

WCB Nova Scotia
Employer Webinar
April 24, 2025

Accommodation Tips and Best Practices

**WORK SAFE.
FOR LIFE.**

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF NOVA SCOTIA

WORKING
TO WELL

**We all want the
same thing.**

**Nova Scotians
Working.**





PURPOSE

Today's Webinar

Provide information and resources on what employers can do to improve their return-to-work strategy.

- Accommodation tips and best practices
- Resources to support you
- Next steps



GOAL OF DUTY TO COOPERATE: HEALTHY AND SAFE WORKERS

Supporting a worker's timely and safe return to work is good for workers:

- Helps recovery
- Workers won't lose as much—or any—of their earnings
- Helps workers stay active
- Helps minimize the impact on worker's family
- Allows workers to focus on what they can do, not what they can't
- It helps with the worker's social, mental, and physical health and wellbeing
- Helps workers stay connected with co-workers in the workplace
- Keeps workers involved in their employee benefits programs
- Contributes to a worker's confidence and sense of value
- Provides a sense of normalcy

KEY DEFINITIONS

Return to Work

The act of re-introducing (or maintaining) injured workers to safe, timely and meaningful work that eliminates or minimizes wage loss, as soon as it is safe to do so.

Timely and Safe Return to Work

TSRTW starts as soon as a worker is injured and continues throughout the worker's recovery period.

Accommodation

The use of modified work or adaptive technologies to enable a worker to return to work following a work-related injury.

Meaningful work

This is real work that the employer needs done.

ACCOMMODATION: YOU CAN DO THIS!

Whether the workplace injury is physical or psychological in nature, employers can begin to work with their injured employee and create a return-to-work plan, before WCB is involved.



ACCOMMODATION: WHERE TO BEGIN

- Start with a conversation to identify the worker's readiness for the demands of the work setting.
- Keep the worker connected to work and co-workers (proximity).
- Promote a strengths-based, individualized approach to RTW.



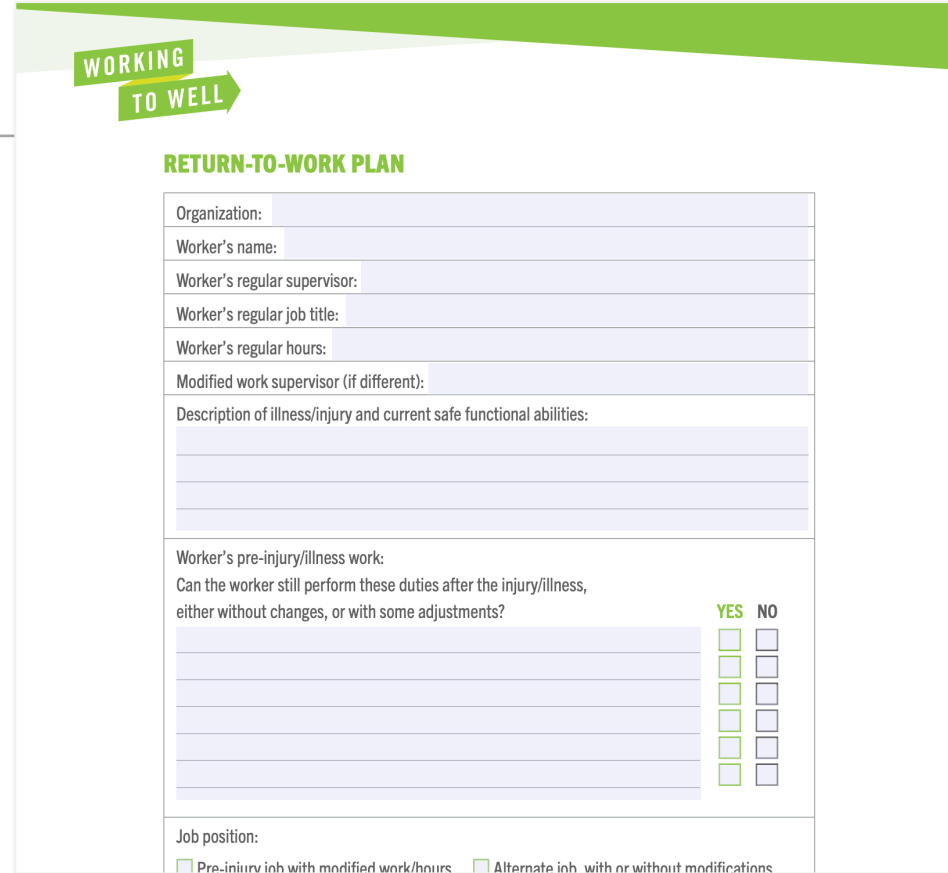
Timely engagement matters!

- 55% chance of full return to work after 6 months
- 32% chance of full return to work after 1 year
- <5% chance of return to work after 2 years

THE “HOW”: RETURN TO WORK PLANNING

Personalized RTW Plan

- Identify the injured worker’s return to work team.
- Align functional abilities with job demands.
- Keep worker actively engaged in each discussion to maintain ownership on how the plan is progressing.



The form is titled "RETURN-TO-WORK PLAN" and features a green header with the text "WORKING TO WELL" in a stylized font. It contains several sections for data entry:

- Organization:** A text input field.
- Worker's name:** A text input field.
- Worker's regular supervisor:** A text input field.
- Worker's regular job title:** A text input field.
- Worker's regular hours:** A text input field.
- Modified work supervisor (if different):** A text input field.
- Description of illness/injury and current safe functional abilities:** A large text area with multiple lines.
- Worker's pre-injury/illness work:** A section with a table for tracking duties. The table has two columns: "YES" and "NO". The "YES" column has a green checkmark icon, and the "NO" column has a grey square icon. There are five rows for listing duties.
- Job position:** A section with two checkboxes: "Pre-injury job with modified work/hours" and "Alternate job with or without modifications".



THE “HOW”: RETURN TO WORK PLANNING



Risk Aware Vs. Risk Averse

- **Risk Averse Approach:** Waiting until the worker can do the full duties.
- **Risk Aware Approach:** Considers opportunities which would support the worker to remain at work, based on the area of injury.

“What if they re-injure during their RTW?”

“What risk factors should we consider while supporting this worker through their RTW plan?”

TRANSITIONAL DUTY HIERARCHY

Pre-injury job

Doing parts of existing job that can be done safely by working with employer to provide supports, changes, or tools to help.

If NO,

Alternate Work

A whole new set of tasks, maybe even in a different department.

If NO,

Transitional Duties

A “bundle of duties” the employer can offer during recovery.

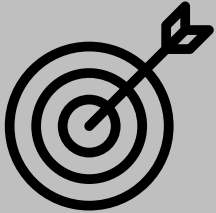
If NO,

Connect to Workplace

Determine a way to keep the worker engaged with managers and colleagues while the worker recovers.



JOB FUNCTIONS VS JOB TASKS



Job Function

Determining the desired outcome or target result of completing a task.

E.g., Roofing company is hired to shingle a roof.



Job task

The method used to accomplish the required outcome.

E.g., Employee manually carries 40 bundles of shingles from a truck onto a customer's roof to begin shingling.

TRANSITIONAL DUTIES

Restriction

Clear and specific things to avoid during recovery because there is a *specific* risk of harm or safety concern. Including but not limited to: specific tasks, exposures, body motions, and/or positional tolerances

E.g., “Do not drive”.



Limitation

The extent to which a worker may perform an activity safely but does not prevent an injured worker from performing that activity.

E.g., lift up to 10 lbs.



SAMPLE ACCOMMODATIONS FOR GPI

Limitation / Restriction	Accommodation / Work Modification
Multi-tasking / handling time pressures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular meetings with supervisor.• Modify process to allow employee to focus on one task at a time .• Remove or reduce distractions.
Cooperation with others	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide expectations for respect to all employees.• Develop processes to effectively deal with conflict.• Provide tasks with limited teamwork.
Tolerance to confrontation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide training including simulations.• Provide more support in situations where conflict is likely to arise.• Alternate duties to minimize the risk of confrontation.
Deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be flexible with hours of work and deadlines.• Establish regular check ins with supervisor.• Avoid tight timelines.



ACCOMMODATION: ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS



Client Care Navigators - GPI Only

Provide help before claim acceptance.



Return to Work Specialists

Supports and guides a return-to-work plan.



Occupational Therapists

Works with worker to enable recovery and return to work.

WORKING

TO WELL

ACCOMMODATION: ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS



<https://www.wcb.ns.ca/Working-to-Well1>

For physical or psychological injuries:

- Employer's Guide for Managing Workplace Injuries
- Return to Work: Toolkit – Guide for healthy Recovery from Psychological workplace injury
- Understanding Transitional Work for Workers
- Return-to-work Planning for Employers

For psychological injuries:

- Job Demands and Accommodation Planning Tool (JDAPT): <https://aced.iwh.on.ca/jdapt>

COMMUNICATION IS KEY

Authoritative vs Supportive communication



Get involved.

MARCH

- Webinar (Mar 6) – “Draft Policy & Consultation Schedule”

• **Policy Consultation** (Mar 27 6-7pm)

APRIL

• **Policy Consultation** (Apr 3 from 3-4pm)

- Webinar (Apr 24) – “Accommodations Tips & Best Practices”

MAY

- Webinar (May 29) – “Duty to Cooperate In-Depth Preview”

JUNE

- Webinar (Jun 26) “Final Policy and Preparing for July”

Duty to Cooperate starts July 15, 2025

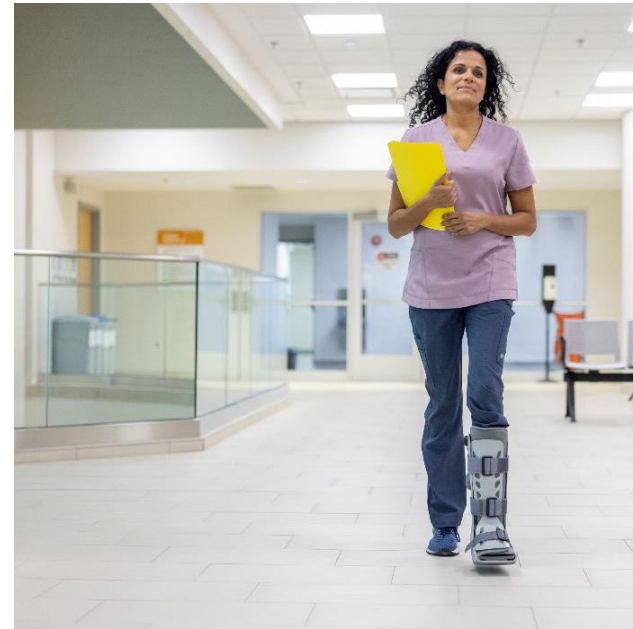


We will be accepting feedback on the draft policies until **April 28th**

What Can You Do?

- Get involved
- Get ready
- Get creative

Start protecting more now.

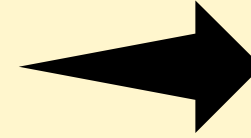


We want to hear from you!

Any questions submitted
will inform upcoming policy
consultations

Closes April 28.

Scan this code with your
phone or tablet camera
to be taken to the
survey



Or visit this link online to access the
survey:

[https://pierdavis.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1
AeWdzvIZamzI6a?Q_CHL=qr](https://pierdavis.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_1AeWdzvIZamzI6a?Q_CHL=qr)

Thank You!

**WORK SAFE.
FOR LIFE.**

WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF NOVA SCOTIA

**WORKING
TO WELL**