

# INTRODUCTION

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Every 15 minutes someone is injured on the job in Nova Scotia.

More than 30,000 Nova Scotians get hurt on the job each year. More than 8,000 of those people are hurt seriously enough that they are unable to return to work the next day. And once they're injured, it takes longer for them to go back to work than in most other provinces.

There's no doubt about it. Workplace injuries happen far too often in this province. The good news is that we can turn it around, and change the safety culture in Nova Scotia – with your help.

At the Workers' Compensation Board of Nova Scotia (WCB), we deal with employers of all kinds. Most of them tell us that two things matter most to their business – the safety of their workers, and their company's bottom line. What they sometimes don't realize is that these two things are closely related.

The human toll of workplace injuries is devastating. When a worker is hurt on the job, it can turn their world upside down. Their life and the lives of their family members can be completely disrupted.

A workplace injury can also disrupt the productivity of your company. Skilled workers are difficult to replace, and losing someone to an injury can be incredibly costly. With a plan in place to keep your workers safe on the job, and to help them return to work in a safe and timely manner following an injury, you can save your employees a lot of pain and suffering, and save yourself a lot of time and money.

# WHAT IS A RETURN-TO-WORK PROGRAM?

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A Return-to-Work program is simply a plan to help injured workers return to productive employment as soon as it's safe to do so. In fact, getting workers back on the job is an important part of their recovery process. The longer an injured worker stays off the job, the more complex the situation becomes and the less likely they are to recover and return to work at all. Work is the single biggest contributing factor to injury recovery. It gives people a sense of self worth and provides income they rely on to support their families.

While injury prevention is the best way to keep workers safe and reduce overall costs, putting an effective Return-to-Work program in place is the best way to manage the impact of an injury. The WCB is entirely funded through employer premiums, so reducing injuries and controlling costs when an injury occurs is the most effective way to reduce your premiums.

The key to a successful Return-to-Work program is a strong partnership between employers, workers, health care providers, unions, Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committees and the WCB. This, coupled with a shared commitment to return injured workers to safe and suitable employment, will ensure your program's success.

# GET STARTED TODAY

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Creating a Return-to-Work program doesn't need to be complicated, but it does take commitment from you and your workers to do things right. By taking the steps outlined in this resource manual, you can ensure that injured workers safely return to their jobs.

Use this manual to build or improve your Return-to-Work program by understanding the claims management process, important return-to-work elements, where to turn with claim concerns, transitioning a worker back to work and preventing future injuries.

Don't forget to document your Return-to-Work program so everyone understands what to do if an injury occurs. Your plan should run like clockwork, and remember – it can be customized to fit the size and complexity of your organization.

If you have questions or would like to discuss your Return-to-Work program please contact the WCB at 1-800-870-3331. We can provide advice, support and guidance throughout the establishment, development and maintenance of your program, as well as during future enhancements.

## A RETURN-TO-WORK PROGRAM BENEFITS YOU AND YOUR WORKERS

### What it means for you:

- Allows a skilled and experienced worker to continue as a valuable resource to your company
- Keeps loss of productivity to a minimum
- Reduces the costs of finding and retaining new workers
- Ensures communication between you and the injured worker, which is a key factor in recovery
- Reduces the risk of further, similar injuries once the hazards that caused the injury are identified and controlled
- Maintains the morale of your workforce
- Reduces your claims cost which can reduce your workers' compensation premiums

### What it means for your workers:

- Reduces or eliminates lost-earnings
- Helps the worker stay active, which speeds up recovery
- Minimizes impact on the worker's family
- Shifts the focus from what a worker 'can't do' to what they 'can do'
- Maintains their sense of confidence and value
- Allows the worker to stay in contact with co-workers and the workplace
- Keeps them involved in employee benefits programs

## MYACCOUNT – ONLINE SUPPORT FOR YOUR RETURN-TO-WORK PROGRAM



Knowing about injury claims, trends and costs will help you manage and improve your Return-to-Work program.

All this information is now available at your fingertips, 24/7, through the WCB's online tool, MyAccount.

### YOU CAN USE MYACCOUNT TO...

- View and calculate the costs of incidents and compare your experience to your industry.
- Monitor claims and their costs in real time.
- Submit forms electronically including Accident Reports. This will result in faster claims processing.
- View Statement of Account and reported payroll.
- View Occupational Health and Safety information such as inspection reports and compliance orders.
- View all newly registered claims and specific information such as case worker and direct phone numbers.
- Identify claims with outstanding Accident Reports and avoid potential late reporting penalties.
- Monitor appeals.

Many companies are already realizing the benefits of having access to all their important WCB information in one location, when they want it. If you're not yet connected, make it a priority to register for this convenient service.

## **REGISTERING IS QUICK AND EASY.**

Visit <http://my-account.ns.ca> to sign up.

For more information about MyAccount and how it can benefit you, call toll-free 1-877-211-9267.

## **NO INTERNET ACCESS? NOT TO WORRY.**

Even if you can't go online, you can still stay up-to-date with past and present claim information and associated costs. Here's how:

- Maintain regular contact with your WCB case worker.
- Call (toll free) 1-877-211-9267 and request a monthly advice notice. The notice identifies the injury claims and claim costs that are affecting your WCB premiums.
- Review the financial and experience rating statements that are mailed to your WCB financial contact.

# **RETURN-TO-WORK RESOURCE MANUAL: AT A GLANCE**

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## INTRODUCTION

### PART 1: THE BUSINESS CASE

### PART 2: THE CLAIMS PROCESS

### PART 3: BUILDING YOUR PROGRAM

### PART 4: MANAGING YOUR PROGRAM

### PART 5: CLAIM CONCERNS

### PART 6: YOUR RETURN-TO-WORK TEAM

### PART 7: SAMPLES AND FORMS