

Early Return-to-Work Procedures

In order to minimize serious disability due to on-the-job injuries and to reduce worker's compensation costs, Douglas County School District 15 has developed procedures to deal with time loss claims in which the worker can be offered light duty or modified work, temporarily.

Light duty jobs will be identified after obtaining and examining the injured worker's physical limitations or restrictions. "Light duty" might be the worker's regular job, modified by removing heavier tasks and reassigning these to other workers; a different regular job currently existing at the workplace; or a job that is specifically designed around the worker's restrictions.

A light duty job offer will be made only when the work is available and of benefit to the company. The light duty job, if offered, will end with the date the worker receives a regular release and may be ended at any time if there is no longer a need for the light duty work. Each case will be assessed individually based on need. Light duty and modified work may not be implemented in every time loss claim. Wage rate will not necessarily be the same as that of the regular job.

On-the-job injuries and occupational diseases will be handled by a team consisting of the injured worker, his/her supervisor, the superintendent or designee, a Board member, an insurance company representative(s) and the injured worker's physician. The team approach is the most effective method for achieving a return to productive work at the earliest opportunity. Responsibilities of the injured worker, the supervisor and the superintendent are as follows:

Employee's Responsibilities

1. Report all injuries to your supervisor **immediately**. If medical treatment is necessary and you have no preference for a physician, you should go to the nearest available facility.
2. Take "Notice to Physician" form with you to first medical visit. Tell the doctor the district may be able to place you in a temporary modified job if you cannot return to regular work. Return the form completed by the doctor to your supervisor or to the office within 24 hours of the medical visit.
3. You and your supervisor must complete forms as soon after the accident as possible. If medical treatment was required, you will complete both an incident report and an 801 form.
4. If you are not released for regular work but are released for light duty, discuss the possibilities with your supervisor and/or the superintendent. If an appropriate light duty job is developed, whether it is a modified version of your regular job or another light duty job, you must report for work at the time designated by the district.

5. If you are taken off work completely or if light duty is unavailable, you must report your medical condition and your progress to the superintendent or designee at least once a week. Report in person if possible. Also furnish the office with your current mailing address and telephone number.
6. If you return to a light duty job, you must make sure that you do not go beyond either the duties of the job or your physician's restrictions. If your restrictions change at any time, you must notify your supervisor at once and give your supervisor a copy of the new medical release.

Supervisor Responsibilities in the Event of an Injury

1. As soon as the supervisor is made aware of an injury, he/she coordinates first-aid efforts, if appropriate, then fills out a written incident report.
2. If medical treatment is required, the supervisor also completes form 801 through item 27 with the worker. The 801 is also completed if the injured worker insists on filing a claim, even if medical treatment is not required.
3. Supervisor accompanies worker to doctor if at all possible. If worker does not express a preference, worker will be taken to the nearest facility, unless he/she clearly needs emergency room services.
4. The "Notice to Physician" form is submitted to the doctor at the first medical visit and requires employee to return the form within 24 hours.
5. Supervisor notifies the office of the industrial injury the day it occurs and turns in a copy of the incident report (and 801 if medical treatment was sought).
6. Supervisor or superintendent follows up with the physician within 24 hours of the first exam. If supervisor obtains the information, he/she relays this to the superintendent or designee.
7. If worker is off work, supervisor contacts him/her at least once a week to learn the most recent developments in medical condition and work status and relays information as he/she receives it to the superintendent or designee.
8. When employee is ready to return to work, supervisor makes sure he/she has a release.
9. If worker is on light duty, supervisor makes sure he/she does not exceed restrictions.
10. Supervisor relays any change in restrictions to the superintendent or designee and discusses possible need for revising job duties.

Coordination by Superintendent

1. When injury occurs, the superintendent or designee determines if medical treatment was provided.
2. If no treatment was provided, the superintendent or designee requests incident report from supervisor.

3. If medical treatment was obtained, the superintendent or designee requests incident report and 801 and finishes 801. He/She sends 801 to insurance company as soon as possible.
4. The superintendent or designee follows up on the "Notice to Physician" form within 24 hours of the date the worker goes to the doctor.
5. If worker is released with restrictions which prohibit return to work at the regular job, the superintendent or designee discusses the possibility of light duty with the employee's supervisor as soon as possible.
6. If light duty is available, coordinate with SAIF Corporation's Risk Control Consultant and prepare job analysis.
7. When physician has signed the job analysis, prepare a formal job offer to worker. If worker cannot accept offer in person, send formal job offer by regular and certified mail.
8. The superintendent or designee monitors any light duty job by checking periodically with worker's supervisor.
9. If the employee cannot return to regular work and light duty is not available, make sure worker is reporting to office at least once a week.
10. The superintendent or designee should coordinate progress on the claim until worker is released for regular work. The superintendent or designee relays information to appropriate SAIF personnel.
11. If restrictions change, the superintendent or designee and the employee's supervisor discuss need to change light duty job. If change is made, contact SAIF Risk Control Consultant to assist with preparation of a new job analysis and repeat step 7.