



WORKERS'  
COMPENSATION  
BOARD OF NOVA SCOTIA

# Your Return-To-Work Program



## What is a Return-To-Work Program?

A Return-To-Work Program is a proactive way to help injured workers return to productive and safe employment as soon as physically possible. It is a partnership involving employers, workers, health care providers, unions, Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committees and the Workers' Compensation Board. The partnership has one shared goal: to return injured workers to safe and suitable work.

## Why Introduce a Return-To-Work Program?

Workplace injuries are costly to all members of today's workplace partnership. While accident prevention is the best way to reduce overall injury costs, the implementation of an effective Return-To-Work Program is the best way to manage costs after an injury has occurred. A Return-To-Work Program helps to guarantee that each injured worker receives prompt health care and early assistance during both the initial stages of recovery and the subsequent return to productive employment.



# Benefits

Return-To-Work Programs benefit all members of the workplace partnership:

- Employers retain experienced workers and reduce accident and workplace costs.
- Injured workers maintain employment security, seniority and benefits while they receive personalized and effective treatment during the return to work process. In addition, they maintain necessary job skills and the lifestyle to which they have grown accustomed.
- Health care providers are supported in their decisions and treatment strategies.
- Unions maintain the employment rights of their membership.
- Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committees are assured that the health and safety of workers is maintained at and near the workplace.
- The Workers' Compensation Board manages rising costs and continues to provide a high level of service to injured workers and employers.



## How Do You Get Started?

The Workers' Compensation Board can provide advice, support and guidance throughout your program's establishment, development and maintenance phases as well as during future enhancements. A representative will visit your workplace and help you get started! In addition, the Workers' Compensation Board has produced a Workplace Development Manual for Return-To-Work Programs. It is available to workplaces throughout Nova Scotia who are interested in establishing their own customized programs. This user-friendly "how to" manual can help you create, design and implement your own workplace Return-To-Work Program.

## Guiding Principle

The key to a successful Return-To-Work Program is a strong partnership between employers, workers, health care providers, unions, Joint Occupational Health & Safety Committees and the Workers' Compensation Board. This, coupled with a shared commitment to achieve the goal of returning injured workers to safe and suitable employment, will ensure your program's success.



# Key Steps to a Successful Return-To-Work Program

- Involve and communicate with your workforce.
- Organize a Joint Return-To-Work Committee.
- Select a Disability Management Coordinator.
- Evaluate the needs of your workplace.
- Develop a return to work policy and define the program's scope.
- Formulate the objectives of your Return-To-Work Program.
- Review your worksite accident history.
- Create rules and processes.
- Conduct a job task analysis.
- Develop suitable alternate work assignments.
- Create an information package.
- Organize a Return-To-Work Team.
- Facilitate communication, education and promotion.
- Evaluate and assess your program.



If you would like further information,  
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Towards A Healthy, Working Nova Scotia

