



RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM (RTW)

TOOLS FOR MANAGERS

Create an *Idea Bank* of Transitional Duty Alternate Jobs for a Return-to-Work Program

An important part of a return-to-work program is to identify possible alternate jobs, which are medically authorized, for an injured worker to perform. It may be referred to as: Modified duty, Alternate Duty, Limited Duty, Restricted duty, or Transitional work. These terms are used synonymously and refer to duty that is intended to be time-limited, temporary, productive and meaningful. The most common scenario this applies to is for temporary, light duty job restrictions. For permanent restrictions, please contact your claims adjuster for additional information.

Type of Injuries

Injured workers with the following types of temporary injuries could possibly perform various types of alternate jobs. Note: First you must have the treating physician medically authorize/document and release the injured worker for alternate or light duty.

- **Soft tissue back injury** - able to walk, sit or stand and use their arms and hands.
- **Ankle/foot/leg injury** - cannot stand or walk but by using a wheelchair, some transitional duty could be performed. Or, a task that could be done at a seated workstation for persons who can walk, but just can't stand for long periods of time.
- **Shoulder/arm/or hand injury** -jobs that require using only one hand could possibly be performed.

Ideas for building your own "Alternate Duty Job Bank"

1. Answering the telephone
2. Filing paperwork
3. Taking inventory (but not physically moving inventory stock)
4. Tool room/storage checkout
5. Placing purchase orders by phone, fax, e-mail etc.
6. Shredding documents
7. Customer appreciation phone calls, telephone sales calls, dispatch assistant
8. Greeter/receptionist/front desk assistant
9. Computer data entry work or document imaging
10. Collating printed materials
11. Packaging/light assembly of product or merchandise
12. Outgoing mail stuffing, applying postage

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13. Incoming mail opening, mail bin distribution

14. Making photocopies

15. Light stocking of supplies for bathrooms/kitchen areas

16. Help with safety inspections, jobsite safety monitor, ensure employees are wearing the appropriate equipment

17. Teacher/instructor (Many times you may have experienced employees who are injured who may be able to return to work teaching younger or less experienced employees.)

18. Light food preparation that can be performed sitting down

19. Light surface cleaning, counters, phones, computers

20. Donation of time to local charities, such as Good Will or National Harvest (check with your CPA for the tax deductibility of time donated to a non-profit)

21. Pick up paper trash along roadway or sponsored highway

22. Afix magnet on a stick to use for picking up metal debris in parking lot or construction yard

23. Be an ambassador to local vocational schools to give talks about your industry, your company, your job

What other tasks/jobs can you think of in your workplace?

- Be creative with identifying alternate job tasks.
- Schedule a meeting of supervisors and employees to suggest alternate duty jobs.
- Encourage everyone to come up with as many suggestions as possible, even if initially they may think the ideas are unrealistic.

The way to come up with a couple good ideas is to have **a lot of possible ideas**. Be creative and look at what meaningful work/job tasks need to be done in your workplace. Create “**Job Bank Sheets**” on which you list the physical activities for each task, as this will assist the physician in understanding the work. Keep these sheets readily available so when a light duty assignment is needed, you’ll already have a number of opportunities available and they treating physician will be able to review how those options would fit the restrictions or other medical concerns the doctor may have.