EARLY RETURN TO WORK (ERTW)

TOOLBOX

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DEFINITIONS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORK

Graduated return-to-work (Part-time Work) - The health care provider authorizes gradual increases in the hours worked and the tasks performed.

Transitional return-to-work - A temporary job where the worker is expected to be able to go back to the job of injury during early intervention.

Light-duty work - Temporary work that is less vigorous and fits the provider’s restrictions.

Modified work - A change in the way the job is normally done to stay within the employee’s physical restrictions.

Temporary work - A job that is not ongoing.

Alternative work - A different job in the company that meets the employee’s physical restrictions. It can be an existing job, or a set of job tasks that you need done.
INTRODUCTION TO EARLY RETURN TO WORK (ERTW)

In today’s business culture, if an employee is injured on the job, the goal is to quickly and successfully return the employee back to work during the recovery and the rehabilitation phase.

a) How does ERTW benefit the employer?

ERTW embraces health and safety awareness in the workplace and decreases costs in time loss, medical expenses, and insurance premiums. **By letting your worker return to work with restrictions, you gain in the following ways:**

1. Labor and Industries may reimburse 50% of the salary of the ERTW worker
2. Your injured employee provides useful labor while working in ERTW
3. Your injury statistics improve and that saves your company work compensation insurance premiums
4. It enhances transparency among supervisors, injured workers and their co-workers

b) How does ERTW benefit the injured worker?

Injured workers may worry about the future and losing their job. **By returning to work early with work restrictions the workers gain the following benefits:**

1. They feel needed and reassured
2. They typically retain their usual wages
3. They maintain their level of physical fitness to do the job by coming in to work regularly
4. They retain their self-image of being a productive employee
5. The worker’s stress is reduced
c) **How does Labor and Industries benefit from employers implementing the ERTW program?**

Labor and Industries, as the workers’ compensation insurance company for the State of Washington, has researched the benefits of Early Return to Work (ERTW). These studies show that injured workers who are out of work for even a few months are significantly less likely to return to work. This makes for very expensive claims. The State of Washington prefers to keep employer workers’ compensation rates as low as possible.

**One strategy is to encourage Early Return to Work.**

*Map of Washington State L&I Regions*
STEP-BY-STEP FOR ERTW

a) When to train employees about ERTW
   It is best to establish a culture of ERTW from the first day of employment. Include a short training video or presentation on ERTW as a part of your company’s philosophy at new employee orientation. Even small companies can include a short ERTW orientation. Every worker should learn to report an on-the-job injury right away to the supervisor.

   For existing employees, a company-wide video or computer module on the ERTW benefit is a good way to introduce the ERTW concept during annual training.

b) When to use ERTW?
   ERTW is for all employees who incur an on-the-job injury. It is not for people who are injured while off duty. Injured workers are entitled to a host of benefits, including ERTW. A worker is eligible to return-to-work when the health care provider releases him or her to modified or light duty. This may be the same day as the injury or the next day.

c) Who manages ERTW?
   Each company should select an ERTW specialist. It may be the owner in a small company, the human resources specialist or workers’ compensation specialist in a medium-sized company. In some circumstances, it may be an occupational or physical therapist or the occupational health nurse. It is their job to ensure the paperwork is completed and help supervisors determine what modified tasks are appropriate given the work restrictions. The responsible person also monitors the ERTW program to help workers stay within their prescribed work restrictions.

d) Who pays for ERTW?
   To encourage Early Return to Work, the State of Washington may pay 50% of the worker’s salary. ERTW workers typically remain in their home cost centers. However, some companies will create a separate fund using corporate overhead or place the worker in the human resources cost center. It is important to remember the employer is saving money by getting the worker back to work quickly, ideally within three days of injury. As stated, Labor and Industries may pay half the worker’s salary, up to 66 days or $10,000, as an incentive for
employers to take injured workers back to work in the ERTW/Stay at Work program.

**Washington Stay at Work:** In 2011, the Washington Legislature voted to create a Stay at Work program: “Stay at work is a new financial incentive that helps employers keep injured workers on the job or bring them back to work quickly and safely back to light-duty or transitional work by reimbursing them for a portion of the costs.”


http://www.lni.wa.gov/IPUB/200-003-000.pdf

**What is the ERTW process?**
A successful ERTW program begins with management writing supportive policies and procedures. The ERTW Flow Chart from Chapter 2 of this ToolBox shows the steps that an employer needs to take. Here is a short summary of the ERTW Flow Chart that presents the three main components of the ERTW process.

**First,** the employer receives an Activity Prescription Form--APF (or similar form) from the health care provider. The employer then immediately considers the restrictions and the job tasks that are available. **Second,** when the employer has identified tasks for the worker to do within restrictions, the employer fills out the Employer’s Job Description form and faxes it to the health care provider right away. **Third,** after approval and signature by the health care provider, the employer offers the modified duty job to the injured worker who then either accepts or declines the offer. A worker can refuse to participate in ERTW, but that worker may lose his or her workers’ compensation time loss pay. Even if the worker declines ERTW, he or she continues to be eligible for injury-related medical care.

**f) When does ERTW stop?**
ERTW stops when the health care provider releases the worker back to full duty. An employer typically sets a time limit on the length of ERTW because the job is by definition temporary.
TROUBLE-SHOOTING ERTW

Sometimes getting a worker back to work in the real world seems very complicated. Here are some tips on solving problems before they happen.

a) What to do when no light duty work is available

This is a frequent first thought by employers. It may be true that you have no jobs that fit the work restrictions, but there are always tasks within jobs that fit the restrictions. Think about the bits and pieces that make up the job as a whole. Among those bits and pieces there usually will be tasks that are within the worker’s restrictions. There are several examples in this ToolBox for you to consider and a list just below.

b) Challenges with accommodating workers

Sometimes injured workers think they automatically get paid time off when they get hurt. Or, it may be that workers have fears of returning to work. Always talk to your worker to determine the worker’s concerns.

If the injured worker is unavailable by phone or seems reluctant, you may write the worker a certified letter offering the approved ERTW job. Give him or her a reasonable time to respond and report for work. There are specific facts that are necessary in this letter, see the examples in this ToolBox. Send a copy of the letter to your claims manager by fax.

c) Communicating with health care providers

A short phone call with the health care provider can oftentimes resolve ERTW issues. As an employer, you are welcome to call the health care provider about your injured worker. You can also find information about your employee’s medical progress on L&I’s Claims and Account Center website. HIPPA medical privacy laws do not apply to employers for worker’s compensation cases.

You can read the latest work-related medical reports about your worker online at http://www.lni.wa.gov/ORLI/LoGon.asp (RCW 51.36.060)
d) **Health care provider not releasing the worker back to full duty**

Rarely, a health care provider may seem slow to release an injured worker back to full duty. The health care provider should be regularly physically checking the injured worker’s condition and increasing physical capabilities, typically about every two weeks. If the new Activity Prescription Form is identical to the last one, call the provider and the claims manager to encourage progress. If lack of progress persists, the claims manager may take other actions to help move the claim along.

e) **Opportunities to develop cooperative relationships with Labor and Industries**

If you feel the injury may not be valid, contact your claims manager to discuss the specifics of the situation. Labor and Industries is available for your ERTW needs. Try calling your local L&I office or going in and explaining your needs. L&I has experts in ERTW who can provide guidance if you encounter an obstacle.
f. **Suggestions for Modified Job Tasks**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>JOBS CATEGORY</th>
<th>TASKS INVOLVED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clerical Support</td>
<td>• Answer phones in office&lt;br&gt;• Customer service&lt;br&gt;• File paperwork&lt;br&gt;• General errand running&lt;br&gt;• Greeter&lt;br&gt;• Organize equipment&lt;br&gt;• Restock shelves&lt;br&gt;• Safety monitor&lt;br&gt;• Shredder/sorter&lt;br&gt;• Log in data&lt;br&gt;• Organize files&lt;br&gt;• Give training or safety classes&lt;br&gt;• Special projects&lt;br&gt;• Replenish supplies in all areas&lt;br&gt;• Create staffing schedules</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Assignments</td>
<td>• Vital signs&lt;br&gt;• Patient admissions&lt;br&gt;• Patient interviews&lt;br&gt;• Medication administration&lt;br&gt;• IV administration&lt;br&gt;• Assist Infection Control&lt;br&gt;• Assist Employee Health with files &amp; records&lt;br&gt;• New employee orientation&lt;br&gt;• Review standards &amp; policies&lt;br&gt;• Data entry&lt;br&gt;• Update bulletin boards&lt;br&gt;• Assist with unit performance improvement projects&lt;br&gt;• Telephone patients for appointments &amp; follow-up&lt;br&gt;• Take minutes in staff meetings&lt;br&gt;• Train employees in using new equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>JOBS CATEGORY</td>
<td>TASKS INVOLVED</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Assignments</td>
<td>• Conduct tours</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Teach classes to staff or patients</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Provide intermittent relief for clerical staff during breaks and lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Make charts</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Verify insurance coverage</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Keep work areas organized</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Feed patients</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Assist pharmacy with labeling, stocking inventory &amp; organizing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janitorial &amp; Grounds-keeping</td>
<td>• Assist with ordering supplies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>• Reviewing &amp; updating procedures</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• New employee orientation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Assist with staffing schedules</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Assist with logging &amp; stocking supplies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Monitor facilities in need of services</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Observing &amp; documenting areas needing janitorial attention.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Greeting visitors &amp; clients</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Replenish restroom supplies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Security Assignments</td>
<td>• Taking &amp; making phone calls</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Prepare reports</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Orienting new employees</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Filing &amp; computer tasks</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Ordering equipment &amp; supplies</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Review disaster &amp; emergency response preparedness plans</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Greeting visitors &amp; clients</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Inventory and order supplies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Orienting new employees</td>
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<td>• Reviewing policies and procedures</td>
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<td>• Receiving phone calls</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Filing &amp; computer work</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Monitor hygiene practices</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Review recipes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Review vendor sales</td>
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</table>

**This list provides a few examples. It is not considered all inclusive. Remember that you can examine the specific job description of the worker to evaluate which job or task components the worker can safely perform within the restrictions outlined by the health care provider. Develop relationships with other departments, sections, or units within the organization and discuss sharing the injured worker who may be able to perform tasks outside his or her assigned department.**
a) Report of accident:
When an injured worker has seen a health care provider, the employee and health care provider complete the REPORT OF ACCIDENT form.

Here is an example of that form. It can be completed online if the employer is signed up through the Claims and Account Center (CAC). Go to: http://www.lni.wa.gov/ORLI/LoGon.asp
b. **Activity Prescription Form (APF):**

This is the form the health care provider will fill out stating what the worker can safely do. Providers or employers may have their own specific forms but the basics of the information required are the same. There is a blank form and then three sample forms.

1. **Blank APF**

Find this form at: [http://www.lni.wa.gov/ClaimsIns/Providers/Claims/ActivityRx/](http://www.lni.wa.gov/ClaimsIns/Providers/Claims/ActivityRx/)
2. **Example APF for back injury**

![Example APF for back injury](image)

### Other Restrictions / Instructions:

- No ladders. No use left arm.

### Required:

- Key Objective Findings:
  - Limited ROM L wr and elbow
  - Swelling L wr and elbow
  - Decreased grip strength L hand

### Employer Notified of Capacities:

- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

### Modified duty available:

- Yes [ ]
- No [ ]

### Date of contact:

- 5/16/14

### Name of contact:

- Gail Knight, RN

### Notes:

- EOI has LD avail. IW to RTW 5/16/14

### New diagnosis:

- [ ] Acute pain or
- [ ] Chronic pain

### Opioids prescribed for:

- [ ]

### Work may return:

- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]

### Will refer:

- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]

### Request IME:

- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]

### Study pending:

- [ ]
- [ ]
- [ ]
3. **Example for hand and arm injury**
4. **Example for knee injury**

![Image of medical form](image-url)
5. **Tips about the APF form**

The backside of the APF form has instructions to the health care provider on how to fill out the form and what specifically is required. Here is a copy.

![APF form image]

If the APF is not filled out completely, fax it immediately back to the health care provider with an urgent note to please complete it so you can better accommodate the injured worker. The form should be filled out anew every time the worker sees the doctor; read the form closely to see what changes and improvements have occurred. You can find this form online shortly after the worker has seen the doctor at the Claims and Account Center.
c.  **Employer’s job description for ERTW**

1. Blank Employer’s Job Description
   
   This is the form you **(the employer)** fill out describing the tasks that meet the worker’s restrictions. You fax it back to the provider for a signature before you offer the ERTW work to your injured worker.

First is the blank form, then three example forms for medical assistant, housekeeping and Central Service jobs.

2. Example of medical assistant worker job (back injury)
3. **Example of housekeeping job (arm injury)**

![Employer's Job Description Form]

**Department of Labor and Industries**

**Physician Billing Code**

**Review of Job Analysis and Job Description**

**10MAR06**-**5DEC06**

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**Worker:** Jane Dougherty  
**Employee Name:** Thomas Scraps  
**Company:** St. Elsewhere Hospital  
**Job Title:** Housekeeper, Modified Duty

**Hours per day:** 8  
**Days per week:** 3

---

**Job Duties:**

- Dust, spray and wipe; maneuver moving总是; empty smaller trash cans; push light weight (34) vacuum on hard floors; stack small items in storage; use lightweight hand broom; use lightweight dust mop (44) on hard floors.

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**Machinery, tools, equipment and personal protective equipment:**

- Dust, spray and wipe; maneuver moving always; empty smaller trash cans; push light weight (34) vacuum on hard floors; stack small items in storage; use lightweight hand broom; use lightweight dust mop (44) on hard floors.

---

**Physical Demands:**

- **Sitting:** Y. Breaks.
- **Standing:** E. While dusting and dry sweeping.
- **Walking:** C. Walk on hard floors assumed for 30 minutes.
- **Climbing Ladders/Stairs:** S. May use elevators if present.
- **Twisting at the waist:** D. May twist body while sweeping.
- **Bending/Kneeling:** O. No searching.
- **Crawling:** N.
- **Reaching:** U. Racks of dirt, wipes, dry mop, vacuum. R ARM ONLY.
- **Working above shoulders:** S. Dusting objects. R ARM ONLY.
- **Handling/Manipulating:** D. Handling tools and small trash cans; R ARM ONLY.
- **Two Finger Manipulation:** D. Manipulate dry paper, dinner plates. L ARM ONLY.
- **Fast Controls/Driving:** N.
- **Repetitive Motion:** E. Repetitively reach out and touch cleaning tools.
- **Tasting Hearing Young:** C.
- **Vibration Tasks:** N.
- **Lifting:** 40 Lbs. S. Lift small trash cans to garbage. R ARM ONLY.
- **Writing:** 10 Lbs. S. Teach, use, light weight vacuum, less than 10 lbs. R ARM ONLY.
- **Packing/Putting:** 30 Lbs. O. Push/pull 30 lbs on hard floor, R ARM ONLY.
- **Uncontrolled Objects:** (20 Uncontrolled) Forward; dirt, wiping, vacuum and dry mop to various locations. Can be done with no use of left arm.

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**FOR HEALTH PROVIDER'S USE ONLY**

**Provider Approval:**  
**Hours per day:**  
**Days per week:**  
**Effective date:**

---

**Provider Signature:**  
**Provider Name (Please print):**  
**Date:**

---

**Index: VOC**
4. **Example of Central Service job (foot injury)**

![Employer's Job Description Form]

**Employer's Job Description**

- **Worker:** Susan Jones
- **Claim:** #7890157
- **Campus:** St. Elizabeth Hospital
- **Job Title:** Product Scanner
- **Employer Name:** (Please print) Louise Lane
- **Title:** Supervision
- **Employer Signature:**
  - **Date:** 7/14/14

**Essential Job Duties**

- Scan codes on products at intake into central service.
- Cut boxes, label scan codes on product, store products in the area for other workers to place in temporary storage.
- Answer telephone. Greet occasional walk-in customers.

**Machinery, tools, equipment and personal protective equipment**

- Scanner (stereo-weighted), box knife, telephone, message pad.

**Frequency Guidelines**

- N: Never (not at all)
- S: Seldom (1-10% of the time)
- F: Frequent (11-25% of the time)
- C: Constant (26%-100% of the time)

**Physical Demands**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Description of Task</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Standing</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Sit or stand period while scanning. Stand at wall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suying</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>Walk to instrument for scanning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clumsy/Large-Motor</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twisting at the wrist</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>May twist torso to reach to box of product on scanning dock.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bending/Reaching</td>
<td>S</td>
<td>No bending/Reaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squatting/Kneeling</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crawling</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reaching out</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Reach for product, reach while scanning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working above shoulders</td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Handling/Turning</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>Handling product to scan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force-Exerting Manipulation</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Manipulate scanner and product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foot Controls/Driving</td>
<td>S</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repetitive Motion</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>Repetitive reach for product, repetitive use of scanner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hauling/Handling Lifting</td>
<td>T</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vibratory Tasks</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifting 75 lb</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>May lift larger objects to be scanned, more than 8.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrying 1 lb</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushing/Pulling 1 lb</td>
<td>N</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**FOR HEALTH PROVIDER'S USE ONLY**

- **Provider Approval:** No
- **Hours per day:**
- **Days per week:**
- **Effective date:**

If no, please provide objective medical documentation to support your decision.

**Providers Signature:**
**Provider Name (Please print):**
**Date:** 7/14/14
5. **Tips about the Employer’s Job Description form**

Some employers keep a list of potential light duty/modified tasks and look through those tasks to assemble the job description. The injured worker or other employees may be a good source of ideas as well. The effort you put into this form will save you time and money, so put forward your best ideas of what the worker can do for your company; you want productivity while keeping the worker safe within his or her work restrictions until released to full duty.

Employers can start by writing down the job tasks in the section labeled: *Essential Job Duties*. It is best to start with an action word, a verb like: scan or wipe or sort.

If the health care provider denies the job offer, they need to document objective (‘measurable’) reasons why the worker is unable to do what you have proposed.

When you fax the Employer’s Job Description to the health care provider, you may want to include a face page telling the health care provider you will modify the job offer if the proposed tasks do not meet the restrictions. Do not hesitate to call the provider to clarify restrictions in order to write up a successful Job Description.
d. **JOB OFFER LETTER FOR ERTW**

1. *Sample blank letter with guidance*

While you have complete authorship for the job offer letter, all the essential information is in the enclosed sample letter. You may be able to conduct this transaction verbally, but the letter is oftentimes the best option. Complete the letter as soon as you have the signed job offer back from the health care provider.
2. Sample nursing ERTW job offer

St. Elsewhere
Date: January 13, 2014

Dear John,

I am pleased to offer you temporary employment that will accommodate your current physical capacities. Your duties are described in the attached Job Description that was approved by your health care provider on January 13, 2014.

Your work hours are 8 am to 2 pm and you are scheduled to work Monday through Friday, a 30 hour work week. Your work will pay your usual hourly pay. If this is less than 95% of your regular pay, you may qualify for Loss of Earning Power benefit.

Your supervisor is Florence Knight. She is aware of your current restrictions and she knows that the health care provider has approved the attached job offer. If you have any difficulties with your job tasks, you are to report them to your supervisor immediately. We want you to be safe and heal up quickly.

We expect you to report to your supervisor at **8:00 am on January 15** on the third floor, room 3110. I spoke with you today, 1/13/14 and you told me you would be happy to accept the offered temporary job. If you decide not to accept this job offer, please call me. If I do not hear from you and you do not show up for work, I will understand you have decided not to accept this job offer. According to industrial insurance regulations, if you decide not to report for work your time loss benefits may be affected.

Please call me with any questions.

Gail Knight, RN
(509) 555-1212
Hand delivered to worker on 1/13/14
cc: Physician, claims manager
Attachment: approved job offer
3. Sample housekeeping ERTW offer

St. Elsewhere
Date: May 15, 2014                                                                    Claim# AJ28391

Dear Janet,

I am pleased to offer you temporary employment that will accommodate your current physical capacities. Your duties are described in the attached Job Offer that was approved by your health care provider on May 15, 2014.

Your work hours are 7 am to 3:30 pm with a 30 minute lunch, and you are scheduled to work Monday through Friday, a 40 hour work week. Your work will pay your usual hourly pay.

Your supervisor is Thomas Trainer. He is aware of your current restrictions and he knows that the health care provider has approved the attached job description. If you have any difficulties with your job tasks, you are to report them to your supervisor immediately. We want you to be safe and heal up quickly.

We expect you to report to your supervisor at 7:00 am on May 16, 2014 on the first floor, room 1108. I met with you on 5/15/14 and you told me you would accept the offered temporary job. If you decide not to accept this job offer, please call me. If I do not hear from you and you do not show up for work, I will understand you have decided not to accept this job offer. According to industrial insurance regulations, if you decide not to report for work your time loss benefits may be affected.

Please call me with any questions.

Gail Knight, RN
(509) 555-1212
Hand delivered to worker on 5/15/14
cc: Physician, claims manager
Attachment: approved job offer
4. **Sample Central Service ERTW offer**

St. Elsewhere  
Date: July 15, 2014  
Claim# Y7309157

Dear Susan Kiew,

I am pleased to offer you temporary employment that will accommodate your current physical capacities. Your duties are described in the attached Job Offer that was approved by your health care provider on 7/14/14.

Your work hours are your usual hours from 3 pm to 12:00 am (midnight). You are scheduled to work Monday through Friday, a 40 hour work week. Your work will pay your usual hourly pay.

Your supervisor is Louise Lane. She is aware of your current restrictions and she knows that the health care provider has approved the attached job offer. If you have any difficulties with your job tasks, you are to report them to your supervisor immediately. We want you to be safe and heal up quickly.

We expect you to report to your supervisor at **3:00 pm on July 16, 2014** on the third floor, room 3110. I spoke with you today, 7/15/14 and you told me you would be happy to accept the offered temporary job. If you decide not to accept this job offer, please call me. If I do not hear from you and you do not show up for work, I will understand you have decided not to accept this job offer. According to industrial insurance regulations, if you decide not to report for work your time loss benefits may be affected.

Please call me with any questions.  
Gail Knight, RN  
(509) 555-1212

Hand delivered to worker on 7/15/14  
cc: Physician, claims manager  
Attachment: approved job offer
5. **Tips on writing the ERTW offer letter**

The first three days off after injury are taken from the injured worker’s sick leave or paid leave. The claim does not start paying time loss until the fourth day. To keep workers’ compensation insurance costs as low as possible, strive to get the worker back to work in ERTW within those first three days.

It is important that the ERTW job offer letter provides clear and concise expectations about the injured workers’ return to work. Fax the job offer letter that you gave the injured worker to the claims manager at (360) 902-6100.

If the worker fails to appear for work, be sure to tell the claims manager.

The Employer’s Job Description that the health care provider approved is the only work the injured worker may do. The employee must stay within the written medical restrictions. If the worker feels he or she is not able to do that level of work, the worker must return to the health care provider to discuss the problem.
Labor and Industries will pay half the base salary of an injured worker who is permitted to return to work while recovering from their injury. Of course there are a few requirements for this to happen.

**a. Reimbursement Allocation**

An eligible employer will get reimbursed 50% of the worker’s base salary for up to 66 days or $10,000. Plus you may be reimbursed for training and tools the worker needs to do the modified job.

**b. Reimbursement Procedure**

1. Develop a modified job within the injured worker’s restrictions
2. Fill out the Employer’s Job Description form (see examples earlier in the ToolBox)
3. Offer the job to the injured worker and the worker accepts
4. Provide time sheets and payroll records.
5. Fax the following to L&I: **(360-902-6100)**
   - a. Activity Prescription Form APF (see examples earlier in the ToolBox)
   - b. Job Description for the light duty job/modifed duty, signed by the health care provider (see examples earlier in the ToolBox)
   - c. Payroll record and daily timesheets.

**c. How to File a Wage Reimbursement Claim with Labor and Industries?**

Fax the APF, the health care provider-signed Job Description Offer, the payroll record and the daily timesheets to **(360) 902 6100**. Copies of everything you need to submit are available at: [http://www.lni.wa.gov/Main/StayAtWork/](http://www.lni.wa.gov/Main/StayAtWork/)
2. **SAW Wage Reimbursement Form example for nurse John Sampler:**

![SAW Wage Reimbursement Form](image-url)
3. **Sample FAX cover page for a Stay At Work Wage Reimbursement Packet:**

![Sample FAX cover page](image-url)
RESOURCES

Telephone

Claims Manager: 1-800-LISTENS
Your Local L&I Office ERTW Contacts:

Region 1
Northwest Washington
Bellingham ..................... 360-647-7300
Everett .......................... 425-290-1300
Mount Vernon ................ 360-416-3000

Region 2
King County
Bellevue ......................... 425-990-1400
Seattle ............................ 206-515-2800
Tukwila ............................ 206-835-1000

Region 3
Pierce County/Peninsula
Bremerton ....................... 360-415-4000
Port Angeles .................... 360-417-2700
Tacoma ............................ 253-596-3800

Region 4
Southwest Washington
Aberdeen ......................... 360-533-8200
Kelso ............................... 360-575-6900
Tumwater ........................ 360-902-5799
Vancouver ....................... 360-896-2300
Region 5
Central Washington
East Wenatchee .......... 509-886-6500
Kennewick ................. 509-735-0100
Moses Lake ................ 509-764-6900
Yakima ........................ 509-454-3700

Region 6
Eastern Washington
Pullman ...................... 509-334-5296
Spokane ...................... 509-324-2600

Websites


Washington Stay at Work: the section of L&I’s website with information about financial incentives to assist employers in bringing back workers to light-duty or transitional work. [http://www.lni.wa.gov/Main/StayAtWork/](http://www.lni.wa.gov/Main/StayAtWork/)

Employers can access a workplace injury claim or their industrial insurance account through the Claim & Account Center at [http://www.ClaimInfo.Lni.wa.gov](http://www.ClaimInfo.Lni.wa.gov). The site is generally available weekdays 6 a.m.–11:30 p.m. and on weekend days.
READING AND WORKBOOKS

*If the document fails to load from the links below, copy and paste the link into your browser.

The Employer’s Return-to-Work Guide is at [http://www.lni.wa.gov/IPUB/200-003-000.pdf](http://www.lni.wa.gov/IPUB/200-003-000.pdf). This guide will explain how to get your workers back to work quickly after an injury.


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