

SUMMERS COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION POLICY

ADOPTED: August 22, 2002
REFERENCE: Board Minutes

CODE: IV-H-10
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RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM

POLICY - Summers County Board of Education is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for our employees. Preventing injuries and illnesses is our primary objective. If an employee is injured, Summers County Board of Education will return an injured employee to modified or alternative work as soon after an injury as possible. This will be done by temporarily modifying the employee's job or providing the employee with an alternative position. The employee's medical condition along with any limitations or restrictions given by the attending physician will be considered as a priority when identifying the modified/alternative position.

PURPOSE - This program is intended to provide our employees with an opportunity to continue as valuable members of our team while recovering from a work related injury. We want to minimize any adverse effects of an on-the-job injury to any of our employees and return the injured employee to his/her original job. This program is intended to benefit an injured employee by promoting a speedy recovery while keeping his/her work patterns and income consistent. The company shares in benefits by having our employees retain work skills thus contributing to the overall productivity of our business.

SCOPE - This program applies to all employees of the Summers County Board of Education.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Summers County Board of Education

All injuries and the duration of the disability will be handled by the Superintendent or his/her designee.

The Superintendent or designee will act as a liaison between the Summers County Board of Education, the injured worker, the attending physician, and West Virginia Worker's Compensation Division.

The Superintendent or designee will make sure that all paperwork and forms have been properly handled and submitted to the appropriate parties.

The superintendent or designee will monitor the modified or alternative work and gather any additional information that may be needed to properly handle the return to work efforts.

All managers and supervisors

In the event of an injury, the manager or supervisor will make sure that the injured employee receives first aide, or if necessary, proper medical treatment. If possible, the manager or supervisor will accompany the employee to the treating physician or medical clinic. The attending physician shall be notified on the first visit that the Summers County Board of Education has a return-to-work program and that modified or alternative work will be provided. The manager or supervisor will work closely with the Superintendent or designee to coordinate the return to work efforts and will be responsible for introducing the employee back into the work place in the modified or alternative position. The manager or supervisor will make sure that the injured employee receives necessary assistance from co-workers and that the employee does NOT work outside his/her restrictions. Monitoring for transition into full duty work will be the responsibility of the manager or supervisor.

Employees

If an injury occurs on the job, the employee is required to report the injury to his/her manager or supervisor immediately. If available, the employer representative will accompany the employee to the medical clinic. Together with the physician, the employee's physical restrictions and limitations shall be discussed. If able, employees are expected to return to the worksite the very SAME day to report the physician's findings and to discuss modified or alternative work. This will enable all parties to be kept abreast of the employee's condition.

Once an employee has returned to work, it is his/her responsibility to work within the physical limitations that the physician has specified. The employee shall perform only those duties that are assigned to him/her.

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An employee shall immediately notify his/her manager or supervisor of any difficulty in performing the duties. The employee must also notify his/her manager or supervisor in advance of any medical appointments. *Time off will be allowed for medical appointments associated with an on-the-job injury.* The employee shall keep his/her manager or supervisor informed of the recovery process and his/her ability to perform modified or alternative work.

Everyone

If anyone involved in this process has questions or concerns, please take a few minutes to talk to your manager or supervisor (unasked questions can lead to confusion). The Summers County Board of Education is committed to promoting, in the best way possible, a full recovery of any of our injured employees.

RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM GUIDELINES

Summers County Board of Education is committed to returning employees to modified or alternative work immediately following the injury. The following are guidelines to accomplish this commitment:

THE EMPLOYER'S ROLE

When the Summers County Board of Education has an on-the-job injury or illness, we will take time to handle the injury appropriately.

We will provide first aid immediately.

If the injured employee requires medical attention, we will, when possible, accompany the injured employee to the treating physician or medical facility.

It is our responsibility to let the medical provider know that we have a Return-to-Work- Program and we intend to bring this employee back to work as soon as possible.

If an injured employee is unable to return to work immediately, the Summers County Board of Education will keep in contact with them. We will let the employee know of our concern for his/her condition and assure him/her that they are a valuable asset to this school system.

The Summers County Board of Education will let the injured employee know that we will make every reasonable effort to accommodate his/her temporary physical limitations with a modified or alternative position.

We will welcome back all employees into both temporary and permanent return-to-work positions.

The Summers County Board of Education will notify West Virginia Workers' Compensation Division of our return to work policy.

MODIFIED/ALTERNATIVE POSITIONS

All temporary, modified, or alternative positions are considered "transitional positions" and are designed to help the injured employee return to his/her usual and customary duties as soon as possible.

The injured employee will be expected to keep regular progress with the employee and the medical provider, as needed, to determine how they are progressing, when and if any additional duties can be added to the modified or alternative position, and when or if the employee can be returned to his/her usual and customary position.

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If the employee is not able to return to his/her usual and customary duties within 30 days, a complete re-

evaluation of the situation may be made in cooperation with the West Virginia Workers' Compensation Division, the treating physician, and the employee.

REPORTING AN ON-THE-JOB INJURY OR ILLNESS

TO ALL EMPLOYEES:

The West Virginia Workers' Compensation Division insures employees for any on-the-job injury or illness. Workers' compensation provides the following benefits:

Medical Care. All approved medical and hospital bills in relation to the compensable injury.

Disability Income. If hospitalized or unable to work for more than three days as a result of your on-the-job injury or illness, you will receive temporary total disability payments equal to 70% of your average weekly wage, up to the maximum allowable by law. If you injury or illness results in a permanent impairment, permanent partial disability benefits may be awarded.

Vocational Rehabilitation. If your on-the-job injury or illness prevents you from returning to your pre-injury job, you may be eligible for vocational rehabilitation.

Death Benefits. Should an on-the-job injury or illness result in death, a benefit may be paid to your dependents.

Effective immediately, the following policy will be in effect:

- 1) Report all injuries within 24 hours to your immediate manager or supervisor. This includes minor injuries that may only require first aid. Failure to report all injuries or illnesses may result in a delay in benefit payments
- 2) An injury requiring emergency treatment should be treated at the nearest emergency treatment facility immediately following the injury. Call 911 when emergency assistance is needed.
- 3) For medical treatment other than an emergency, you may seek treatment from a company pre-selected physician or physician of your choice. If you go to a medical provider of your choice you must notify your Return-to-Work Coordinator or Supervisor. Arrangements will have to be made regarding the company's Return-to-Work Program.
- 4) Should the treating physical restrict you from regular duty because of an on-the-job injury or illness, you must immediately provide your manager or supervisor with the NOTICE TO PHYSICIAN form outlining your restrictions. Whenever possible, we will attempt to accommodate your restrictions by providing appropriate modified or alternative work for you while you are unable to perform your normal duties.
- 5) Workers' compensation fraud is a felony in West Virginia. Any person who files or contributes to the filing of a false workers' compensation claim is committing a crime punishable by a prison sentence and/or fine.

In order for this system to work most efficiently, we must have your cooperation. Please see your immediate manager or supervisor should you have any questions.

PROCEDURES FOR THE RETURN-TO-WORK PROCESS

Follow these procedures when an employee is injured on the job.

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1. An employee who is injured must immediately report the injury or incident to a supervisor or an appropriate person in management.
2. The supervisor or return to work coordinator is responsible for: following requirements set forth by the West Virginia Workers' Compensation Division for reporting injuries and illnesses; completing an incident investigation record for every report of injury, whether or not medical attention is needed.
3. If medical attention is needed, the injured employee's supervisor or return-to-work coordinator should go with the employee to the doctor or other medical provider. Whenever possible, the employee or supervisor should provide the treating physician with a physician's information packet. The packet includes the injured employee's job description, essential job elements, and an introductory letter explaining the return to work process. The supervisor also can ask to speak to the doctor after the visit.
4. If the employee is restricted from work, a contact person (the supervisor or return to work coordinator) should communicate regularly with the employee and treating doctor. The contact person should talk with the employee on the day of the injury and once a week until the employee returns to work. The contact person should check with the treating doctor whenever the employee has a follow-up visit.
5. When the treating doctor releases the employee to alternative productive work, the supervisor should attempt to develop an alternative assignment. Every assignment must meet the doctor's restrictions. Every effort will be made to develop alternative productive work.
6. The supervisor must keep a copy of the doctor's work release.
7. The supervisor must follow up with the employee on a regular basis after the employee returns to work.