

**WORKING**

**TO WELL**

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**EMPLOYER'S QUICK GUIDE**  
**TO EARLY AND SAFE RETURN TO WORK**

**RESOURCES TO HELP YOUR EMPLOYEE**  
**AFTER A WORKPLACE INJURY OR ILLNESS**

## RTW MADE EASIER

Work is good – for employers, employees and our province as a whole. For injured workers, it's especially valuable. Work keeps them productive and connected to others. Work helps them heal.

New Brunswick is made up largely of small-to-medium sized employers. In fact, 92% of our province's employers have fewer than 20 employees. For such employers, workplace injuries and illnesses happen few and far in between. While this is good news in itself, most employers may not have the tools and resources in place to act quickly when an incident happens. So we're here to help.

This condensed guide contains our more popular tools for early and safe return to work – tools that employers like you have found especially helpful after learning of a workplace injury or illness.

For more information on setting up an effective return to work program and disability prevention, in general, please view and download our **Working to Well – Employer's Guide to Return to Work and Disability Prevention** – an interactive guide.

This resource provides practical steps and tips for incorporating return-to-work principles in your daily operations. You'll learn about policies, procedures, promotion and staff education. You'll have the tools to perform a job task analysis, develop a communication log, and monitor and improve upon your workplace's return-to-work program.



For additional help, you'll want to download the interactive guide's accompanying **Working to Well Employer Toolkit**, which has a combined 15 templates and info sheets – some of which are featured in the following pages.

For more information on early and safe return to work or stay-at-work programming, please speak to your claim manager, call 1 800 999-9775 or email us at [enquiries@ws-ts.nb.ca](mailto:enquiries@ws-ts.nb.ca). We'll be pleased to help.

## PROMPTS FOR IDENTIFYING EARLY AND SAFE OPTIONS

The following prompts may help you find alternative work that is valuable to the organization. Remember, if the worker is unable to perform usual job duties – with or without modifications – first look for suitable work within the division before looking across the whole organization.

Department or Area	Questions to Ask	Example Ideas
<b>Administration</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there administration tasks to do?</li> <li>• What are our needs in the next 6-12 months?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Processing tax receipts</li> <li>• Data entry</li> <li>• Filing and reorganizing</li> </ul>
<b>Business Improvement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there new systems or processes that would improve business?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing a filing system</li> <li>• Creating forms for improved efficiency</li> <li>• Updating training manual content</li> <li>• Updating a quality assurance system</li> </ul>
<b>Promotion, Marketing, Sales</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What work could promote the business?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Phone sales or calling clients</li> <li>• Developing promotional material</li> <li>• Market research – customer satisfaction questionnaires</li> <li>• Updating client databases</li> </ul>
<b>Labour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does anyone need an extra hand?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cleaning and organizing</li> <li>• Researching or buying tools and equipment</li> <li>• Taking inventory</li> <li>• Organizing parts and materials</li> <li>• Finding new suppliers (searching for cost-efficient or better materials)</li> </ul>
<b>All</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can we complete the job in a safer way?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can tools or equipment, such as carts, handles, hoists and power tools, or ergonomics reduce the demands?</li> <li>• Can we reorganize job tasks to reduce risks?</li> <li>• Can we adjust the work environment, such as temperature and lighting?</li> </ul>
<b>All</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there incomplete tasks?</li> <li>• Are there opportunities for bundling job duties?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incomplete projects</li> <li>• Areas that requires research</li> <li>• Redistribution of job tasks (make sure that you're not putting co-workers at risk of injury)</li> </ul>
<b>Training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there training the worker could take to benefit the organization?</li> <li>• Is there an opportunity for cross-training (other job tasks) in the organization?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Computer courses</li> <li>• Safety training</li> <li>• Technical skill training</li> <li>• Training others in the organization</li> </ul>



## EARLY AND SAFE RETURN TO WORK OFFER

Employer's name / location: \_\_\_\_\_

Worker's name: \_\_\_\_\_ Claim number: \_\_\_\_\_

We're committed to helping employees make an early and safe return to work. Working is good for physical and mental health. In fact, it often helps speed healing.

We're offering the following modified duties:

Describe specific job duties and the physical requirements of each duty and/or attach any functional job description.

We are offering the following hours:

Full time

Modified hours (please specify: \_\_\_\_\_ )

We would like help in identifying modified duties.

Employer contact responsible for return-to-work program: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Employer's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Please email the completed form through MyServices or fax to 1 888 629-4722.



## RETURN-TO-WORK (RTW) PLAN

Worker's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-accident job position: \_\_\_\_\_

Pre-accident supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Modified work supervisor (if different): \_\_\_\_\_

Effective date: \_\_\_\_\_ Anticipated end date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Job position:

- Pre-accident job – modified duties/hours
- Alternate job, with or without modifications
- Re-bundled tasks
- Home position

### Functional limitations and restrictions that require accommodation:

### RTW plan specifications (describe job duties, tasks and modifications, including necessary tools, equipment and training):

**Hours** (include progression schedule if applicable):

Days and Hours Scheduled Each Week								
Work Week (Date)	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun	Comments

**Monitoring/review** (outline schedule for regular monitoring and review):

Daily informal check-ins with supervisor at \_\_\_\_\_ (date, time, location)

Follow-up review meeting with \_\_\_\_\_ (name)

at \_\_\_\_\_ (date, time, location)

In addition, if you, the worker, employer or WorkSafeNB has any difficulties or concerns with the modified work contact, please contact:

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signatures:**

By signing this document, we confirm our participation in the plan’s development. We understand our roles in the plan’s implementation and monitoring, and agree to actively participate as outlined above.

Supervisor/manager: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Worker: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Union representative (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# GUIDELINES FOR EARLY AND SAFE OPTIONS (STRAIN/SPRAIN INJURIES)

Provide appropriate work as part of an effective return-to-work plan.



## Neck

ENSURE:	LIMIT:	AVOID:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The worker can self-pace and/or take micro breaks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Activities with arms above shoulder level, including reaching down</li> <li>Activities with lifting and carrying to light or medium loads</li> <li>Hanging weights</li> <li>Ladder climbing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lifting and carrying with arms above shoulder level</li> <li>Extremes or looking up, down or over the shoulder, especially if sustained for more than a few seconds</li> </ul>

## Elbow/Forearm

ENSURE:	LIMIT:	AVOID:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The worker can self-pace and/or take micro breaks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repetitive or sustained gripping, especially where high forces are required</li> <li>Lifting and carrying to light or medium loads</li> <li>Repetitive elbow bending</li> <li>The total time spent keyboarding or driving</li> <li>The use of impact tools (including power tools and hammers)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hanging weights</li> <li>Forearm rotations</li> <li>Pressure on the elbow/forearm</li> </ul>

## Lower Back

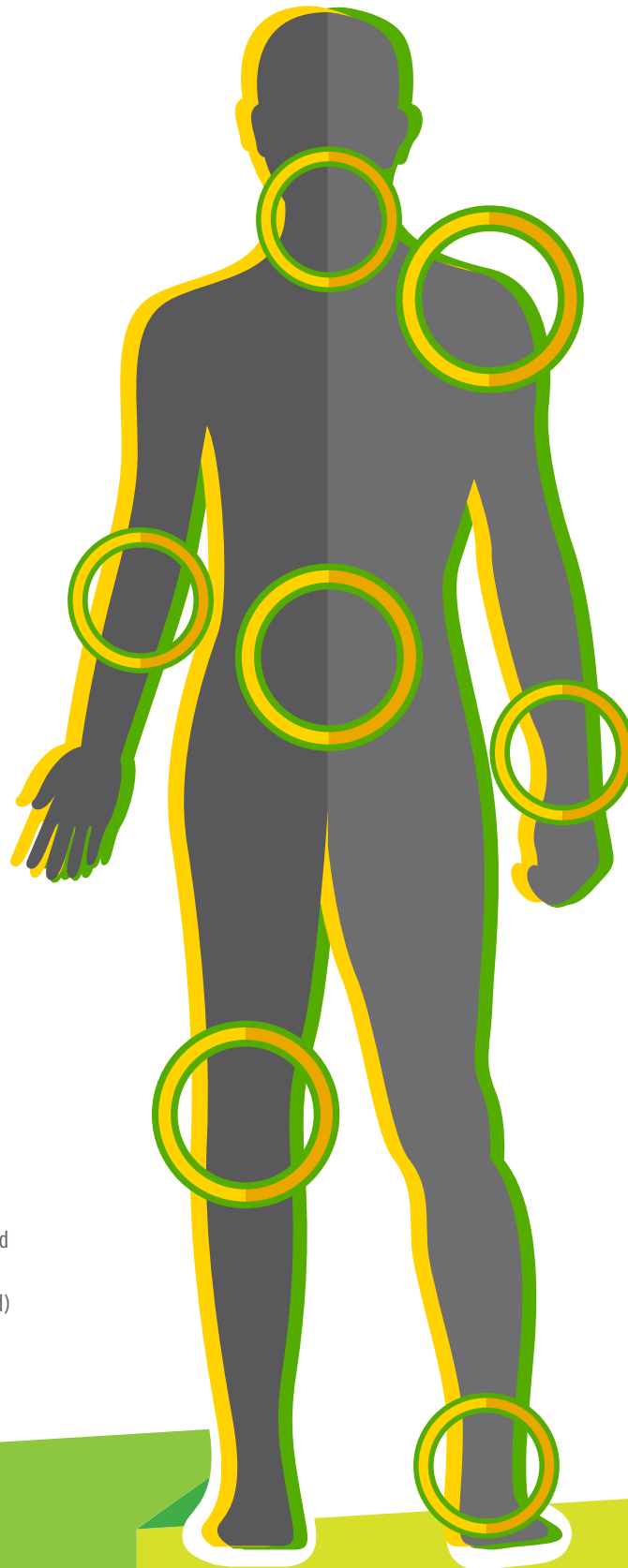
ENSURE:	LIMIT:	AVOID:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The worker can self-pace and/or take micro breaks</li> <li>The worker can change position between walking, standing and sitting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking on uneven ground</li> <li>Lifting and carrying to light or medium loads, depending on frequency and postures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Jarring</li> <li>Repetitive bending</li> <li>Long periods of static standing or sitting</li> <li>Extreme bending or extending of the back</li> <li>Twisting of the back</li> </ul>

### Strength categories for handling loads

National Occupational Classification (NOC) is the nationally accepted reference on occupations in Canada and provides a standardized framework for definitions such as pulling, pushing, lifting and/or moving objects during the work performed.

The NOC defines strength used in handling loads (examples: pulling, pushing, lifting and/or moving objects during the work performed) as follows:

- Limited:** Work activities involve handling loads up to 5 kg
- Light:** Work activities involve handling loads of 5 kg but less than 10 kg
- Medium:** Work activities involve handling loads between 10 and 20 kg
- Heavy:** Work activities involve handling loads more than 20 kg



## Shoulder

ENSURE:	LIMIT:	AVOID:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The worker can self-pace and/or take micro breaks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ladder climbing</li> <li>Activities using arm above shoulder level, including reaching down</li> <li>Activities that require lifting and carrying to light or medium loads</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Holding the arm outstretched for periods, especially while holding weights and applying force</li> <li>Lifting and carrying with arm above shoulder level</li> </ul>

## Wrist/Hand

ENSURE:	LIMIT:	AVOID:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The worker can self-pace and/or take micro breaks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Repetitive gripping, especially where high or sustained forces are needed</li> <li>Lifting and carrying to light or medium loads</li> <li>Repetitive or sustained gripping, especially where high forces are required</li> <li>The use of impact tools (including power tools and hammers)</li> <li>The total time keyboarding or driving</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extreme postures of the wrist, especially with force</li> </ul>

## Knee

ENSURE:	LIMIT:	AVOID:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The worker can self-pace and/or take micro breaks</li> <li>The worker can occasionally elevate the knee</li> <li>The worker can frequently change position between standing, walking and sitting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Walking on uneven ground</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long periods of standing or walking</li> <li>Deep squatting, kneeling or crouching (with or without weight)</li> <li>Pivoting of the knee</li> <li>Participating in activities requiring bracing, balancing, running or jumping</li> <li>Stair use or ladder climbing</li> </ul>

## Ankle

ENSURE:	LIMIT:	AVOID:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The worker can self-pace and/or take micro breaks</li> <li>The worker can occasionally elevate the ankle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stair use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long periods of standing or walking</li> <li>Walking on uneven ground</li> <li>Ladder climbing</li> <li>Deep squatting and crouching (with or without weight)</li> <li>Activities requiring balancing, bracing, running or jumping</li> </ul>

# A WORKER HAS AN INJURY. NOW WHAT?

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Can the worker continue to perform their pre-injury job without making modifications?

YES

Worker returns to pre-injury job.

NO

Can the worker continue to perform their pre-injury job with modifications?

YES

Worker returns to pre-injury job with modifications.

NO

Can the worker perform a different job without making modifications?

YES

Worker performs different job.

NO

Can the worker perform a different job with modifications?

YES

Worker performs different job with modifications.

NO

Worker continues treatment and rehabilitation to increase functional abilities.





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