



## EMPLOYMENT POLICY MANUAL

<b>Subject:</b> Return to Work Program	<b>Approval Date:</b> June 17, 2013	<b>By-Law No.</b> 1785-13
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### 3.18 RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM

The Municipality of Red Lake is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for all our workers.

If a worker becomes injured on the job, the Municipality will communicate with the individual and work with them to arrange a return to meaningful, and productive, work based upon their abilities.

The Municipality will be fair in managing all injuries.

When time away from work is not required the Municipality will collaborate with the worker to enable them to continue to work during recovery.

If a worker is unable to perform the essential duties of their job the Municipality will assist in finding ways to modify the job to suit their current abilities, or coordinate other meaningful safe employment while the worker recovers.

If the worker is unable to return to pre-injury duties, the Municipality will continue to accommodate the worker in accordance with Human Rights legislation.

Employees, working with the Municipality, are required to actively participate in the development of their return to work program and to provide feedback to improve the program's future development.

### 1. RETURN TO WORK (RTW) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

#### 1.1 Employer responsibilities:

- Provide a safe work environment.
- Report work-related injuries/illnesses to the WSIB when they occur.
- Develop written return to work policies and procedures that are fair and applied to all workers covered by the program.
- Educate all workers covered by the program.
- Train all supervisors in return to work strategies.
- Train workers on incident reporting and incident investigation.
- Communicate with workers regularly during their time away from work, and monitor their progress when they return.
- Identify suitable work for the returning worker with guidance from the worker and health care providers.
- Modify the workplace as required to accommodate any worker that has been disabled due to injury.



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- Monitor the progress of workers in modified work programs and meet with them regularly to ensure they can achieve their return to work goal.

### 1.2 Worker responsibilities:

- Know and follow all safety policies and procedures.
- Report all injuries immediately and appropriately.
- If injury occurs, and medical aid is required, inform the treating health professional that a return to work program is available to accommodate for their physical abilities.
- Keep the treating health care professional informed about return to work options and injury symptoms.
- Communicate with the employer throughout the recovery period and co-operate with the employer in finding suitable employment for return to work.
- Inform the return to work coordinator or other workplace representatives about any concerns with treatment, benefits, work duties, changes in circumstance, etc.
- Comply with the recommendations of treating health professionals; attend all medical or rehabilitation appointments and attend any independent assessments as required.
- Take an active role in developing their return to work plan.
- Obtain the necessary documentation from the treating health professional as may be required by the employer (for example, Functional Abilities Form).
- Report any concerns with the return to work to the supervisor, or to the WSIB case manager, so the problems can be addressed promptly.
- Attend scheduled return to work progress meetings with the employer/supervisor.

### 1.3 Supervisor responsibilities

- Take appropriate action when an injury is reported.
- Participate in return to work planning.
- Identify appropriate work duties, transitional work options and temporary, or permanent, job accommodations for employees with disabilities.
- Know who to refer a worker with a disability to if the worker is having difficulties, before, during, or after they return to work.
- Monitor safe work practices of workers that are returning to work.
- Answer co-workers questions and concerns about workers with disabilities, job modifications, job restructuring, etc. being careful to maintain the confidentiality of the worker's situation.
- Notify the Human Resources Manager about potential candidates for the disability management or return to work program.



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- Promote safe work practices and support the effects of the company's health and safety program.

### 1.4 WSIB responsibilities:

- Provide education to workers and employees.
- Actively manage and monitor activities, progress, and co-operate with the workplace parties.
- Maintain communication with the employer, the worker and their treating health professional throughout the RTW process.
- Determine the suitability of employment and fitness to return to work.
- Encourage and actively assist the worker in their successful RTW.
- Determine compliance with re-employment and co-operation obligations.
- Provide RTW resources that the workplace parties may choose to access.
- Provide Labour Market Re-entry services.
- In cases where the workplace parties are having trouble achieving a successful RTW outcome:
  - Assist workplaces to problem solve workplace issues that present an obstacle to successful RTW.
  - Facilitate communication between workplace parties, health professionals, unions and other interested parties.
  - Obtain commitment from the worker and employer on the RTW plan and process.
  - Attempt to resolve disputes that are preventing a successful RTW outcome.

### 1.5 Treating health care responsibilities:

- Provide appropriate, effective health care that facilitates recovery and expedites return to productive work.
- Provide information on the worker's functional abilities when requested by the company, the worker, or WSIB.
- Complete functional assessment forms thoroughly, being alert to job demands that might cause re-injury or aggravation of an existing condition.
- Suggest ways in which tasks could be modified to place less strain on existing injuries or conditions.
- Establish and maintain open communication with the workplace, having regard for patient confidentiality.
- Provide timely information to the WSIB.



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### 2. DEVELOPING INDIVIDUAL RETURN TO WORK PLANS

- 2.1 The Municipality's return to work plan (attached as Schedule "A" will lay out the steps that need to be taken to return an injured employee to their original duties prior to the injury. Or if this cannot be accomplished, due to new constraints on the employee's abilities, new meaningful duties can be assigned provided all parties involved agree to the new terms.
- 2.2 The best return to work program is when the employee, their medical professional team, supervisor, union representative, the Workplace Safety Insurance Board (WSIB), and the employer work together to design a progressive agenda that will benefit both the needs of the employer, as well as promote the safe rehabilitation of the worker.
- 2.3 An effective program includes:
  1. The goal of the plan
    - These goals set out practical and achievable milestones for the worker to progress through until they succeed to the final goal: a return to pre-injury duties or modification of duties.
    - The goals will be developed prior to work restart by the return to work coordinator, the employee, their supervisor and union representation.
  2. The actions required to achieve the program goals
    - This area will detail the responsibilities of the worker, supervisor, or any other parties assisting the employee in obtaining the listed goals.
  3. Time frames for achieving the goals
    - Time frames will provide a guide to measure the worker's progress. Every plan will have a finite beginning and end; as the scope of a return to work plan is to bring the worker back to pre-injury duties, or to develop new duties if the former is not possible. Time frames will have clear definitions of what is considered progress (*i.e. by week five the worker will be able to perform duties for 5 hours a day etc.*).
  4. Health care needs
    - If the worker will be visiting health care professionals, or attending appointments, during working hours these must be included in the return to work plan. Any staff that will be affected by these appointments will be notified as required.



The Corporation of the Municipality of Red Lake

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All return to work programs will be developed by the appropriate parties upon notification of intent to return to work by the employee.

At all times the Municipality will concede to the recommendations provided by trained medical professionals, as well as members of the WSIB, in order to prevent further injury, or aggravation of existing injuries, to the worker.



**Appendix "A"**

**Municipality of Red Lake  
Safe Return to Work Plan**

Employee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Goal \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Limitations \_\_\_\_\_  
Week \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Limitations \_\_\_\_\_  
Week \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Limitations \_\_\_\_\_  
Week \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Manager's Signature



**Appendix "A"**

**Municipality of Red Lake  
Safe Return to Work Plan**

Employee \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Goal \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Limitations \_\_\_\_\_  
Week \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Limitations \_\_\_\_\_  
Week \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Limitations \_\_\_\_\_  
Week \_\_\_\_\_

Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Manager's Signature

Appendix "B"



Municipality of Red Lake
Safe Return to Work Plan – Progress Report

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date plan implemented \_\_\_\_\_
Department \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_
Objective \_\_\_\_\_

Week #

Date from \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_
Limitation \_\_\_\_\_
to worker \_\_\_\_\_

Objectives \_\_\_\_\_

Duties \_\_\_\_\_

Hours \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date of progress report \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Review of Week #

Observations \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's \_\_\_\_\_
comments \_\_\_\_\_
or concerns \_\_\_\_\_

Actions to \_\_\_\_\_
address \_\_\_\_\_
concerns \_\_\_\_\_

Employee's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Coordinator's Signature \_\_\_\_\_