Work Reintegration

Occupational Disability Response Team

The Occupational Disability Response Team (ODRT) of the Ontario Federation of Labour is an expert, cost-effective resource that employers and unions can use to:

- assess their disability prevention programs
- educate workplace parties about rights, responsibilities and effective prevention and return to work strategies, and
- design best practice programs.

The WSIB supports ODRT and is pleased to provide this link to its website.

Six new Work Reintegration operational policies and NEER policy took effect on July 15, 2011.

Work Reintegration policies:

- Work Reintegration Principles, Concepts and Definitions (Policy #19-02-01)
- Responsibilities of the Workplace Parties in Work Reintegration (Policy #19-02-02)
- Determining Suitable Occupation (Policy #19-03-03)
- Work Transition Plans (Policy #19-03-05)
- Work Transition Expenses (Policy #19-03-06)
- Relocation Services (Policy #19-03-11)

NEER policy:

- NEER Policy (Policy #13-02-02)

Focus of new policies

The primary focus of the new policies, which took effect on July 15, 2011, is to return injured/ill workers back to work with their injury employer to the extent possible.

The WR policies integrate the legislative provisions of Early and Safe Return to Work, Re-employment, and Labour Market Re-entry. The NEER policy extends the NEER window from three to four years beginning with the 2008 injury year. With the new NEER policy, employers will see a change on their December 2011 quarterly NEER statement reflecting the change from a three-year to a four-year window.

Policy Consultation
During the Work Reintegration and NEER policies consultation from November 8, 2010 to February 15, 2011, the WSIB directly engaged worker and employer stakeholders in meetings for their input. All stakeholder submissions and recommendations, as well as WSIB staff feedback, were reviewed and considered before the policies were finalized.

As a result of the consultations, the policies were clarified and made easier to use for WSIB staff and clients. Key changes from the consultation include:

- Clarifying the key concepts and definitions, such as “WR goal” and “suitable” and “available” work, to respect the legislative provisions and further the goals of the work reintegration program
- Adding language about the duration of the co-operation obligations, as well as what factors will not lead to a finding of non-co-operation
- Recognizing the challenges faced by small businesses, such as extending the period of the written notice for non-co-operation from seven to 14 days
- Providing more detail about an employer’s re-employment obligations
- Clarifying that the WSIB will first look to the availability of suitable occupations with the injury employer and the local labour market before looking at the availability of suitable occupations in the broader labour market
- Creating a standalone policy on relocation services.

Read our consultation summary report (359.6kb, PDF).

In developing the new Work Reintegration Program and supporting policies, the WSIB held extensive consultations with:

- Workers
- Employers and their representatives
- The Ontario Network of Injured Worker Groups, and
- The Canadian Federation of Independent Business.

We also considered feedback from the 2008 Morneau Sobeco Report on Experience Rating, the 2009 KPMG Value for Money Audit on the LMR Program, and the results of Chair Steve Mahoney’s 2009 Stakeholder Consultation sessions.

**Related info:**

- Work Reintegration summary assessment reports
- Work Reintegration Complaints Office
- Work Reintegration Program Brochure (2.4mb, PDF)
- Understanding the New Work Reintegration Policies
- Work Reintegration/NEER Policies: Q and A
- Work Reintegration Program: Q and A
- Work Reintegration Program Background
- Stakeholder Endorsements