

## INTRODUCTION

This program is designed to support injured employees in their recovery from any injury or illness and to assist them to return to full employment. The employer recognises the workplace is an appropriate and effective place to rehabilitate injured employees. The employer will assist all injured employees to safely remain at work or safely return to work at the earliest opportunity. This agreed program has been developed in accordance with clause x of the NUW Enterprise Agreement.

## RETURN TO WORK

The employer will:

1. Encourage the early reporting of any symptoms of an injury or disease related to work.
2. Ensure a health and safety investigation of all incidents, injuries, illnesses is conducted with the Health and Safety Representative and immediately develop a control plan to prevent further injuries.
3. Ensure that occupational rehabilitation is the course of action following injury.
4. Assist in an early and sustainable return to meaningful and productive work following illness and injury.
5. Ensure that treatment, return to work activities and any necessary occupational rehabilitation services and support will commence as soon as possible after illness or injury.
6. Establish a Return to Work Group who will prepare a return to work plans at the earliest opportunity. The Return to Work Group will include the Return to Work Coordinator, injured employee, their Health and Safety Representative and union Delegate and nominated management representative(s). The Return to Work Group will make any recommendations regarding alterations to work areas/ergonomic adjustments etc to accommodate employee needs.
7. Ensure that all Return to Work Plans will be:
  - Developed on the advice of the employee's treating practitioner and/or rehabilitation provider
  - Developed with regard to the health and safety of co-workers
  - In writing
  - Regularly monitored and reviewed by the Return to Work Group

8. Ensure the injured employee has the right to:
  - Choose their own treating practitioner
  - Be consulted on any rehabilitation programs and new plan
  - Choose a rehabilitation provider from the agreed list, and
  - Be represented by the Health and Safety Representative and/or union Delegate
  
9. Ensure that early return to work by an injured person is an integral part of the rehabilitation process. Options for a return to work shall be in accordance with the following preferred order:
  - Original duties and work area/shift
  - Modified duties/hours/and/or work area
  - Alternative duties with appropriate training
  - Retraining or further training and/or education
  
10. Ensure the rehabilitation process will continue until the agreed goal has been achieved. The case closure shall be agreed and documented by the Return to Work Group.
  
11. Integrate the injured or ill person successfully back into the workforce.
  
12. Ensure that participation in a rehabilitation program or the rehabilitation program itself will not prejudice an injured person.
  
13. Ensure the confidentiality of injured employees' medical information.
  
14. Not terminate the employment of an injured employee by reason of their injury, or for reasons that include their injury.
  
15. Provide training and resources to the Return to Work Coordinator to enable them to perform their role.
  
16. Provide training for Health and Safety Representatives, union Delegates and Supervisory staff (including leading hands/team leaders) on their roles and responsibilities.
  
17. Provide education to the whole workforce on this program to ensure everyone is aware of it and able to understand their role in providing support to injured employees.
  
18. Ensure information about this program is included in any induction for new employees.

This rehabilitation program will be effective as from **date:** .....

Our nominated approved **Occupational Rehabilitation Providers** are: .....

Our **Return to Work Coordinator/s** is/are: .....

Following any workplace injury our Return to Work Coordinator will:

- Contact the relevant health and safety representative to discuss any health and safety issues related to any return to work
- Contact the injured worker and their treating practitioner to implement the commitments outlined in the Return to Work program
- Determine the need for any occupational rehabilitation assistance in consultation with the injured worker and their treating practitioner and their relevant health and safety representative
- When appropriate refer to one of the nominated approved Occupational Rehabilitation Providers

## **Consultation**

This program was developed in consultation with Health and Safety Representatives, union Delegates and employees. This program was endorsed by a meeting of all employees.