

WCB-Alberta

Claims Audit Self-Evaluator

Roles and
Responsibilities



The Self-Evaluator helps employers:

- *understand your responsibilities when a work-related injury/illness occurs*
- *evaluate if you are meeting the dos and don'ts of legislated requirements*
- *evaluate how your management of an injured worker's return to work compares with best practices*

Completing the Self-Evaluator helps you:

- identify shortcomings in meeting legislated requirements
- identify gaps in managing return to work
- improve your overall injury management process

Did you know:

Early reporting results in faster entitlement decisions and benefit payments to your workers. This allows workers to focus on recovery and safe return to work.

Managing a successful return-to-work program helps you reduce claim costs and lower your WCB premiums.

Under the Workers' Compensation Act employers have a number of responsibilities when a work-related injury/illness occurs. These responsibilities include: recording, reporting and worker entitlement issues. Implementing return-to-work best practices minimizes the impact of a work-related injury/illness. **Use the checklist to determine if you are doing all you should be.**

Checklist

RECORDING

Do you:

- Keep a record of all work-related injuries/illnesses reported to you?
- Record the right details?
- Keep records confidential and for three years minimum?
- Give the injured worker a copy of the record?

You must keep a record of all work-related injuries/illnesses that are reported to you by your workers. The details you must record are:

- full name
- date and time of injury/illness
- date and time reported to you
- where it occurred
- cause and description of injury/illness
- description of first aid, if provided

In respect of worker privacy, employers must maintain confidentiality of records. Records may no longer be open to general viewing, such as being left in first aid kits or at first aid stations, unless access is limited.¹

Best practice – use individual record forms, have someone responsible to maintain the records for at least three years and control access to them.

¹Access to accident records is limited to the injured worker, those providing medical treatment, worksite inspectors, accident investigators, those evaluating health and safety programs and statistics, and WCB.

REPORTING

Do you:

- Submit a WCB Employer's Report of Injury on all reportable accidents within 72 hours of becoming aware of them?
- Notify WCB within 24 hours of an injured worker's return to work?
- Notify WCB of any change in an injured worker's circumstances that may affect his/her entitlement under the Act?
- Give the injured worker a copy of the report?

WORKER ENTITLEMENT

Do you:

- Pay injured workers their full wages for the date of accident and not deduct them from sick pay?
- Provide for and pay the cost of transportation to initial medical treatment?
- Tell injured workers to submit all medical aid expenses including prescriptions to WCB?
- Not make unauthorized deductions from your worker's wages to cover WCB liabilities?
- Not enter into agreement with injured workers to waive or forego WCB benefits or in any way discourage or impede workers from reporting an accident to WCB?
- In making modified work available, provide work that is necessary to your operations and keeps the injured worker active in the workplace?

Reportable accidents are those that result in:

- lost time or the need to temporarily or permanently modify work beyond the date of accident
- death or permanent disability (such as amputation, hearing loss, etc.)
- a disabling or potentially disabling disease or condition caused by occupational exposure or activity (such as poisoning, infection, respiratory disease, dermatitis, etc.)
- the need for medical treatment beyond first aid (such as assessment by physician, physiotherapy, chiropractic, etc.)
- the worker incurring medical aid expenses (such as dental treatment, eyeglass repair or replacement, prescription medications, etc.).

A change in circumstances that may affect entitlement includes:

- a change in a worker's ability to perform work resulting in time loss or the need to modify work duties
- a change in hours of work or rate of pay while on modified work
- unpaid time loss following return to work to attend medical treatments/appointments

You are required to pay injured workers the full wages they would have received for the date of accident had they not been injured and cannot deduct those wages from their sick pay or other entitlement.

Employers are responsible to provide and pay the cost of necessary transportation to initial medical treatment.

WCB is responsible for all medical aid for work-related injuries/illnesses. Medical aid includes dental, vision and prescription coverage that often is submitted through the employer's health benefit plan carrier.

Employers fund WCB through premiums based on their accident experience record. You cannot deduct from worker wages to cover the cost.

An employer cannot discourage or impede a worker from reporting an accident to WCB or enter into any agreement to waive or forego WCB benefits. Agreements include:

- *paying an injured worker for time loss resulting from a work-related accident instead of reporting it to WCB; or*
- *altering work schedules or taking vacation/sick time to cover time loss for a work-related injury/illness.*

If you provide modified work to expedite return to work it must be meaningful and productive work that is part of your operations and performed at the employer's premises or other suitable location for the work being performed.

Checklist *continued*

RETURN-TO-WORK BEST PRACTICES

Do you:

- Have someone assigned to coordinate return-to-work planning?
- Give injured workers an information package post-accident?
- Offer modified work to expedite return to work?
- Obtain medical clearance for return to work?
- Use a written modified work agreement and send a copy to WCB?
- Pay injured workers their pre-accident rate of pay while on modified work?

Return-to-work best practices are essential to an effective injury management process.

Having someone responsible to coordinate return-to-work planning with the injured worker, health care provider and WCB helps ensure workers are back on the job as soon as able.

An information package should include:

- *physical demands analysis of worker's regular duties to assist the health care provider in determining fitness for work*
- *a notice to the injured worker indicating what is expected including attending treatments, regularly advising the employer of fitness status and cooperating in return-to-work planning*
- *notice to the health care provider explaining the company's return-to-work program, available modified work, and willingness to pay a report fee for fitness-for-work information*
- *a fitness-for-work assessment form to be completed by the health care provider with authorization for release of information signed by the injured worker*

Offering modified work in keeping with the work restrictions set out by the treating health care provider enables injured workers to safely return to work at the earliest opportunity and reduces claim costs.

Obtaining medical clearance for return to modified or regular work helps ensure workers are physically able to perform the work and do not aggravate their injury.

Using a written modified work agreement ensures mutual understanding by all parties. It should stipulate the modified duties assigned, date commenced, hours of work, rate of pay, injured worker's acceptance/refusal, and who is responsible to monitor the injured worker's progress.

Paying injured workers their pre-accident rate of pay while on modified work keeps claim costs down and allows workers to focus on recovery and return to work.

Did you know...

You can report accidents electronically. Get more information on our website at www.wcb.ab.ca, under WCB for Employers, 'myWCB'.



Employer and worker accident report forms and other useful publications and forms are also available on our website.

Where to find a sample...

Injury record - http://employment.alberta.ca/documents/WHS/WHS-PUB_fa009.pdf

Notice to injured employee - <http://www.wcb.ab.ca/employers/forms.asp>

Fitness to for work form with notice to health care provider - <http://www.wcb.ab.ca/employers/forms.asp>

Offer of modified work agreement - <http://www.wcb.ab.ca/employers/forms.asp>

Physical demands analysis - <http://www.wcb.ab.ca/employers/forms.asp>

Any questions?

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