

Return-to-Work Planning Meeting (RTWPM)

Every work-related injury is unique. At WCB-Alberta we're here to help Alberta's workers access the right service, at the right time. Our goal is to help them back to their life and work after a work injury. We care about the worker's experience and tailor our treatment plans to their individual needs and circumstances. As a return-to-work services (RTWS) provider, **you are one of the key contributors in a worker's recovery and return-to-work (RTW) plan.**

Work plays an important role in 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?

- Initiate RTW discussions and explore possible modified work, establish a gradual return to work (GRTW) plan, and explore modified work employment options that allow the worker to continue contributing to their workplace while recovering.
- Develop and document a formal RTW plan to promote recovery and ensures the worker 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 job description).
- Provide education to the worker and employer regarding the RTWPM, RTW process, and rehabilitation process (including prevention and how to avoid reagravation of their injury).

Modified work

- Accommodates the medical restrictions without endangering the worker's recovery and safety or the safety of others.
- Keeps the worker active and involved in the workplace.

- Promotes potential for safe and gradual return to the worker's pre-accident level of employment.
- Must be a meaningful and productive part of the employer's operations.

Barriers: when a worker presents barriers to accepting modified work, discuss and explain evidence-based information about the dangers of being off work and the benefits of getting back to work and their normal routine as soon as possible.

Who is required to participate in a RTWPM?

The following interested parties are required to participate:

- The injured worker.
- Employer and/or representative.
- Union representative (if applicable) – it is an expectation of the RTW provider that, prior to delivering the service, the worker is asked if they have union representation.
- While it is not an expectation that the CO attends a RTWPM, it is an expectation that they are part of the conference call following the service to discuss the outcome of the meeting and the established RTW plan.
- An Industry Specialist may attend a RTWPM when there are barriers to the RTW process, and this is documented on the referral form.

Note: *The provider must make reasonable efforts to schedule the RTWPM to allow all parties to participate.*

How can you help support a successful RTWPM service?

- **Reporting:** Provide consistent, complete, and timely information (including date of accident duties and availability of modified work). Ensure RTW plan is based on **compensable** injury and accepted diagnosis on the claim.
- **Modified work:** Discuss the benefits of modified work with all involved parties such as staying connected with others. This can be done by encouraging the worker and employer to explore modified work options together.
- **Collaboration:** Be clear in addressing the purpose of the RTPWM at the beginning of the meeting and follow-up with all involved parties once the report has been completed to further ensure consensus.

RTWPD vs. RTWPM

	Return to Work Planning Discussion (RTWPD)	Return-to-Work Planning Meeting (RTWPM)
When appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a formal RTWPM is not realistic. When the employer chooses to meet the provider on the provider's site. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When the injured worker is not working. When there has been difficulty in identifying modified duties for the worker. When the worker is performing modified duties but there is no plan to progress to full duties. When RTW issues have been voiced by the worker or employer.
Purpose of the service	Review and obtain agreement on any employer-provided physical demands analysis (PDA) and modified duties and develop a return-to-work plan.	Identifies suitable modified duties, negotiates transitional and/or modified return-to-work programs and clarifies the pre-accident job demands/job tasks of the worker's pre-accident employment. It determines if there are any worksite barriers present and provides information to the employer regarding RTWPM and the return-to-work process.
Service delivery	Virtual (telephone, video conferencing) or in-person.	Virtual (telephone, video conferencing) or in-person.
Claim owner referral	Referral and the following information: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A copy of the employer's PDA for that worker's position; Confirmation and documentation of modified duties, if any; and Current fitness for work level. 	Referral
Anticipated use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large employers that have detailed PDAs for the worker's position and there is no uncertainty regarding job demands for developing the RTW plan. In rare cases, for employers that refuse a RTWPM, a RTWPD is the only opportunity to discuss RTW planning with the employer. 	When a comprehensive overview of the worker's job description is required to develop a RTW plan.

	Return to Work Planning Discussion (RTWPD)	Return-to-Work Planning Meeting (RTWPM)
Service objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiate RTW discussion and explore modified and alternate employment options with the employer; • Obtain agreement on pre-accident work duties; • Develop a formal RTW plan, as applicable; • Educate the worker about the RTW process; • Educate the employer about the RTW and rehabilitation process; • Re-establish the worker and employer relationship, as required; and • Determine if there are any RTW barriers present. <p>Note: A RTWPD may not be used for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gathering detailed documentation of the worker's critical job demands (CJDs). • Onsite assessment, development, or negotiation of modified work duties; or • A comprehensive overview of the worker's job description. 	<p>In addition to those listed under RTWPD service objectives, the RTWPM will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine whether there is a need for ergonomic or worksite modifications to facilitate RTW; • Measure and document pre-accident critical job demands (CJDs) and job tasks.

