Occupational Injury Services (OIS)

OIS offers injured workers quick access to treatment and support for a safe and timely return to work. These clinics provide immediate access to a physician with experience in work-related injuries, same day reports, expedited diagnostic investigations and return-to-work plan development.

Working together

A critical part of your employees' recovery (and WCB's overarching goal) is to ensure your employee safely continues or returns to work; Your role is to actively support your worker during their recovery and return-to-work process.

In 2025, injured workers resumed safe employment 4.1 days sooner than their counterparts whose employers do not use OIS. Please consider signing up for this valuable service.

Services you can count on

Our goal is to ensure your employee has access to specialized and collaborative care (between the OIS physician, other health care providers and claim owner) to support their recovery and journey back to work.

Your employee(s) will get:

- Access to expedited medical treatment by a physician with a background in occupational medicine, same day submission of reports, diagnostic investigations and return-to-work support.
- Their best chance at a timely, safe and sustainable return to work. We follow the best evidence available and proven rehabilitation approaches (e.g., staying active for soft-tissue injures in the form of modified work).

Employee/employer benefits:

- Provides immediate access to specialized medical care and expert recommendations about evidence-based rehabilitation approaches.
- Offers a collaborative care experience between your employee, their claim owner and OIS physician.
- Ensures OIS physician participation in your employee's case conference with accurate details about your worksite and operations, to help design a sustainable return-to-work plan for your employee(s).
- Delivers same-day reporting to you and your employee that help determine detailed physical work capabilities, alternate work opportunities and return-to-work dates. This ensures the employee, employer, claim owner and physician have the same information.
- Skilled/productive employees are retained, eliminating the need to re-hire or train a replacement.

Employee return-to-work plan

After assessing your employee's injury, the OIS clinic coordinator will set up a case conference with you and your employee to create a return-to-work plan.

You will work together with your employee, their physician and their claim owner to implement all parts of the return-to-work plan.

You can support your employee in their recovery by providing time off work to attend appointments (e.g., physiotherapy sessions), supporting treatment approaches (e.g., stretches at work) and/or alternate work if applicable.

About modified work

Modified work is a type of temporary employment modification that allows your employee to safely recover while remaining connected to their work.

Employee expectations related to modified work:

- Accommodates their medical restrictions without endangering their recovery and safety or the safety of others.
- Keeps them active and involved in the workplace.
- Promotes a gradual return to their pre-accident level of employment.
- Offers them meaningful work opportunities that contribute to operational productivity.

Forms of modified work include:

- Reduced duties
- Reduced days or hours of work
- Changed position or department
- A permanent position with same or new employer

How to access the program

- Visit OIS clinics and doctors for more information on services and to find an OIS clinic.
- Complete the OIS form through the:
  - Online form
  - myWCB employer portal
  - myWCB employer mobile app (available to download from the App Store or Google Play)

If you still have questions, please contact us.

Additional resources:

Occupational Injury Service

OIS Resources

Frequently asked questions

Q: Will signing up for OIS cost me anything?

A: No. OIS fees are only charged to the claim when an employee visits a clinic for an injury.

Q: Will OIS participation affect my premiums?

A: If you participate in the experience rating plan for small employers, your rates will not be affected by claim costs. If you participate in the experience rating plan for large employers, the following costs will be included in your experience rating:

- Costs associated with no-time-loss claims if the costs exceed the annual threshold (currently $2,100 for 2026)
- Costs related to lost-time claims

For more information you can refer to the fact sheet on how claims affect your premiums.

The amount charged to the claim is higher than the regular physician's assessment fee. The fee includess fitness-for-work reporting, documentation from a physician about your employee's current physical abilities and a case conference with a physician and your employee to discuss return-to-work options. The current fee is listed on our website. It is expected that by using OIS services, expedited treatment will result in better outcomes and ultimately reduce the cost of claims.

Q: Who pays if the claim is denied?

A: WCB will cover the cost of the first OIS visit if the claim is denied.

Q: Is attendance at the OIS orientation mandatory?

A: Yes. OIS is a partnership approach and employers and employees receive the greatest benefit if they understand their role in the return-to-work process.

Q: Can I access multiple OIS providers?

A: Yes. You may use any of the OIS providers across Alberta. However, to ensure the provider has a good understanding of your worksite operations, you should contact each one to conduct a worksite visit.

Once your employee has visited a clinic for their assessment, they should stay with that clinic for the remainder of their care to avoid complicating the return-to-work plan.

Q: Are OIS clinics walk-ins or do I have to call ahead?

A: Please contact the OIS clinic to let them know that a worker is coming so the clinic can perform a triage assessment. For safety reasons, it is critical that the OIS clinic is only sent injuries that are within their scope of services.

Q: Will I wait long for an assessment?

A: No. The average wait time is no more than 30 minutes. In unusual circumstances, such as the arrival of an emergency case, the wait may be longer. However, even in these instances the wait time is shorter than in an emergency room.

Q: If my employee went to an emergency room first, can they still be in an OIS clinic?

A: An employee should visit an emergency room (ER) if the OIS clinic is closed, the injury is severe and requires ER treatment or the injury is beyond the scope of services provided by the OIS clinic. In these cases, the employee can still be seen in an OIS clinic if:

- The time period between an ER visit and OIS visit is less than 96 hours.

- The employee is not returning to the ER physician for follow-up.
- The employee has chosen to visit an OIS clinic.

Q: How long will it take before the worker can return to work?

A: The time until full recovery varies and depends on the type and severity of the injury. The OIS physician will give you and your employee an estimate at the time of the OIS assessment. After the initial assessment, the OIS physician completes a work readiness report outlining your employee's abilities. The physician will give you a copy of this report and discuss it with you and your employee at the return-to-work case conference.

Q: Do I have to participate in every case conference?

A: Yes. If you do not attend the case conference you will not get direct information about your employee's return-to-work plan and you will not have the opportunity to provide input.

Q: How do I address concerns about the service at an OIS clinic?

A: Please contact the clinic manager and voice your concerns. Give the provider a chance to respond and be open to working with them to address the issue. If you feel like the provider has not listened or responded to your concern, email HCS.OIS@wcb.ab.ca.