

Return-to-Work Planning Meetings (RTWPM)

Every work-related injury is unique. At WCB-Alberta we're here to help your employee access the right service, at the right time. Our goal is to help them get back to their life and work. We care about your experience and work with healthcare providers to tailor your employee's treatment plans to their needs and circumstances.

Work plays an important role in a worker's recovery. A Return-to-Work Planning Meeting (RTWPM) assists workers, employers, and claim owners (COs) in developing a safe, suitable and sustainable return-to-work (RTW) plan. Collaboration between all involved parties is the fundamental basis for a successful RTWPM. We aim to build the simplest, most effective, modified RTW plan that keeps workers connected to their job and workplace.

What happens at a RTWPM?

We want you to be informed and, more importantly, part of the process.

- A trained clinician will initiate RTW discussions and explore possible modified work, establish a gradual return to work (GRTW) plan and explore modified work employment options while your employee is recovering.
- Develop and document a formal RTW plan to promote recovery and ensures your employee can RTW safely, gradually and in a timely fashion.
- Determine whether there is a need for ergonomic or worksite modifications to help facilitate a RTW plan.
- Identify any required adaptive equipment or ergonomic devices to facilitate a RTW plan.
- Outline any RTW barriers present at the worksite (if applicable).
- Measure and document pre-accident critical job demands and job specific tasks (comprehensive overview of the worker's job description).
- Provide education to you and your employee regarding the RTWPM, RTW process, and rehabilitation process (including injury prevention and how to avoid reagravation of their injury).

When to expect a RTWPM referral

- Your employee is off work.
- Modified duties or a gradual return to work plan are not in place or defined.
- Your employee is performing modified duties, but there is no plan to progress to full duties.
- You or your employee has voiced RTW issues and/or workplace barriers.

About modified work

Modified work is a type of employment modification that allows your employee to safely recover while remaining connected to their work.

Employee benefits related to modified work:

- Accommodates their medical restrictions without endangering their recovery and safety or safety of others.
- Keeps them active and involved in the workplace.
- Promotes a gradual return to their pre-accident level of employment.
- Offers them meaningful work opportunities that contribute to operational productivity.

Forms of modified work include:

- Reduced or alternate duties.
- Reduced days or hours of work.
- Change in position or department.
- A permanent position with same or new employer.

How to get the most out of the RTWPM

Coming prepared to the RTWPM with an idea of the physical job demands and possibilities of modified work will assist all parties when collaborating to develop a RTW plan.

Building a suitable RTW plan will expedite your employee's recovery, the RTW process and reduce time-loss claim costs that impact your premiums. It also helps reduce indirect claim costs (such as overtime payments and human resource time) used to manage impact in your workplace.

Questions to consider prior to the RTWPM:

- Who will need to be participating in the discussion (direct supervisor, health and safety personnel, manager, owner, etc.)? We recommend including someone who can make a decision on modified work in the meeting to implement the RTW plan quickly.
- Can the employee's regular job duties be modified in any way to accommodate their current fitness for work capabilities (e.g., removing certain tasks, reducing lifting requirements)?
- Are there any alternate positions or tasks that may not part of their regular job duties but would be within their physical restrictions (e.g., administrative duties, online training)?
- Is there any equipment (e.g., ergonomic, or assistive devices) or workplace adjustments that can be made to accommodate the current capabilities?
- What types of modified duties have been offered to other employees in the past?
- Is there an opportunity to reduce the number of hours worked per shift (e.g., 4 hours). If yes, what would the shift schedule look like?
- Are there other roles within the organization that could accommodate the current capabilities? If yes, provide details on any training and/or skill development that could be helpful or provided to your employee to assist with the transition.

To help you prepare, please visit our [website](#) for detailed information about how to determine modified work opportunities and how to propose it.

