

Return to Work

Temporary Modified Duty or Lost Time

Why you are getting this information.

Your doctor has decided it would be helpful for your recovery if you were to return to work performing a *Temporary Modified Duty* assignment.

Please take a few minutes to read this information. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to speak to your doctor, supervisor, or Return to Work Coordinator.

What is *Temporary Modified Duty*?

Temporary Modified Duty is the use of temporary work tasks to help an injured or ill employee recover until he or she can return to full duty. It will help you to recover more quickly and completely.

Why is *Temporary Modified Duty* necessary?

In many cases it is important for injured or ill workers to remain active during their recovery. When you stay active through modified duties you may return to your regular job sooner, maintain communication with your supervisor and co-workers, and gain financial security.

Can I recover at home?

Only if your Doctor orders off work or the District cannot accommodate your restrictions.

There are, however, some problems that may develop when workers remain at home too long. Lack of daily exercise and activity tends to wear down general muscle tone and fitness. This may increase the likelihood of re-injury when you return to full duty.

As soon as you can perform some kind of limited, temporary assignments, *Temporary Modified Duty* can be the bridge from staying at home to returning to regular employment.

How do I avoid re-injury?

No one can guarantee that you will not re-injure yourself when you come back to work. A well thought out *Temporary Modified Duty* plan does, however, reduce the likelihood of re-injury by limiting and monitoring the duties you perform.

Remember, *Temporary Modified Duty* is not the end of your treatment, it is part of it.

What do I need to do?

You and your supervisor will design the best *Temporary Modified Duty* plan by working together. It is a team effort. Your Doctor will outline your restrictions.

Start by asking yourself:

- “What parts of my regular job could I still do?”
- “What activities need to be done at work that I could do?”

Share your ideas with your supervisor as soon as possible. The best plans provide you with tasks to help you recover and give your department the ability to get valuable work done.

When should I meet with my supervisor?

Call your supervisor today. Our supervisors understand the benefits of *Temporary Modified Duty*; let the Return to Work Coordinator and your doctor know as soon as possible so they can evaluate your need for outside physical therapy or conditioning. After you recover more fully, your restrictions will be reevaluated at your scheduled appointments for changes in your accommodations.

How will *Temporary Modified Duty* work for me?

Your *Temporary Modified Duty* release has three parts:

- **Medical Restrictions**
 - These are activities you should *not* do.
- **Abilities**
 - These are activities you are *able* to do.
- **Recommendations**
 - These are activities you should *try* to do.

It is important that the *Temporary Modified Duty* assignment causes you no harm. If your *Temporary Modified Duty* plan includes activities that you feel you should not do, tell your supervisor and inform your doctor of any activities that cause you physical problems or pain. A Return to Work Agreement will be provided to you outlining your understanding between employee and employer of *Temporary Modified Duty*.

Only a professional can evaluate whether the discomfort you feel is harmful to you. Report any significant pain associated with your *Temporary Modified Duty* activities to your doctor as soon as possible. Suspend or limit activities until they can be assessed.

How long does this last?

The length of a *Temporary Modified Duty* plan is different for each person. It is not designed to exceed 90 days. You, your supervisor, and your doctor should discuss your recovery goals and the expected length of your transitional assignment.

Do I have to do this?

Your doctor has recommended Temporary Modified Duty as the best course of action to help you to recover. It is to your advantage to participate in *Temporary Modified Duty*.

Will my medical treatment continue?

Temporary Modified Duty is only one part of your treatment. Your doctor may advise you to attend physical or occupational therapy, receive medication or undergo medical procedures, and participate in regular medical follow-up appointments to assess your progress.

What now?

Follow your doctor's instructions. Take the work status reports directly to your supervisor. Focus on remaining active and getting better. Let your doctor know of any problems or changes in your condition.

Take the First Step!

EMPLOYEE'S RESPONSIBILITIES

When an employee is off work due to a medical condition, it is the employee's responsibility to submit any and all work status slips to his or her department. The work status slip must be shared with and the leave must be approved by the employee's supervisor, failure to do so could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination for job abandonment.

If an employee is released to return to work with Temporary Work Restrictions, the employee should contact his or her supervisor immediately to determine if there is a *Temporary Modified Duty* work assignment available. If the employee neglects to contact his or her supervisor in a timely manner, it can affect Workers Compensation payments and/or the ability to receive Sick Leave Benefits.

If an employee receives Permanent Work Restrictions the employee should contact his or her supervisor to determine if these restrictions can be permanently accommodated.

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