

VIII – HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES

VIII – 11.0 RETURN TO WORK POLICY

Policy #: VIII – 11.0

Effective: 8/30/01

Revised: 8/5/08;5/08/2017

Responsible Dept.: HR

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. 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 position, the health care provider's office or the employee will submit the release to the Human Resources Office, who will coordinate a date for the employee to report to work. The Human Resources Office will submit a supplemental report indicating this return to work to the WCP and will notify the Virginia Sickness and Disability Program (VSDP-UNUM), if applicable.

• **Released to Return to Work with Restrictions:** If the employee is released to return to work with restrictions, the Human Resources Office and the employee's supervisor will review the restrictions set forth by the attending health care provider and will decide within five business days of receipt 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. If transitional duty is deemed inappropriate, the Human Resources Officer or Human Resources Benefits Administrator will notify the employee in writing. If transitional duty is deemed appropriate, the Human Resources Officer or Human Resources Benefits Administrator 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 are compatible with the employee's medical restrictions and the College mission.

The Human Resources Office and supervisor will develop a Transitional Employment Plan, which serves as documentation of the duties the employee will perform during the transitional duty period. The Human Resources Officer or Human Resources Benefits Administrator will review the Transitional Employment Plan with the employee and the employee's supervisor, obtain their signatures, and then, via the employee, submit it to the attending physician for approval.

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

During transitional duty, the supervisor and Human Resources Benefits Administrator will meet with the employee to discuss concerns and evaluate progress on a monthly basis. Transitional duty may be altered, upgraded, or changed consistent with the healthcare provider's updated medical restrictions.

The Human Resources Office, 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-UNUM if applicable.

If the employee cannot return to work in his or her current department, the Human Resources Officer will attempt to coordinate a return to work within another department if possible.

• **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 Office will maintain communication with the employee, WCP, and VSDP-UNUM, if applicable. The employee will be required to provide on-going healthcare provider information for the employee's prognosis for recovery and 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