RETURN TO WORK POLICY
Template Return to Work Policy for Employers

This is a template return to work policy for employers. Although this template is designed to be comprehensive, employers should always consider their particular circumstances and the individual needs of their organisation.
[Name of Organisation] Return to Work Policy

Policy Statement

[Name of Organisation] is committed to assisting employees in achieving a safe return to work after periods of illness or injury.

The aim of this policy is to provide a procedure which will allow the employer to bring employees back to work as soon as is safely possible and properly assess and plan for suitable employment.

This policy covers the return to work of employees who have been absent from work on personal/sick leave or worker’s compensation leave in accordance with [Name of Organisation] policies. It should be read in conjunction with the [Name of Organisation] leave and occupational health and safety policies.

General policy

Where an employee has been absent from work due to illness or injury (whether work related or not) either the manager or the employee may initiate a return to work process.

Process

Usually, a return to work process will involve the following steps:

Step 1: The employee must provide the employer with written medical clearance from their treating doctor. This medical clearance must tell the employer:

- whether the employee is fit to resume work;
- when the employee is fit to resume work;
- whether there are any restrictions on the duties that the employee is able to perform; and
- if so, the extent of those restrictions.

Step 2: If required, the employer may seek the employee’s consent to liaise directly with the employee’s treating doctor. The employee must not unreasonably withhold this consent.

Step 3: If required, the employer may also ask that the employee undertake an independent medical assessment to ascertain the following (but not limited to) matters:

- the tasks and duties that the employee is and is not capable of undertaking;
- the dates/length of time that the employee is able to resume restricted duties and then full duties (if at all);
- the nature of the employee’s condition and the effect it will have on their ability to carry out their duties;
- the flexible working arrangements or options that may be required to facilitate the employee’s return to work; and