

# PIEDMONT VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

## VIII – HUMAN RESOURCES / PERSONNEL POLICIES

### VIII – 11.0 RETURN TO WORK POLICY

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<b>Policy #:</b>	<b>VIII – 11.0</b>
<b>Effective:</b>	<b>8/30/01</b>
<b>Revised:</b>	<b>8/5/08</b>
<b>Responsible Dept.:</b>	<b>HR</b>

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#### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of Piedmont Virginia Community College to achieve the safe and timely return of injured or ill employees to the workforce, and to reduce agency costs related to disability. This policy applies to all PVCC employees who are restricted in the performance of their essential functions due to compensable, work-related injuries, as well as to non-occupational injuries or illnesses.

#### 2. NOTIFICATION PROCEDURES

An employee must immediately notify his or her supervisor of any work-related injury. The supervisor must notify the Human Resources (HR) Office (Room 810) and complete the Employer's Accident Report (EAR) within 24 hours of the incident.

PVCC's Human Resources Officer will serve as the college's Return-to-Work Coordinator. The HR Officer will review the EAR and submit it to the Workers' Compensation Program (WCP) administered by the Department of Human Resource Management within ten days from the date PVCC receives notice of the work-related injury. As required by Virginia Workers' Compensation Law, the Human Resources Officer will also offer the employee a listing of a panel of at least three physicians skilled in the handling of work-related injuries. This panel shall be obtained from the listing maintained by the Commonwealth's Office of Workers' Compensation.

For non-occupational injuries, an employee should notify his or her supervisor as soon as possible after the personal injury or onset of the illness or medical condition that restricts the performance of the employee's regular duties. Within a reasonable period after the incident or injury, the Human Resources Officer will communicate with the attending physician. This communication shall include a discussion of return-to-work options, such as transitional duty, which is a temporary situation when an employee returns from a work-related or non-occupational injury or illness to medically restricted or modified duties. Under transitional duty, duties assigned can be those identified in the employee's current Employee Work Profile with restrictions, or another appropriate assignment. The Human Resources Officer will submit the employee's Employee Work Profile and proposed Transitional Work Plan to the attending physician to be used in the evaluation of a transitional duty recommendation.

#### 3. RETURN TO WORK OPTIONS

- **Released to Return to Work with no Restrictions:** If the employee is released to return to work and can perform the essential functions of his or her pre-injury position, the physician's office or the employee will give the release to the Human Resources Officer, who will coordinate a start date for the employee to report to work. The Human Resources Officer will submit a supplemental report indicating this return to work to the WCP and will notify the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP-CORE), if applicable.
- **Released to Return to Work with Restrictions:** If the employee is released to return to work with restrictions, the Human Resources Officer and the employee's supervisor will review the restrictions set forth by the attending physician and will decide if the agency is able to provide transitional duty for the employee. Transitional duty must meet the agency's staffing needs and accommodate the employee's medical restrictions while taking into consideration the welfare and safety of the employee, co-workers, and customers.

The Human Resources Officer will schedule an initial return-to-work meeting with the employee and the employee's supervisor to coordinate the return to work. They will develop transitional duties, which will focus on the employee's abilities as well as comply with the employee's medical restrictions and the College mission.

The Human Resources Officer will complete the Transitional Work Plan, which serves as documentation of the duties the employee will perform during the transitional duty period. The Human Resources Officer will review the Transitional Work Plan with the injured/ill employee and the employee's supervisor, obtain their signatures, and then submit it to the attending physician for approval.

The Human Resources Officer will submit a supplemental report indicating this return to work to the WCP and also will notify VSDP-CORE, if applicable, of the employee's return to work.

During transitional duty, the Human Resources Officer will meet with the employee to discuss concerns and to evaluate his or her progress every month. Transitional duty may be altered, upgraded, or changed in a manner consistent with medical restrictions and in accordance with an individual's improved condition. The Human Resources Officer, in coordination with the employee's supervisor and the employee, may amend the Transitional Work Plan should the employee demonstrate improvement or regression. Any amendments must be resubmitted to the attending physician for approval and a copy forwarded to WCP and VSDP-CORE, if applicable.

If the employee cannot return to work in his or her pre-injury department, the Human Resources Officer will attempt to coordinate a return to work within another department.

- **No Release to Return to Work:** If transitional duty is not possible for an employee within the agency or if the employee is not released to work, the Human Resources Officer will maintain communication with the employee, WCP, VSDP-CORE, if applicable, and the attending physician in order to obtain the employee's prognosis for recovery and the employee's functional capacity.

#### **4. LENGTH OF TRANSITIONAL DUTY**

Transitional duty shall be made available to those employees who are expected to return to their pre-injury position and may not normally exceed 90 days. At the conclusion of 90 days, the supervisor in consultation with the Human Resources Officer, may terminate the transitional duty assignment. If it is determined that the employee has permanent restrictions that result in his or her inability to perform the essential functions of his or her primary position, the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and other applicable laws will be applied to determine suitability for employment.

#### **5. OTHER**

The Human Resources Officer is responsible for the official interpretation of this policy.

#### **6. REFERENCES**

Department of Human Resource Management, Policy 4.57, Virginia Sickness and Disability Program.

Department of Human Resource Management, Policy 4.60, Workers' Compensation, Governor's Executive Order 52 (99) on Workplace Safety and Health.