

# DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE OF RISK MANAGEMENT



An Employer's  
Return To Work Guide

# Introduction

The District of Columbia Office of Risk Management (DCORM) oversees the Public Sector Workers' Compensation Program which is administered by its third party administrator (TPA), Sedgwick CMS.



# What is 'Return to Work?'

Return to work simply means helping your employee get back to work as soon as possible after a job-related injury or illness. For example, he or she could work shorter hours, do different work temporarily or perform “modified duty” until fully recovered.

# What Are The Benefits Of Return To Work?

- Encourages communication between you and the injured employee – a key factor in his or her recovery.
- Allows a skilled and experienced employee to continue working and also increases the odds of full recovery.
- Keeps loss of productivity to a minimum.

- Reduces the cost of training new employees.
- Creates an opportunity to complete work usually left undone.

# How Do Employees Benefit?

- Keeps the employee active and speeds medical recovery.



- Shifts focus from “disability” to ability.
- May reduce the risk of re-injury.
- Provides a sense of job security.

- Allows the employee to maintain contact with co-workers.
- Shows that you value your employee and his/her contributions to your agency.

# How Much Documentation Do You Need?

In most cases, you should document your attempts to return your employee to work. Documentation is useful if the injured employee is not cooperating with your efforts to return him or her to work. If these situations occur, you may choose to do one or more of the following:



- Ask the Return to Work Officer to specify work restrictions in writing.
- Provide a written description of work duties to the Return to Work Officer.
- Send a letter to your employee specifying the job title, supervisor, hours, location and start date for the return to work.

# After Your Employee Returns To Work

- Regularly check with the employee to see how his/her work and recovery are progressing.
- Make certain any restrictions on work tasks are being met.

- Continue contact with the Return to Work Officer, obtain his/her approval for changes in duties.
- Notify the Return to Work Officer if you are not able to accommodate ongoing or permanent restrictions.

# DC Office of Risk Management



Phillip A. Lattimore, III  
Chief Risk Officer

441 4<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 800S

Washington, DC 20001

202-727-8600

<http://orm.dc.gov>