

Ft. Worth ISD

Return to Work

Program

Guide

Revised: April 28, 2022

Ft. Worth ISD Return to Work Program Guide

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Section I

Return to Work

Program

Overview

Ft. Worth Independent School District Return to Work Program

Program Goals

- Provide a comprehensive, consistent and successful Return to Work (RTW) Program that is viewed as a benefit by both the management and the employees.
- Provide pre-injury training and education of District employees to promote the benefits of early reporting and return to work in order to establish a successful and consistent RTW program.
- Allow injured employees to return to work and their usual routine as soon as it is medically appropriate.
- Enhance productivity by ensuring that even at a reduced capacity, injured employees contribute to the work effort.
- Allow the injured employee to be productive and involved with the work team while on alternate duty.
- Reduce workers' compensation medical and indemnity costs by decreasing and/or eliminating time away from work through identification of alternate duty job tasks which will accommodate temporary physical limitations as the injured worker transitions back to his or her regular job duties.

RTW Program Overview

Ft. Worth ISD is committed to providing a safe work environment for all employees. Unfortunately, injuries can occur that temporarily prevent an employee from performing some or all of his or her regular job duties. In order to assist the injured employee and the supervisor in these situations, Ft. Worth ISD developed a Return to Work (RTW) Program. The RTW Program was designed to provide a consistent approach in returning injured employees to regular or alternate duty work as soon as medically appropriate. The RTW Program consists of pre-injury training and education, documented roles and responsibilities of the team members and alternate duty work assignments. A RTW team manages the RTW Program and provides assistance to the employee and the supervisor throughout the return to work process.

All Ft. Worth ISD employees are required to support the RTW Program and to consistently follow the RTW Program requirements and procedures. Employee support and participation are key to a successful RTW Program. The following information and attached procedures provide specific guidelines that supervisors and injured employees are expected to follow during the return to work process.

RTW Program Eligibility

The workers' compensation claim adjuster will refer all employees who are expected to be temporarily unable to perform some or all of their regular job duties to a Case Manager. All employees who have more than one day of lost time due to a work injury will be referred to the Case Manager for evaluation.

RTW Program Team Members

A successful RTW Program requires a team effort. All of the following people are an important part of the RTW team and have specific roles and responsibilities.

- Injured employee
- Doctor
- Injured employee's supervisor
- Health Services Representative
- RTW Case Manager & Work Comp Specialist
- Claim adjuster
-

RTW Program Packets

A return to work packet will be provided to the injured employee when he or she is unable to perform the regular job duties due to an on the job injury. The claim adjuster mails the return to work packet to the injured employee at the time of referral. The return to work packet contains a summary of the RTW Program and procedures, employee roles and responsibilities when a job injury occurs, frequently asked questions and contact information. The entire RTW Program Guide is available to any employee upon request.

Alternate Job Duty Assignments

The Case Manager will first review the employee's limitations and restrictions against the requirements of his or her regular duty job. If practical, the Case Manager will define modifications to the regular job duties which will allow the employee to continue to perform his or her normal job. If this is not possible, the case manager will identify appropriate, alternate job duty assignments for an injured employee. These alternate job duty assignments are based on the employee's physical limitations as identified by his or her treating physician.

If the employee cannot perform his or her regular job duties with modifications, every effort will be made to provide an alternate duty assignment within the employee's home department. However, there will be times when the home department is unable to provide alternate duty that will meet the employee's physical limitations. The Case Manager will then review alternate duty availability in other departments and/or on other campuses. All District employees are required to cooperate whenever an alternate duty assignment is outside of the employee's home department. Throughout the return to work process, the Case Manager will guide and assist both the injured employee and the supervisor to ensure a positive, effective and successful return to work process.

Offer of Alternate Duty Assignment

The Case Manager provides a job analysis of the alternate duty assignment and the employee's work status report from the doctor to the injured employee's supervisor. The supervisor is required to review the information and sign the job analysis indicating agreement with the assignment and understanding of the physical restrictions. Once the

Case Manager has made the necessary arrangements for an alternate duty assignment, the employee will be contacted to discuss the alternate duty assignment. The Case Manager will instruct the employee to check their work email or go to the Administration Building that same day but no later than the next business day. The employee may meet with the Workers' Comp specialist, and Health Services representative whenever he or she has missed work and/or has physical restrictions due to a work injury. This process must occur prior to return to work. The case manager will provide specific instructions to the employee as to the return to work offer email or visit to the Administration Building.

Prior to the employee's return to work process, the Case Manager will provide the Workers' Comp specialist with the job analysis of the alternate duty assignment, the employee's work status report from the doctor and the required claim information needed to complete bona fide offer of employment letter. The Workers' Comp specialist will send an email including, the bona fide offer letter as well as the job analysis, work status report, claim information sheet and ask that the employee review the offer and electronically sign the letter if they agree. The employee is to then return the signed document to the Workers' Comp specialist via email and the documents will then be sent to Health Services to complete the process electronically. If the employee does not have access to email or is unable to electronically sign the Case Manager will instruct the employee to come into the Administration Building. The Workers' Comp specialist will review these documents with the employee and request the employee's signature on both the job analysis and the bona fide offer letter indicating agreement and understanding of the job duties and acceptance of the bona fide offer of employment. The employee is then instructed to meet with a Health Services Representative. Once this process is complete, Health Services will send an email informing the Supervisor of the employee's completion of the return to work process. The employee reports to work as instructed.

If an employee cannot be contacted by phone, email, or the employee does not complete the return to work process as instructed, the Workers' Comp specialist sends the bona fide offer of employment letter to the employee by regular and by certified mail. The Workers' Comp specialist notifies the claim adjuster if the employee does not respond to the offer, via email or by reporting to the Administration Building within 7 days of receipt of the bona fide offer letter of employment. The employee is deemed to have received the bona fide offer letter five days after it was mailed. The employee should return to work as soon as medically appropriate and as instructed by the Case Manager. Receipt, by the employee, of the bona fide offer of employment letter is not required prior to return to work.

Duration of Alternate Duty Assignments

Whenever possible, alternate duty will be provided for up to three months from the date the alternate duty begins. These assignments are intended to be temporary with most lasting only a few days to a few weeks depending on the employee's physical limitations. The goal is for the employee to recover at work through alternate duty assignments that progress to full duty as the employee recovers. These alternate duty assignments allow the employee to return to their normal lifestyle and routines as well as positively contribute to the District's work effort.

If alternate duty is expected to be needed longer than three months, the Case Manager refers the employee's file to the RTW Committee for further evaluation. The RTW Committee will analyze the employee's current medical status, cooperation and participation with the

RTW Program, attendance during the alternate duty assignment, and progression of job duties during the alternate duty assignment and expected length of time before the employee can resume regular work duties. Based on this evaluation, the RTW Committee may provide a one time, three month extension of the alternate duty assignment. However, the RTW Committee is not required to provide this extension.

Employee Refusal of Alternate Duty Assignment

If an employee refuses an alternate duty assignment, the Risk Management Dept and claim adjuster are notified by the Case Manager and/or the supervisor depending on when the assignment is refused. The employee is subject to personnel action, up to and including termination of employment and loss of workers' compensation benefits.

If the employee accepts the alternate duty assignment and then believes that the assignment cannot be performed without exceeding the limitations as defined by the treating doctor, the employee should immediately discuss the concerns with the supervisor. If the supervisor does not respond to the employee's satisfaction, the employee is required to contact the case manager who in turn will contact the supervisor, claim adjuster and doctor as applicable. The employee may also contact a representative in Health Services for assistance.

Permanent Restrictions

Should an injured employee be given permanent work restrictions by their workers' comp physician, they will be referred to Human Capital Management for review.

RTW Committee

The RTW Committee oversees the RTW Program and evaluates the success of the program. In addition to approving one time, three month, extensions of the alternate duty assignments, the RTW Committee reviews injury trends and develops action plans to correct any identified problems or deficiencies in the RTW Program. The RTW Committee Members are as follows.

- Case Manager
- Claim Adjuster
- Workers' Comp Specialist
- Employee's regular Supervisor & alternate duty Supervisor if not the same

Summary

All Ft. Worth ISD employees are required to support and cooperate with the RTW Program in order to ensure its success. A successful RTW Program benefits the employees and the District by minimizing the economic and social impact of a workplace injury on the injured employee while maintaining production requirements to meet the District's needs. The following return to work procedures outline the roles and responsibilities of the return to work team members.

Section II

Return to Work

Team Member

Duties

Return to Work Program Employee Responsibilities

Before an Injury Occurs

- Employees are expected to be familiar with the safety procedures and Return to Work (RTW) Program information provided at the time of their initial orientation.
- Ongoing adherence to safety rules and procedures is required.
- Employees are required to immediately notify their supervisor of any unsafe conditions which are identified.

When an Injury Occurs

- Employee should seek immediate medical attention as appropriate.
- Once the medical situation is stable, the employee is required to immediately notify the supervisor of the injury and complete the employee accident report.
- Contact a Case Manager or your claim adjuster whenever assistance is needed in identifying a health care provider who accepts workers' compensation and is familiar with the District's RTW Program.

During Recovery, Alternate Duty Assignments & Return to Full Duty

- Employee is provided with a Return to Work Packet and is expected to review the information and adhere to the RTW Program requirements.
- Employee is required to attend all scheduled medical appointments.
- At each visit with your doctor, discuss your current medical and work status. Inform your doctor about the RTW Program and the availability of alternate duty assignments.
- Follow the treatment plan as recommended by your treating doctor. Any recommended physical restrictions should be followed both at home and at work. Request a copy of your Work Status Report (DWC-73) from your doctor. The Work Status Report should outline both your work status and any recommended physical restrictions.
- You are required to contact your supervisor and the Case Manager after each medical appointment to discuss your current medical and work status. Provide the Case Manager with any work status information documented by your doctor.
- You are expected to accept temporary alternate duty assignments that are within the current physical restrictions as identified by your doctor. The Case Manager will assist you in the entire return to work process.
- If you are unable to perform your regular job duties or miss one or more days of work due to the work injury, you may be required to report to the Administration Building and meet with the Workers' Comp specialist, Health Services and a representative from the Human Capital Management (Human Resource Department) prior to returning to work. The Case Manager will assist you with this process including notifying you if a visit to the Administration building is required.
- Until you are working at your regular duty job, you are required to report to the Case Manager after each doctor appointment in order to review your work status and job duties to determine if your doctor has allowed an increase in your physical activity.
- If alternate duty is required, the Case Manager will provide you with a job analysis of the alternate duty assignment. In addition, you will be provided with your work status

report from the doctor and a bona fide offer of employment letter to confirm the details of your return to work. You are required to review the job analysis and offer letter. If in agreement that the duties are within your current physical limitations, sign the job analysis and offer letter to acknowledge your agreement and understanding.

- You are required to notify your supervisor and the Case Manager whenever you have a change of medical or work status.
- When working at an alternate duty assignment, you are required to notify the supervisor and the Case Manager if you experience problems or have any concerns about the alternate duty. You may also notify a representative of Health Services.

Required Communication

- You are required to contact your doctor, supervisor and the Case Manager if experiencing problems adhering to the recommended treatment plan or alternate duty assignment.
- You are required to contact your home department supervisor as needed but at a minimum of weekly until return to work at your regular duties.
- You are required to contact the Case Manager as needed but at a minimum of weekly until return to regular duty work.
- You are required to contact the supervisor and Case Manager after all doctor appointments and whenever there is a change of medical or work status.
- You are required to contact the Claim adjuster for all claims related issues.
- If you have missed one or more days from work or are unable to resume your regular job duties, you may be required to meet with the Workers' Comp specialist, & a representative in Health Services prior to returning to work.
- Once you have resumed your regular job duties, the Case Manager will send you a RTW Program Evaluation form and a self addressed, stamped envelope. You are required to complete the RTW Program Evaluation and return in the envelope provided within five days of returning to regular duty work.

Return to Work Program Supervisor Responsibilities

Before an Injury Occurs

- The supervisor is required to follow and promote all District safety procedures to avoid injuries whenever possible.
- The supervisor is required to receive pre-injury training on the Return to Work (RTW) Program
- The supervisor is required to provide pre-injury training on the RTW Program to their staff.
- The supervisor is required to become familiar with the Return to Work Program Guide and to adhere to the requirements.
- The supervisor is required to work with the Case Manager to update job descriptions and to identify possible job modifications and alternate job duties in the event an injury occurs.

When an Injury Occurs

- The supervisor is required to seek immediate medical attention for the injured employee as appropriate.
- Once the medical situation is stable, the supervisor is required to immediately report the injury to the TriStar Risk Management Claim Department and to follow all other District procedures for reporting work injuries.
- The supervisor is required to complete the Employer's First Report of Injury and the Supervisor Accident Investigation Report not later than the first business day after the employee reports the injury.
- The supervisor ensures that the injured employee completes the Employee's on the Job Accident Report. The supervisor is required to mail the employee accident report to the employee if this information cannot be completed in person. If the form is mailed, the supervisor is required to call the employee at home to explain the form and to wish the employee a speedy recovery.
- The supervisor submits online the injury reports, as they are completed, to the TriStar Risk Management Claim Department.
- Whenever your employee needs assistance in identifying a doctor who accepts workers' compensation and is familiar with the District's RTW Program, contact the Case Manager or the claim adjuster for suggestions.

During Recovery, Alternate Duty Assignments & Return to Full Duty

- The injured employee is expected to contact the supervisor after each medical appointment and at a minimum of once weekly until returned to regular job duties. If the supervisor does not hear from the employee as required, it is the supervisor's responsibility to contact the employee to determine his or her status.
- Prior to the employee's return to work, the supervisor providing the alternate job assignment will be sent a job analysis of the employee's alternate duty tasks and work status report. The supervisor is required to review the job analysis and sign to indicate

understanding and compliance with the alternate duty assignment and recommended physical restrictions. The signed job analysis is returned to Case Manager.

- Once the employee has returned to work, the supervisor is required to ensure that any physical restrictions are adhered to during the alternate duty assignment.
- The supervisor is required to report any employee non-compliance to the Case Manager immediately. Likewise, if the supervisor discovers aspects of the job that require activity beyond the employee's physical limitations, the limitations should not be exceeded. The supervisor is expected to contact the Case Manager immediately.
- If an employee refuses or does not present for an alternate duty assignment, the supervisor is required to contact the Case Manager and claim adjuster.
- The supervisor is required to work with the Case Manager to increase the alternate job duty requirements as the employee progresses through his or her recovery.
- The supervisor is required to notify the Case Manager with any questions or problems during any phase of the return to work process.
- If the employee is not working in his or her home department, both the home and the alternate duty assignment supervisor will participate in the employee's evaluation for that time period.

Required Communication

- The supervisor is required to immediately report work injuries to the TriStar Risk Management Claim Department.
- The supervisor is required to complete the job injury paperwork including the Employer's First Report of Injury and the Supervisor Accident Investigation Report not later than the first business day after the employee reports the injury.
- The supervisor ensures that the employee completes the Employee's on the Job Accident Report form. The completed injury and accident forms are completed online with TriStar Risk Management Claim Department.
- The supervisor is required to maintain a minimum of weekly contact with the injured employee throughout the recovery and return to work process and until regular duty is accomplished.
- The supervisor is required to maintain ongoing contact with the Case Manager during the recovery and return to work process.
- The supervisor is required to review, sign and return the job analysis, for the alternate duty assignment, to the Case Manager.
- The supervisor is required to make immediate contact with the claim adjuster and Case Manager whenever there is a change in the employee's medical or vocational status.
- The supervisor is required to verify that the employee has met with the Workers' Comp specialist, & a representative in Health Services prior to returning to work. The Case Manager will assist you throughout this process.
- If the employee is not working in his or her home department, it is the responsibility of the home department supervisor to contact the supervisor in charge of the department that is providing the employee with the alternate work assignment on a weekly basis for status updates.
- Upon the employee's return to regular duty employment, the supervisor is required to complete the RTW Program Evaluation form and return it to the Case Manager.

Other Duties & Responsibilities

- The home department and the alternate duty supervisor are required to participate as members of the RTW Committee whenever their employee is being reviewed by the Committee.

Return to Work Program Treating Doctor Responsibilities

When an Injury Occurs

- The doctor should provide immediate medical attention for the injured employee as appropriate.
- The doctor must be on the **Trinity Occupational Program-504 Network** as an approved doctor.
- The doctor should provide medically necessary care to the injured employee, as related to the work injury, that promotes recovery and return to work.
- The doctor should address both the medical and vocational status with the injured employee during the initial visit. An initial treatment plan should be discussed.
- The doctor should make timely, medically necessary referrals for diagnostic testing, physical therapy, specialty providers, etc.
- The doctor should communicate with the claim adjuster, supervisor, & Case Manager regarding treatment plan and work status as requested.
- The doctor is required to complete the Work Status Report (DWC-73) after the initial visit and as the employee's status changes thereafter.

During Recovery, Alternate Duty Assignments & Return to Full Duty

- The doctor is required to provide medically necessary care to the injured employee, as related to the work injury that promotes recovery and return to work.
- The doctor should address both the medical and vocational status with the injured employee during each visit.
- A treatment plan with at least monthly updates should be developed for the injured employee that addresses medical treatment, recommended referrals for testing or treatment, temporary physical limitations, work status and expected maximum medical recovery date.
- The doctor should complete the Work Status Report after each appointment or change of status.
- The doctor should communicate with the Case Manager, adjuster or supervisor as requested.
- The doctor should address alternate duty work assignments as submitted by the Case Manager.
- The doctor should request a Functional Capacity Assessment as needed.
- The doctor should work with the Case Manager to increase the alternate job duty requirements as the employee progresses through his or her recovery.
- The doctor should discuss any questions or problems during any phase of the medical recovery or return to work process with the Case Manager.

Required Communication

- The doctor is required to complete the initial and subsequent Work Status Reports.

Return to Work Program Case Manager Responsibilities

Before an Injury Occurs

- The Case Manager is required to promote all District safety procedures to avoid injuries whenever possible.
- The Case Manager provides pre-injury training on the RTW Program to District Management Staff.
- The Case Manager identifies job modifications and alternate duty job tasks within the District.
- The Case Manager works with the District staff to update job descriptions and to define specific job analysis information to be used during the return to work process if an injury occurs.

When an Injury Occurs

- The Case Manager provides recommendations to the employee and/or the supervisor with regards to requests for assistance in identifying a doctor who accepts workers' compensation, is on the Approved Doctor's List and is familiar with the District's RTW Program.

During Recovery, Alternate Duty Assignments & Return to Full Duty

- The Case Manager contacts the injured employee within one work day of referral to the RTW Program in order to explain the program and the RTW packet, discuss employee expectations, assess current medical and vocational status and determine the employee's understanding of his or her medical treatment plan. The Case Manager mails the RTW packet to the injured employee.
- The Case Manager maintains ongoing contact with the employee to discuss medical and vocational status and to provide assistance with medical care coordination and return to work. Although the employee is required to contact the Case Manager regarding appointments, status changes, etc., the Case Manager is expected to contact the employee whenever the employee has not followed the contact requirements in order to determine the employee's status.
- The Case Manager contacts the doctor, as needed and after each appointment, to determine the current treatment plan and to discuss the availability of modified or alternate duty. The Case Manager provides the doctor with a job description and/or task analysis of the regular duty job as well as the proposed alternate duty position as applicable.
- The Case Manager contacts the doctor to obtain a complete Work Status (DWC-73) form after each appointment. If the Work Status form is not fully completed, the Case Manager contacts the provider and requests the additional information.
- The Case Manager contacts the employee's supervisor within one work day of the referral and then weekly to determine availability of alternate duty, coordinate return to work and to update the supervisor regarding the employee's job injury status.
- The Case Manager contacts the claim adjuster with frequent updates on employee's medical and vocational status. The claim adjuster is notified whenever there is a change

in the employee's status and is copied on all medical information received by the Case Manager.

- The Case Manager arranges alternate duty for the injured employee as soon as medically appropriate. The injured employee is instructed to meet with the Workers' Comp specialist, & a representative of Health Services prior to return to work and after each doctor visit until full duty is achieved.
- Prior to the employee returning to work, the Case Manager sends the alternate duty job analysis and work status report to the employee's supervisor. The supervisor is required to review the information and sign the job analysis indicating agreement with the assignment and understanding of the physical restrictions. The signed job analysis is returned to the Case Manager.
- Prior to the employee's return to work meetings at the Administration Building, the Case Manager sends the alternate duty job analysis, work status report and bona fide offer of employment letter to the Workers' Comp specialist who in turn will review the information with the employee during the return to work meeting. The Workers' Comp specialist will obtain the employee's signature on the job analysis and the offer letter.
- If the employee does not report for work or is unable to continue working, the Case Manager notifies the claim adjuster and Workers' Comp specialist.

Required Communication

- The Case Manager is required to contact the employee, supervisor and doctor within one business day of the referral. Once the initial contacts have been completed, the adjuster is contacted to discuss the employee's current medical and vocational status.
- A minimum of weekly contact is required with the injured employee throughout the recovery and return to work process until he or she is returned to regular duty.
- Ongoing contact, as needed, with the doctor, supervisor and claim adjuster during the employee's recovery and return to work process is required.
- Immediate contact with the claim adjuster and supervisor whenever there is a change in the employee's medical or vocational status is required.
- Contact with the Risk Management and the Health Services Department as needed to facilitate a return to work.
- If the employee is not working in their home department, contact with both supervisors is required to coordinate return to work activities.

Other Duties & Responsibilities

- The Case Manager is a member of the RTW Committee.
- The Case Manager develops the Committee agenda with input from other Committee members.
- The Case Manager invites the applicable supervisors to each Committee meeting.
- Prior to the Committee meeting, the Case Manager completes the Alternate Duty Extension evaluation for each employee with input from the employee, his or her supervisor, doctor and other applicable team members.
- The Case Manager refers cases to the RTW Committee for review of an extension to the alternate duty past the initial three months.
- Once the employee has returned to regular duty, the Case Manager sends the RTW Program Evaluation form and a self addressed, stamped envelope to the injured

employee and to the supervisor to obtain feedback for potential Program improvements.

- The Case Manager submits a quarterly report of the RTW Program Evaluation results to the RTW Committee.

Return to Work Program Claim Adjuster Responsibilities

Before an Injury Occurs

- The claim adjuster is required to promote all District safety procedures to avoid injuries whenever possible.
- The claim adjuster is required to review pre-injury training and education information and become familiar with the RTW Program.
- The claim adjuster is required to work with the Case Manager to discuss injury trends, workflow, etc.

When an Injury Occurs

- The claim adjuster receives the Employer's First Report of Injury, the Supervisor Accident Investigation Report and the Employee's on the Job Accident Report from the employee's supervisor.
- The claim adjuster approves medically necessary, reasonable and work related care for the injured employee.
- For an employee who is not losing time from work, the claim adjuster determines if the employee is expected to lose any time and, if so, refers the employee to the Case Manager.
- The claim adjuster is required to make a referral to the Case Manager for evaluation whenever an employee has lost more than one day of work due to a work-related injury.
- The claim adjuster refers medical only cases to the Case Manager whenever the employee has been working at an alternate duty position for more than 60 days.
- The claim adjuster, when requested, assists the employee or supervisor in identifying medical providers that accept injured workers, are on the Approved Doctor List and are familiar with the District's RTW Program.

During Recovery, Alternate Duty Assignments & Return to Full Duty

- The claim adjuster maintains contact with the employee and his or her supervisor as needed.
- The claim adjuster reviews medical reports and Work Status reports as received. If received directly from the medical provider, the claim adjuster faxes or emails a copy of the information to the Case Manager immediately.
- The claim adjuster pays medically necessary, work related medical bills and makes indemnity payments.
- The claim adjuster handles all DWC required filings and reporting.
- The claim adjuster works closely with the Case Manager to avoid duplication of efforts and to ensure a successful outcome.
- The Case Manager provides the claim adjuster with a job analysis of the alternate job duty assignment, work status report and bona fide offer of employment letter. The employee is instructed to meet with the Workers' Comp specialist, & a representative of Health Services, prior to returning to work.

- The claim adjuster is required to provide the job analysis, work status report and offer letter to the employee for his or her review. The employee is required to sign the job analysis and offer letter, acknowledging understanding and agreement of the assignment.
- If the employee does not sign the paperwork, the claim adjuster is expected to notify Risk Management and the Case Manager immediately.
- Once the employee has signed the job analysis and offer letter, the Workers' Comp specialist escorts the employee to meet with a representative of Health Services.
- If the employee does not attend the meeting with the Workers' Comp specialist, the bona fide offer of employment letter will be mailed to the employee via certified mail.

Required Communication

- The claim adjuster maintains contact with DWC as required for claims handling.
- The claim adjuster maintains contact with the injured worker and supervisor as needed to discuss claim issues.
- The claim adjuster maintains ongoing contact with the Case Manager during the recovery and return to work process.

Other Duties & Responsibilities

- The applicable claim adjuster serves as a member of the RTW Committee.

Section III

Frequently

Asked

Questions

Ft. Worth ISD Return to Work Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Return to Work (RTW) Program?

Please see the complete RTW Program Guide for specific information. The RTW Program is designed to be a benefit to all District employees whenever an on the job injury occurs and the employee is unable to perform some or all of his or her regular duties. In most cases, the RTW Program allows an injured employee to return to work as soon as medically appropriate.

2. If I have an injury, how will the RTW Program benefit me?

Return to work is a natural part of the recovery and healing process and can hasten your recovery in many instances. The RTW Program allows you to return to work more quickly after an on the job injury. Early return to work has a positive impact on your lifestyle by allowing you to return to your usual routine and to remain a productive member of the District's work force.

3. Who is the Case Manager and what assistance can I expect?

The RTW coordinator is a Case Manager who has expertise in work injuries, job modifications and return to work coordination. The Case Manager will assist with both medical and work coordination during your recovery and return to work. The Case Manager can also help you find a doctor who will accept workers' compensation cases and who is familiar with the District's program.

4. When should I contact the Case Manager?

After each appointment with your doctor, whenever your medical or job status changes or if you have any questions. Contact should be made at a minimum of once a week until you are fully recovered.

5. What if I don't know who has been assigned as my Case Manager?

Anytime you have any questions or are unsure who your Case Manager is, you can call the Tristar Risk Management Claim Department toll free number at 888-285-6708. You can also use this number to leave a message for your Case Manager.

6. Who is the claim adjuster and what assistance can I expect?

The claim adjuster handles the workers' compensation benefits, paperwork and filings with the Texas Workers' Compensation Commission. The adjuster can assist you with

any aspect regarding your workers' compensation benefits. You can expect a call from the adjuster initially after your injury and then periodically, as needed, for updates.

7. When should I contact the claim adjuster?

Whenever you have questions regarding your workers' compensation benefits

8. What if I don't know who has been assigned as my claim adjuster?

Anytime you have any questions or are unsure who your adjuster is, you can call the Tristar Risk Management Claim Department toll free number at 888-285-6708.

9. Is my doctor involved in the RTW Program?

Yes, your doctor is a very important member of the RTW team and should be involved during your medical recovery and return to work. Your doctor identifies any temporary physical limitations that you should be following both at home and at work. These limitations are used to temporarily modify your regular job or to identify an appropriate alternate duty assignment when needed.

10. What is temporary alternate duty and what can I expect?

When an injured employee is unable to perform some or all of his or her regular work duties, an attempt is made to identify temporary alternate duty that will meet the physical limitations as recommended by the doctor. The alternate duty assignment is intended to be temporary with increases in job duties as the employee progresses in his or her medical recovery. The Case Manager will work with you throughout the alternate and regular duty process.

11. Will the alternate duty be within my own department?

Alternate duty in your home department is not always possible. Every effort will be made to keep you working in your home department and campus. However, there will be times that the home department cannot meet the physical restrictions and the alternate duty assignment will be provided in another department and/or campus.

12. How long does the alternate duty last?

In most cases, no longer than three months from the date the alternate duty started, depending on your work duties. Most injured employees require alternate duty for only a few days or weeks.

13. What happens when the alternate duty opportunity expires?

If your doctor is still recommending that you not return to your regular duties, a referral will be made to the RTW Committee. The RTW Committee will evaluate your

current medical and work status, expected date of regular duty, attendance and cooperation with alternate duty and the business needs of the District. Depending on the results of this evaluation, a one time extension of the alternate duty for up to three months may be recommended. An extension of the alternate duty assignment may be recommended but is not required.

14. Do I have to accept alternate duty?

No, however, if you refuse to accept an alternate duty assignment that is within your physical abilities as defined by your doctor, you will be subject to personnel action, up to and including termination of employment and loss of your workers' compensation benefits.

15. Do I need to meet with anyone before I return to work?

Yes, you must meet with the Workers' Comp specialist, & a representative of Health Services prior to returning to work. During the initial return to work meeting, the adjuster will provide you with a job analysis of the alternate duty assignment and an offer letter for your review, approval and signature. The Workers' Comp specialist and Case Manager will assist you throughout the return to work process including these pre-return to work meetings.

16. Who do I contact if I am unable to tolerate the alternate job duty tasks?

Your supervisor, the Case Manager and your doctor

17. Who do I contact if the alternate duty is not following the physical limitations as defined by my doctor?

Discuss your concerns with your supervisor and also notify the Case Manager immediately for assistance

18. Who do I contact with questions regarding the RTW Program or alternate duty job?

Contact the Case Manager at 855-366-6789.

19. Once I am back at my regular duty job, do I have any other responsibilities?

Yes, you will receive a RTW Program Evaluation form from the Case Manager. You are required to complete the brief evaluation form and return the form in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. This evaluation will allow for your input and suggestions as to how the RTW Program can be improved in the future.

Section IV

Return to Work

Employee

Packet

Dear Injured Employee,

The enclosed Ft. Worth ISD Return to Work Packet is intended to provide information and guidance to you during your medical recovery and return to work.

The Return to Work Packet includes the following information:

- Ft. Worth ISD Return to Work Program Summary
- Roles & responsibilities the injured employee is required to follow
- Answers to frequently asked questions regarding the Return to Work Program
- Contact list with names & phone numbers of parties involved with the Return to Work Program

You are required to review this Return to Work Packet and become familiar with your roles and responsibilities in the process. If you need assistance in reviewing and/or understanding this information, please contact the Case Manager at 855-366-6789. A copy of the complete Ft. Worth ISD Return to Work Program may be obtained from your supervisor upon request. We wish you well with your medical recovery and return to work.

Sincerely,

Ft. Worth ISD

Questions on the RTW Program or your claim?

Call the Case Manager @ 855-366-6789

OR

Call the claim adjuster @ 888-285-6708

Ft. Worth ISD Return to Work Program Summary

Return to Work Program Overview

Ft. Worth ISD is committed to providing a safe work environment for all employees. Unfortunately, injuries can occur that temporarily prevent employees from performing some or all of their regular job duties. In order to assist injured employees and their supervisors in these situations, Ft. Worth ISD developed a Return to Work (RTW) Program. All District employees are expected to follow the RTW Program requirements and procedures as a condition of employment.

The RTW Program was designed to be a benefit to all District employees. The Program allows for an injured employee to return to work as soon as medically appropriate which, in turn, allows the employee to resume his or her normal routines as soon as possible after a work injury. The RTW Program is managed by a Case Manager who will provide assistance to the employee and his or her supervisor throughout the return to work process. The Case Manager also works closely with the doctor in order to identify any temporary physical limitations the injured worker may have that will require temporary alternate duty assignments.

Alternate Job Duty Assignment & Duration

Whenever possible, the Case Manager will identify appropriate modifications to the employee's regular job or alternate duty assignments for injured workers who are temporarily unable to perform some or all of their regular work activities. These modified and alternate job duty assignments are considered temporary with most assignments lasting only a few days to a few weeks. The goal is for the injured employee to recover at work through modified or alternate duty assignments that allow for progression to regular duty.

Every effort will be made to provide alternate duty assignments within the employee's home department. However, there will be times when the home department is unable to provide alternate duty that will meet the employee's physical limitations. The Case Manager will then review alternate duty availability in other departments and/or on other campuses.

Whenever possible, alternate duty will be provided for up to three months from the date the alternate duty begins. If the employee refuses the alternate job duty assignment, the employee is subject to personnel action, up to and including termination of employment and loss of workers' compensation benefits.

Injured Employee Responsibilities

The injured employee is required to support and cooperate with the RTW Program. A complete list of employee responsibilities is enclosed.

Return to Work Program Employee Responsibilities

Before an Injury Occurs

- Employees are expected to be familiar with the safety procedures and Return to Work (RTW) Program information provided at the time of their initial orientation.
- Ongoing adherence to safety rules and procedures is required.
- Employees are required to immediately notify their supervisor of any unsafe conditions which are identified.

When an Injury Occurs

- Employee should seek immediate medical attention as appropriate.
- Once the medical situation is stable, the employee is required to immediately notify the supervisor of the injury and complete the employee accident report.
- Contact a Case Manager or your claim adjuster whenever assistance is needed in identifying a health care provider who accepts workers' compensation and is familiar with the District's RTW Program.

During Recovery, Alternate Duty Assignments & Return to Full Duty

- Employee is provided with a Return to Work Packet and is expected to review the information and adhere to the RTW Program requirements.
- Employee is required to attend all scheduled medical appointments.
- At each visit with your doctor, discuss your current medical and work status. Inform your doctor about the RTW Program and the availability of alternate duty assignments.
- Follow the treatment plan as recommended by your treating doctor. Any recommended physical restrictions should be followed both at home and at work. Request a copy of your Work Status Report (DWC-73) from your doctor. The Work Status Report should outline both your work status and any recommended physical restrictions.
- You are required to contact your supervisor and the Case Manager after each medical appointment to discuss your current medical and work status. Provide the Case Manager with any work status information documented by your doctor.
- You are expected to accept temporary alternate duty assignments that are within the current physical restrictions as identified by your doctor. The Case Manager will assist you in the entire return to work process.
- If you are unable to perform your regular job duties or miss one or more days of work due to the work injury, you may be required to report to the Administration Building and meet with the Workers' Comp specialist, & a representative of Health Services prior to returning to work. The Case Manager will assist you with this process including notifying you if a visit to the Administration building is required.
- Until you are working at your regular duty job, you are required to report to the Case Manager after each doctor appointment in order to review your work status and job duties to determine if your doctor has allowed an increase in your physical activity.

- If alternate duty is required, the claim adjuster will provide you with a job analysis of the alternate duty assignment. In addition, you will be provided with your work status report from the doctor and a bona fide offer of employment letter to confirm the details of your return to work. You are required to review the job analysis and offer letter. If in agreement that the duties are within your current physical limitations, sign the job analysis and offer letter to acknowledge your agreement and understanding.
- You are required to notify your supervisor and the Case Manager whenever you have a change of medical or work status.
- When working at an alternate duty assignment, you are required to notify the supervisor and the Case Manager if you experience problems or have any concerns about the alternate duty. You may also notify a representative of Health Services.

Required Communication

- You are required to contact your doctor, supervisor and the Case Manager if experiencing problems adhering to the recommended treatment plan or alternate duty assignment.
- You are required to contact your home department supervisor as needed but at a minimum of weekly until return to work at your regular duties.
- You are required to contact the Case Manager as needed but at a minimum of weekly until return to regular duty work.
- You are required to contact the supervisor and Case Manager after all doctor appointments and whenever there is a change of medical or work status.
- You are required to contact the Claim adjuster for all claims related issues.
- If you have missed one or more days from work or are unable to resume your regular job duties, you may be required to meet with the Workers' Comp specialist, & a representative of Health Services prior to returning to work.
- Once you have resumed your regular job duties, the Case Manager will send you a RTW Program Evaluation form and a self addressed, stamped envelope. You are required to complete the RTW Program Evaluation and return in the envelope provided within five days of returning to regular duty work.

Ft. Worth ISD Return to Work Program Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the Return to Work (RTW) Program?

Please see the complete RTW Program Guide for specific information. The RTW Program is designed to be a benefit to all District employees whenever an on the job injury occurs and the employee is unable to perform some or all of his or her regular duties. In most cases, the RTW Program allows an injured employee to return to work as soon as medically appropriate.

2. If I have an injury, how will the RTW Program benefit me?

Return to work is a natural part of the recovery and healing process and can hasten your recovery in many instances. The RTW Program allows you to return to work more quickly after an on the job injury. Early return to work has a positive impact on your lifestyle by allowing you to return to your usual routine and to remain a productive member of the District's work force.

3. Who is the Case Manager and what assistance can I expect?

The RTW Coordinator is a case manager who has expertise in work injuries, job modifications and return to work coordination. The Case Manager will assist with both medical and work coordination during your recovery and return to work. The Case Manager can also help you find a doctor who will accept workers' compensation cases and who is familiar with the District's program.

4. When should I contact the Case Manager?

After each appointment with your doctor, whenever your medical or job status changes or if you have any questions. Contact should be made at a minimum of once a week until you are fully recovered.

5. What if I don't know who has been assigned as my RTW coordinator?

Anytime you have any questions or are unsure who your Case Manager is, you can call the toll free number at 855-366-6789. You can also use this number to leave a message for your RTW coordinator.

6. Who is the claim adjuster and what assistance can I expect?

The claim adjuster handles the workers' compensation benefits, paperwork and filings with the Texas Workers' Compensation Commission. The adjuster can assist you with

any aspect regarding your workers' compensation benefits. You can expect a call from the adjuster initially after your injury and then periodically, as needed, for updates.

7. When should I contact the claim adjuster?

Whenever you have questions regarding your workers' compensation benefits

8. What if I don't know who has been assigned as my claim adjuster?

Anytime you have any questions or are unsure who your adjuster is, you can call the Tristar Risk Management Claim Department toll free number at 888-285-6708.

9. Is my doctor involved in the RTW Program?

Yes, your doctor is a very important member of the RTW team and should be involved during your medical recovery and return to work. Your doctor identifies any temporary physical limitations that you should be following both at home and at work. These limitations are used to temporarily modify your regular job or to identify an appropriate alternate duty assignment when needed.

10. What is temporary alternate duty and what can I expect?

When an injured employee is unable to perform some or all of his or her regular work duties, an attempt is made to identify temporary alternate duty that will meet the physical limitations as recommended by the doctor. The alternate duty assignment is intended to be temporary with increases in job duties as the employee progresses in his or her medical recovery. The Case Manager will work with you throughout the alternate and regular duty process.

11. Will the alternate duty be within my own department?

Alternate duty in your home department is not always possible. Every effort will be made to keep you working in your home department and campus. However, there will be times that the home department cannot meet the physical restrictions and the alternate duty assignment will be provided in another department and/or campus.

12. How long does the alternate duty last?

In most cases, no longer than three months from the date the alternate duty started, depending on your work duties. Most injured employees require alternate duty for only a few days or weeks.

13. What happens when the alternate duty opportunity expires?

If your doctor is still recommending that you not return to your regular duties, a referral will be made to the RTW Committee. The RTW Committee will evaluate your

current medical and work status, expected date of regular duty, attendance and cooperation with alternate duty and the business needs of the District. Depending on the results of this evaluation, a one time extension of the alternate duty for up to three months may be recommended. An extension of the alternate duty assignment may be recommended but is not required.

14. Do I have to accept alternate duty?

No, however, if you refuse to accept an alternate duty assignment that is within your physical abilities as defined by your doctor, you will be subject to personnel action, up to and including termination of employment and loss of your workers' compensation benefits.

15. Do I need to meet with anyone before I return to work?

Yes, you must meet with the Workers' Comp specialist, and a representative of Health Services prior to returning to work. During the initial return to work meeting, the adjuster will provide you with a job analysis of the alternate duty assignment and an offer letter for your review, approval and signature. The Workers' Comp specialist and Case Manager will assist you throughout the return to work process including these pre-return to work process.

16. Who do I contact if I am unable to tolerate the alternate job duty tasks?

Your supervisor, the Case Manager and your doctor

17. Who do I contact if the alternate duty is not following the physical limitations as defined by my doctor?

Discuss your concerns with your supervisor and also notify the Case Manager immediately for assistance

18. Who do I contact with questions regarding the RTW Program or alternate duty job?

Contact RTW coordination at 855-366-6789.

19. Once I am back at my regular duty job, do I have any other responsibilities?

Yes, you will receive a RTW Program Evaluation form from the Case Manager. You are required to complete the brief evaluation form and return the form in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. This evaluation will allow for your input and suggestions as to how the RTW Program can be improved in the future.

Section V

Return to Work

Program

Evaluation



Workers' Compensation Survey

Fort Worth ISD is interested in hearing more about your experience related to your workplace injury. The District has a number of programs in place to help you through the recovery process. We would like to hear more from you regarding your experience with these programs. Please complete the short survey below and return by mail, fax or email as indicated below.

Rating System

5- Excellent 4- Above Average 3 – Average 2 – Below Average 1 – Poor

Medical Care						Rating
M1	Overall, were you satisfied with the care and services provided by the physicians in the TOP program?	5	4	3	2	1
M2	Did you receive prompt appointments and referrals to other providers as needed?	5	4	3	2	1
M3	Did you receive adequate information about the Trinity Occupational Program (TOP) to help you understand your responsibilities under the program?	5	4	3	2	1
Case Management & Return to Work						
C1	How do you rate the case manager's assistance in arranging medical care and/or services?	5	4	3	2	1
C2	How do you rate the case manager's assistance in coordinating your return to work?	5	4	3	2	1
C3	How do you rate your supervisor's assistance in coordinating your return to work?	5	4	3	2	1
Claims Adjusting						
A1	How do you rate your adjuster's professionalism and thoroughness in helping you with your workers' compensation claim?	5	4	3	2	1
Overall						
G1	What is your overall rating of the Fort Worth ISD occupational Injury recovery program?	5	4	3	2	1

Tell us what you think about the program.

Rating System

5- Excellent 4- Above Average 3 – Average 2 – Below Average 1 – Poor

Medical Care		Rating				
M1	Overall, were you satisfied with the care and services provided by the physicians who provided care to you?	5	4	3	2	1
M2	Did you receive prompt appointments and referrals to other providers as needed?	5	4	3	2	1
Case Management and Return to Work						
C1	How do you rate the case manager's assistance in arranging medical care and/or services?	5	4	3	2	1
C2	How do you rate the case manager's assistance in coordinating your return to work?	5	4	3	2	1
C3	How do you rate your supervisor's assistance in coordinating your return to work?	5	4	3	2	1
Claims Adjusting						
A1	How do you rate your adjuster's professionalism and thoroughness in helping you with your workers' compensation claim?	5	4	3	2	1
Overall						
G1	What is your overall rating of the Fort Worth ISD occupational Injury recovery program?	5	4	3	2	1

Tell us what you think about the program.

S2

Rating System

5- Excellent 4- Above Average 3 – Average 2 – Below Average 1 – Poor

Medical Care		Rating				
M1	Overall, were you satisfied with the care and services provided by the physicians in the TOP program?	5	4	3	2	1
M2	Did you receive prompt appointments and referrals to other providers as needed?	5	4	3	2	1
M3	Did you receive adequate information about the Trinity Occupational Program (TOP) to help you understand your responsibilities under the program?	5	4	3	2	1
Claims Adjusting						
A1	How do you rate your adjuster’s professionalism and thoroughness in helping you with your workers’ compensation claim?	5	4	3	2	1
Overall						
G1	What is your overall rating of the Fort Worth ISD occupational Injury recovery program?	5	4	3	2	1

Tell us what you think about the program.

Rating System

5- Excellent 4- Above Average 3 – Average 2 – Below Average 1 – Poor

Medical Care		Rating				
M1	Overall, were you satisfied with the care and services provided by the physicians who provided care to you?	5	4	3	2	1
M2	Did you receive prompt appointments and referrals to other providers as needed?	5	4	3	2	1

Claims Adjusting		Rating				
A1	How do you rate your adjuster’s professionalism and thoroughness in helping you with your workers’ compensation claim?	5	4	3	2	1

Overall		Rating				
G1	What is your overall rating of the Fort Worth ISD occupational Injury recovery program?	5	4	3	2	1

We welcome your comments and suggestions.

S4

If you wish, add your name and number. This is information is optional.

Name:

Phone:

Mail or Fax completed forms to:

CareWorks MCS
Attention: TOP Survey Response
PO Box 81665
Austin, TX 78708
Fax: 800-580-3123

Section VI

Return to Work

Team Member

Phone & Fax

Numbers

Ft. Worth ISD Return to Work Program Contact Information

RTW Team Member

Phone and Contact Info

RTW Case Management

Ph: 855-366-6789

Email: CM@Careworks.com

Claim Adjuster

Ph: 888-285-6708

Email: Fortworth.isd@tristargroup.net

Fax: 214-492-5691

Health Services

Ph: 817-814-2990

Email: Emp.Health@fwisd.org

Fax: 817-814-2995

Human Capital Management

Ph: 817-814-2717

Fax: 817-814-2725

FWISD Risk Management

Ph: 817-814-2251

Fax: 817-814-2255

Section VII

Return to Work

Committee

Ft. Worth ISD RTW Committee Meeting Agenda

RTW Committee Meeting Date:

- Review of Alternate Duty Assignments for Extension – Name of Injured Worker
- Review of Recent Injuries - Review of injuries and locations from the past month
- Issues with the RTW Program or Alternate Duty Assignments – List items for discussion
- Suggestions for Improvement in the RTW Program - Discuss results of RTW Program, etc
- Other Agenda Items
- Next Committee Meeting Date - Schedule the date of the next monthly meeting)

Ft. Worth Independent School District Return to Work Committee Alternate Duty Extension Evaluation

Instructions: When a referral is made to the RTW Committee, the following is addressed by the Case Manager with appropriate input from other team members as needed. The referral is discussed with RTW Committee members addressing the Evaluation questions below. Once the Committee addresses a final determination is made and communicated to the Employee, Department Supervisor and Human Capital Management accordingly.

Employee Name:

Date of Injury:

Job Injury Diagnosis:

Occupation & Home Dept:

Alternate Duty Assignment Start Date:

Department:

Reason for Referral:

Date of Referral:

Evaluation

1. What is the current medical status and when does the doctor expect the employee to be able to resume their regular work duties?
2. Has the employee cooperated and participated in the alternate job duty assignment thus far?
3. Has the employee's attendance been appropriate during the alternate duty assignment?
4. Have the alternate job duties increased as the employee progresses in their recovery?
5. What impact is the employee having on the District's business needs by not working at regular duty?
6. Are there any extenuating circumstances impacting the employee's recovery that should be considered?

RTW Committee Determines

- To allow up to a three month extension of the alternate duty assignment
 - Determines an extension to the alternate duty assignment is not recommended
-