

Workplace Safety and Insurance Board - Early & Safe Return to Work

Return to Work

Preventing workplace injuries and illnesses is the responsibility of everyone in the workplace. When injuries and illness do occur, however, it is important for you and your employer to try to minimize the impacts by focusing on returning you to safe and productive work as soon as it is medically possible for you to do so.

Why early and safe return to work?

Most people who have a workplace injury or illness are able to return to some type of work even while they are still recovering, provided the work is medically suited to the injury or illness.

Returning to daily work and life activities can actually help an injured worker's recovery and reduce the chance of long-term disability. In fact, worldwide research shows that the longer you are off work due to injury or illness, the less likely it is that you will return to work.

Both you and your employer benefit in cooperating in your early and safe return to work. You benefit by restoring your source of income and staying active and productive, which are important to the healing/recovery process. Your employer benefits by minimizing the financial and human costs of your injury or illness.

Shared Responsibility for RTW

You, your employer and the WSIB all have certain roles, responsibilities, and obligations that support early and safe return to work.

In Ontario, returning an injured worker to work is a shared responsibility primarily between the worker and the employer. The WSIB is responsible for managing the claim and monitoring, providing education and assistance to the worker and employer, and to the workplace. Health care providers are responsible for providing timely health or medical and functional abilities information in order to make timely decisions both on benefits and on return to work. Where there are shared responsibilities, communication and cooperation toward a common goal is essential.

Together, all parties working toward a shared goal of early and safe return to work and full productivity has the potential to reduce the human and economic impact of workplace injuries and illness