

Section – J Early and Safe Return to Work (ESRTW)

PURPOSE The Early and Safe Return to Work (ESRTW) Program will facilitate a safe and early return to work for Workers who have sustained a workplace injury while employed with our company. The ESRTW program will provide every opportunity for injured Workers to return to gainful employment in the event of a disabling workplace accident.

PROCEDURE Site Superintendents will be required to participate in the ESRTW process. Once an injured Worker has been placed on an ESRTW program, the supervisor for that Worker will be expected to follow the program with the injured Worker and keep Management updated as required.

The ESRTW program will be broken into two stages;

1. To prevent Workers from losing time due to workplace injuries through prompt medical treatment (use of the WSIB Functional Abilities Form) and adherence to the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (WSIA).
2. To return Workers to gainful employment as soon as medically authorized. This will be done on potentially two levels;
 - a) Temporary Modified Work
 - b) Permanently Modified Work

DISTRIBUTION All management staff will receive copies of the ESRTW program, followed by a training/awareness session that will include participation from the following persons;

- Senior Management
- Project Managers and the Health and Safety Coordinator
- Site Superintendents

The entire workforce must also be made aware of the ESRTW program during worker Orientations and/or review of the Employee Guidelines.

RECORDS Worker records generated through the ESRTW program must be maintained indefinitely.

Section – J Early and Safe Return to Work (ESRTW)

Early and Safe Return to Work (ESRTW) Program

The purpose of having an ESRTW program is to provide workers who have been injured on the job, a safe means for returning to gainful employment in an expedient manner while ensuring that "Lost Time" is kept to an absolute minimum.

Re-employment obligations and the financial impact of experience rating implemented by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board have put the onus on the Employer to return injured Workers to the workplace as soon as possible.

Features

The Early Safe Return to Work Program will be broken into two stages; the first stage will be to ensure that minor accidents requiring first-aid and/or medical attention do not result in "Lost Time Accidents". The second stage will focus around helping injured Workers return to work through Modified Jobs, which will accommodate injuries sustained in a workplace accident; this will include "Temporary Modified Work" and/or "Permanently Modified to Work".

Implementation

The Management Team (Project Manager, Health and Safety Coordinator, Site Superintendent) will be responsible for the organization and implementation of the ESRTW program including communication and monitoring of the program.

The following are a list of steps, which will be necessary for the successful development and implementation of the Early Safe Return to Work Program;

1. Injured Worker

When a workplace accident occurs, employees must receive prompt First Aid Treatment and when required Medical Treatment by a Health Care Professional.

2. Injured Worker Re-integration

The injured Worker's supervisor and the Management Team will help ensure that the re-integration of the injured Worker into the workplace is done effectively. The requirements listed on the injured Workers Functional Abilities Form must first be met (e.g. changes to work station, lifting or bending chores to be assigned to a co-Worker temporarily, etc.).

(Upon The Injured Workers Return)

1. The worker's supervisor must meet with the injured Worker to welcome the person back to the workplace.
2. The injured Worker must be provided with a copy of the ESRTW Modified Job Description Form (Appendix 9), followed by a full explanation of how the program will help the injured worker return to his/her normal pre-accident job duties.
3. **Assure** the injured Worker that he/she will be able to return to normal job functions, once given clearance (in writing) by the attending physician or the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) Nurse Case Manager.

Section – J Early and Safe Return to Work (ESRTW)

4. Instruct the Worker not to exceed the physical restrictions outlined by the attending physician or WSIB Nurse Care Manager.
5. Instruct the Worker to immediately notify their supervisor of any difficulties, encountered while on the ESRTW program.
6. Give the Worker a chance to ask questions about the transition back into the workplace.

Note: *If the injured Worker does not comprehend English, have a co-worker or supervisor of the same native language; translate the information.*

The injured worker must then be taken out to the work area and advised of changes made to his/her work area (e.g. additional safety precautions, temporary modifications as per the ESRTW Modified Job Description Form).

After verbal and written instruction is provided, the injured Worker should then be asked to begin performing the modified job while in the presence of the supervisor. The injured worker should be observed for a while to ensure that the work being performed does not exceed the worker's physical restrictions and that difficulties are not encountered.

3. Follow-up

After the Injured Worker has been re-integrated into the workforce, an integral aspect of the Early Safe Return to Work Program will be follow-up. Through follow-up, the supervisor will be able to evaluate progress of the injured Worker and effectiveness of the ESRTW Program in place.

The supervisor for the injured worker will perform follow-up activities with the Worker and report their findings to the Management Team. The supervisor will perform the follow-up functions using the "Supervisor's Follow-Up Report Form" (Appendix 10).

Checks will be performed on a "First day back", daily, weekly and bi-weekly basis and will include the following;

(First Day Back)

- after the initial hour, the supervisor will meet the Worker at the workplace and discuss the Worker's progress and comfort level with the Modified Job.
- the supervisor will instruct the injured Worker to report back to him/her after breaks, lunch and prior to leaving the site. During these follow-up meetings, the supervisor will document findings on the Follow-up Report Form (Appendix 10) and when required, involve the Management Team (e.g. job functions are causing discomfort)

(Daily Follow-up)

- have the injured Worker report to the supervisor prior to the beginning of the shift.
- have the injured Worker report to the supervisor at the end of the shift
- involve the Management Team if/ when required

(Weekly)

- at the end of each week have the injured Worker complete the "Worker's Progress Report Form" (**Appendix 11**) and when required assist in completion of the form.
- the supervisor will then forward the form to the Management Team

Section – J Early and Safe Return to Work (ESRTW)

(Every Two Weeks)

- the Supervisor will arrange to meet with the injured worker and Attending Physician to discuss the Worker's progress and the supervisor will provide a written update to the Management Team.

The Management Team will review the Follow-up/ Progress Reports at the end of each week, unless problems with the program occur during the week, at which time immediate intervention by the Management Team will take place.

Changes to the Job Description

At times, changes must be made to the ESRTW Program and Job Descriptions in order to accommodate;

- difficulties being encountered by the Worker,
- progress or deterioration in the physical abilities of the injured Worker,
- production requirements (e.g. transfer to another job).

Changes made to the Job Description must be approved by the Management Team and not exceed the restrictions outlined by the attending physician. Once the changes have been made, they must be documented and explained to the worker.

Physical Rehabilitation

If and when required, workers on the ESRTW Program will be allowed and encouraged to receive Rehabilitation Treatment for their injuries. The Supervisor will work with the employee and physician to develop a schedule for rehabilitation treatment.

Through active rehabilitation treatment, injured workers will be able to recover from their injuries in an expedient manner. Furthermore, rehabilitation treatment will help the injured worker understand the nature of the injury and methods of avoiding a recurrence (e.g. back injuries-proper lifting techniques) and in many cases improve the physical condition of the injured worker, hence, reducing the chance of recurrence.

Re-Integration to Regular Job Functions

Upon completion of the ESRTW Program duties, the injured worker must be returned to his/her normal pre-accident job. In the event that the job has been eliminated, the worker will be placed on a comparable job.