**Insert business logo/letterhead here**

**Recovery/return to work procedure (draft)**

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## Background

***Insert Business Name*** is committed to supporting “remaining at” or “return to work” outcomes. Our focus is on early intervention to support our employees to recover from injury and realise the health benefits of returning to work.

## Purpose

This procedure describes the processes for supporting and managing a sustainable recovery and return to work at ***Insert Business Name***.

## Scope and Application

This procedure applies to ***Insert Business Name*** employees for work related or non-work related injury.

## Definitions

**Claims Agent:** ***Insert Name of Claims Agent*** is ***Insert Business Name*** claims agent. ***Claims Agent*** is responsible for determining and managing claims in accordance with the requirements of the Return to Work Act 2014.

**Employees:** are staff that are employed by ***insert Business Name****.* Employees are defined in the Work Health & Safety Act (SA) 2012 as workers and include contractors, sub-contractors and their employees, labour hire and volunteers. For the purpose of this procedure, employees will be identified as workers.

**Incident**: is any unplanned event resulting in, or having a potential for injury, ill-health, damage or other loss.

**Injury Pack:** provided by Return to Work Coordinator to an injured worker with all relevant documentation and information required. Pack may include documents such as Medical Authority, workers information on rights and responsibilities, expense reimbursement forms, employer contact lists and any other information that is relevant to business processes.

**Work Capacity Certificate (WCC):** is a certificate used by a treating medical practitioner to certify the worker’s capacity for work and any applicable restrictions.

**Return to Work Coordinator**: is the person appointed and named by the business to perform these functions:

* Provide support for an injured worker to remain at / return to work as soon as medically safe to do so
* Assist the claims manager with preparation and implementation of recovery/return to work plan
* Liaise with any person(s) involved in the medical treatment and services
* Monitor the progress of the injured worker’s capacity to return to work
* Take steps to prevent the occurrence of re-injury when a worker returns to work

## Procedure

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Step | Responsibility | Information |
| 1. | Reporting injuries that occur at work | Worker  Line Manager/Supervisor  RTWC | Any injury that occurs at work must be reported as soon as practicable to the worker’s Line Manager (within 24 Hours).  The Line Manager/Supervisor will then immediately advise the Return to Work Coordinator (RTWC) of the injury.  If the worker’s Line Manager/Supervisor is unavailable, the worker must advise the RTWC directly on ***insert contact number***  An incident report outlining how the injury occurred should be completed as soon as practicable.  The RTWC will provide worker with an Injury pack if applicable. |
| 2. | Reporting an injury to Claims Agent | Worker  Line Manager/Supervisor  RTWC | Claims Agent should be contacted once worker has reported the injury to their Line Manager/ Supervisor and/or RTWC and expressed their desire to lodge an injury claim.  The worker to lodge claim via the telephone reporting system by calling ***insert Claims Agent name and telephone number***  RTWC will advise and support the worker with the lodgement of a claim by providing the relevant information that the Claims Agent will require to triage and document worker’s claim. |
| 3. | Reporting injuries that occur outside of work | Worker  Line Manager/Supervisor  RTWC | Workers are to notify their Line Manager/Supervisor of any non-work related injury/illness prior to their return to workplace as soon as practicable.  The Line Manager/Supervisor will notify the RTWC who will assess any needs and ensure ***insert name of business*** is able to fulfil its duty of care.  Medical clearance to certify worker is fit to undertake the task/role may be required prior to the worker returning to work. The Line Manager/Supervisor will advise the worker of the information that is required in this event. |
| 4. | Medical Treatment | Worker  Line Manager/Supervisor  First Aid Officer  RTWC | First aid will be provided onsite by the recognized First Aid Officer ***insert details if applicable***. In the absence of First Aid Officer the Line Manager/Supervisor will provide appropriate first aid.  If immediate offsite treatment is needed the RTWC ***(or nominated person)*** will accompany the worker to the medical clinic / hospital. At the appointment, support, return to work and suitable duties may be discussed with the doctor if appropriate.  Worker is responsible for ensuring treating doctor completes and provides a Work Capacity Certificate to be given to employer.  If worker is admitted to hospital, SafeWork SA must be informed. |
| 5. | Early Intervention Practices | Worker  Line Manager/Supervisor  RTWC | Where appropriate early intervention practices may be initiated by the RTWC as soon as symptoms are reported by an employee or a Line Manager/Supervisor.  Early intervention practices may include:  Injury management plans outlining responsibilities of all parties (Recovery, Return to Work Plans)  Contact schedules highlighting where worker is able to access further supports if needed  Workstation realignments and adjustments/improvements  Temporary adjustment of working hours  Ergonomic assessments conducted by appropriate medical professionals  Ergonomic hardware such as chairs, sit stand desks, foot rests and lumbar support.  All early intervention practices will be recorded in the Injury Management/RRTWP plan. |
| 6. | Suitable Duties & Implementing return to work | Line Manager/Supervisor  RTWC  Claims Agent | The RTWC may liaise with treating medical team to clarify the worker’s capacity in the event that this is unclear.  The RTWC and Line Manager/Supervisor will meet with worker to identify and agree upon suitable roles and duties.  The RTWC will document the suitable duties and prepare a recovery & return to work plan. The plan will be finalised in consultation with the Claims Agent, Worker and Line Manager/Supervisor.  The RTWC will distribute the completed plan to the worker and Line Manager/Supervisor. A copy of the plan will be recorded on the worker’s personnel file.  If specialist expertise is required, and not available in the workplace, the RTWC will communicate with the Claims Agent around referral/s for return to work services. The Claims Agent will process any referral/s required for return to work services.  The RTWC will ensure information provided to worker relating to their return to work arrangements is clear and timely. The RTWC will ensure that the worker receives any necessary training (including work health and safety considerations) prior to undertaking any modified or alternative duties.  The RTWC will engage interpreting and translating services if required. |
| 7. | Monitor Progress | RTWC | The RTWC will review progress:  When an updated WCC is received  At significant milestones  When the worker provides new information  This will be achieved through:  Visiting the worker and Line Manager/Supervisor  Convening or attending case conferences  Staying in touch with treating providers where appropriate  The worker’s duties and/or hours of work will be adjusted in response to changes in the extent of their capacity for work and any new information available.  Workers are to keep their Line Manager/ Supervisor informed of any changes throughout the claim and work in accordance with their Recovery / Return to Work Plan |
| 8. | Return to Pre-injury duties | RTWC | The RTWC will advise the Claims Agent when a worker who has been in receipt of income support:  Has made a return to pre-injury duties  Has experienced a change in earnings  Has experienced a change in the type of work being performed  The RTWC will close the recovery / return to work file when a worker has made a return to pre-injury duties. |
| 9. | Unable to Return to Pre-injury duties | RTWC | ***Insert business name*** will monitor and review progress via the recovery/return to work plan. If it is evident that the worker is unable to return to pre-injury duties in the future the RTWC will request that the Claims Agent facilitate a determination on whether or not it is reasonably practicable for ***insert business name*** to provide suitable employment.  ***Insert business name*** may request additional information in order to assist the process of identifying suitable employment such as functional capacity evaluation, worksite assessment and / or vocational assessment.  The needs for any such services will be discussed with the worker by the RTWC and Claims Agent. |
| 10 | Unable to identify suitable employment | RTWC  Worker | If ***insert business name*** is unable to provide suitable employment for the worker, the Claims Agent must be notified promptly, in writing, by the RTWC.  The Claims Agent will consider the evidence as a result of the above activity, and decide if any further return to work services may be required and review the recovery / return to work goal together with the worker and ***insert business name***  A review may also occur under section 25(10) of the Return to Work Act 2014 to consider whether new or other employment options for the worker need to be considered to assist a return to suitable employment.  If a worker believes that ***insert business name*** is not complying with the requirements in the Act for their retention, employment or re-employment they may request ReturnToWorkSA to investigate (section 15(2) of the Act). |
| 11. | Confidentiality |  | Information obtained during recovery / return to work will be treated with sensitivity and confidentiality. The worker will be required to sign a Medical Authority to permit the RTWC to contact the worker’s treating medical providers.  ***Insert business name*** will ensure that all personal and medical information relating to the worker is protected against loss and unauthorized access, use, modification or disclosure and against other misuse.  Section 185 and 186 of the Act describes these obligations.  The RTWC will keep secured, accurate and objective case notes for each worker’s return to work. Hard copy records will be kept in locked storage, or electronically, to only be accessible by the RTWC. |
| 12. | Information and Training |  | Information and training regarding recovery / return to work will be available for Line Managers / Supervisors and workers.  Recovery and return to work information will be included in induction programs for new workers. |
| 13. | Grievances and Disputes |  | In the event of any dispute or issue regarded as unfair or against the intent of a successful recovery / return to work the worker will, in the first instance, raise the issue with ***insert name and/or role of person dealing with workplace issues.***  ***Insert identified role*** will be responsible for following up and making every effort to resolve the grievance in a spirit of cooperation with the worker, management and Claims Agent.  Issues relating to the provision of a service, or the retention, employment or re-employment of the worker may be raised directly with ReturnToWorkSA.  The Ombudsman may also consider issues, refer to <http://www.ombudsman.sa.gov.au/return-to-work/>  Note: this does not include claim decisions made by the Claims Agent that have review rights to the South Australian Employment Tribunal.  All workers and Line Managers / Supervisors will be trained in this procedure.  Induction programs for new workers will include recovery and return to work information.  The RTWC details will be displayed in the following locations:  ***List locations*** |

## 

## Roles and Responsibilities

General roles and responsibilities are listed in the WHS Responsibilities statement ***(include location of Position Descriptions)***

### Employer

* Inform managers/supervisors and workers of their roles in the recovery and return to work process. (Include how you do this eg. within induction, a specific training session, team &/or toolbox meetings)
* Support the return to work coordinator perform their functions
* Appoint contacts at each worksite ***(list the different sites if applicable)*** to assist the coordinator perform their functions.
* If applicable, have an appointed and trained RTWC with the capacity to proactively support injured workers achieve a safe and sustainable return to work.
* Provide support to injured workers by identifying support process to facilitate and assist working with Claims Agents, medical treatment team, monitoring progress of injury worker’s return to work and capacity and preventing the occurrence of further injury when worker has returned to work.

### Workers

* Exercise reasonable care and adherence to safety policies to prevent injury to themselves or other workers
* Notify the employer of a work injury as soon as possible (within 24 hours if you can)
* Lodge a claim as soon as possible and inform your employer of intention to do so
* Cooperate with all parties to meet recovery / return to work obligations
* Complete all required documentation, including claim forms and incident reports and provide to employer
* Maintain contact with Line Manager / Supervisor and/or RTWC during recovery and return to work
* Notify Line Manager / Supervisor and/or RTWC of any issues or concerns regarding injury or return to work process
* ***Insert any other responsibilities***

## Records Management

All records will be retained in accordance with the requirements of the relevant legislation.

## Relevant Legislation

***Insert business name*** expects all employees to adhere to our standards of behavior and comply with all requirements of relevant legislation.

This procedure has been developed with reference to the following:

* *Return to Work Act 2014*
* *Return to Work Regulations 2015*

## Review of procedure

***Click here to insert details of when and how this procedure will be reviewed***

Approved by: Click to enter name Position: Click to enter position details

Signature: Date: Click here to enter a date.

**\*\*\*[Delete this note]\*\*\***

* This document is a template only – it **MUST** be adapted to your specific workplace and practices
* When adapting, consider; the size of your business; how many locations you have & where they are; how often you have injuries; who is involved in your practices, ‘who’ does ‘what’, ‘when’
* Communicate and train all staff about what is in the procedure
* Check to make sure the procedure is followed. Consider audit &/or scheduled review to ensure ‘who’ does ‘what’ and ‘when’ is happening as written in your procedure
* Use the same structure, language & document control etc. that you have for your other procedures
* *Return to work coordinator training and operational guidelines* has further information for employers