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Return to Work Coordinator Training Course

A return to work coordinator is a worker nominated by an employer (or a contractor engaged specifically for the role), whose principal purpose is to assist injured workers to return to work in a safe and durable manner. The return to work coordinator ensures that the policy and procedures in an employer's return to work program are followed.

Under workers compensation law, Category 1 employers,

(ie. employers whose basic tariff premium exceeds \$50,000, as well as self insurers, and employers who are insured by a specialised insurer and who employ more than 20 workers)

must have a return to work coordinator. The Return to Work Coordinator must hold a WorkCover certificate certifying attendance at the WorkCover NSW accredited two-day course 'Introduction to return to work coordination'.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of return to work coordinators are outlined in WorkCover's Guidelines for employer's return-to-work programs (below). However, specific duties will reflect the needs of a workplace and its workers, and should be outlined in the employer's return to work program. Duties may include:

- ✚ developing and implementing the return to work program, educating the workforce, keeping injury and return to work statistics, and developing policies to improve systems.
- ✚ providing information on the return to work process and workers compensation benefits to injured workers
- ✚ determining an individual injured worker's needs by discussion with the worker, the nominated treating doctor and other treating practitioners
- ✚ working with the insurer to develop an injury management plan for the injured worker
- ✚ identifying appropriate suitable duties and assisting the injured worker to return to work as soon as possible
- ✚ preparing a return to work plan to document suitable duties and work restrictions so that all parties are informed and managing the return to work process
- ✚ being the focal point for all contact relating to the injured worker
- ✚ coordinating and monitoring progress in treatment, rehabilitation services and return to work plans
- ✚ maintaining confidential case records

Return to work coordinators require the following skills:

- ✚ ability to develop a return to work program consistent with workplace requirements
- ✚ ability to implement policy and procedures of the return to work program and facilitate the training of staff
- ✚ excellent written and verbal skills, including negotiation and listening skills
- ✚ ability to implement and explain the Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998 and the Workers Compensation Act 1987
- ✚ ability to identify suitable duties, consistent with section 43A of the Workers Compensation Act 1987
- ✚ ability to develop and implement a return to work plan
- ✚ decision making skills
- ✚ ability to disseminate information to all relevant parties
- ✚ case and caseloads management skills
- ✚ organisational and time management skills
- ✚ ability to assess when rehabilitation provider services are required