Responsibilities

#### ***The Corporation will:***

- Provide awareness training and educational material to all employees regarding the RTW Program.
- Assign a RTW Program Coordinator.

#### ***Department Heads /Supervisors will:***

- When an incident occurs, immediately conduct or arrange for the completion of an incident investigation.
- Arrange transportation for the injured Employee if needed.
- Instruct and advise the Employee regarding the RTW Work Program.
- Ensure the injured Employee has the Return to Work Package.
- Ensure the injured Employee knows he or she must return to work, either the same day or on their next regularly scheduled shift.
- Complete form WSIB 0007A (Form 7) and accident investigation within 72 hours after learning of the reporting obligation. WSIB requires that a completed Form 7 be received within 3 days after learning of the reporting obligation. Record any first aid obtained.
- Identify suitable work with the employee and review the injured worker's present job position/description to establish if the position can be modified to accommodate the injured worker's restrictions/capabilities.
- Prepare a formal written modified work offer.
- Meet with the employee to discuss the RTW Plan and to sign the modified work offer.
- Develop an RTW plan in co-operation with employee and monitor the plan.
- Communicate with the employee weekly throughout recovery and keep a contact log of the communication.
- Complete all necessary forms as required by WSIB.
- If the employee is unable to return to regular duties and is deemed to have a Permanent Impairment, contact the Human Resources for assistance with the accommodation process.

***RTW Program Coordinator will:***

- Have experience or training in RTW or Disability Management.
- Ensure all employees receive awareness training about the RTW program.
- Ensure RTW program information is accessible to all employees.
- Re-communicate the requirements of the program to the employees at the time of injury or illness.
- Assist with the development of an RTW plan in co-operation with employee and the Department Head/Supervisor.
- Set up regular meetings to review the RTW plan and the employee's progress.
- Keep records of all documents relating to the RTW case file.
- Communicate with Department Heads/Supervisors and injured employees on a regular basis.
- Determine when independent assessment is needed or when additional assistance from the WSIB is required.
- Create an emergency evacuation plan for employees requiring accommodations if an alternative plan is needed.
- Communicate with WSIB, including changes in injured workers duties, wage changes, failure of any party to cooperate in the RTW program and when the employee is back to full regular duties.
- Get the CAO and/or WSIB involved if there is a dispute between the injured worker, and the Department Head/Supervisor or RTW Coordinator.
- Review the RTW program annually.

***Employees will:***

- Immediately report all accidents and illnesses and obtain necessary first aid and/or health care.
- If filing a claim for benefits, review and sign a completed WSIB Form 7.
- Provide the Department Head/Supervisor and RTW Coordinator with a copy of the page 2 of the WSIB Form 8 provided by the Health Care Professional before start of next shift or communicate the functional abilities information to the Corporation as soon as possible.

- Obtain a Functional Abilities Form, WSIB 2647A (FAF) from Department Head/Supervisor for subsequent doctors visits, complete and sign employee's section of Functional Abilities Form to consent to disclosure of functional abilities information.
- Communicate to the RTW Coordinator once a week on your progress in returning to normal duties and update any functional abilities information needed.

### **Training**

All employees must complete training on their responsibilities for the RTW program and the goals and objective of the RTW program during orientation. This training must be reviewed annually.

### **Evaluation**

An annual review of the policy will be conducted by the RTW Coordinator. The RTW Coordinator will track and analyze all incidents to determine performance measures. A copy of this review will be provided to the CAO so that improvements can be added to the Continuous Improvement Plan and the budget for RTW can be reviewed.

## **6. Summary**

### **Legislation/Standards**

Ontario Occupational Health and Safety Act

Workplace Safety and Insurance Act