

## SUMMARY

Workplace injuries and illnesses are costly to both workers and employers. While accident prevention is the best way to reduce overall injury costs, an effective workplace Return to Work (RTW) Program is the best way to manage costs and improve recovery after an injury has occurred. Providing appropriate temporary accommodations to employees due to an on-the-job injury or illness is a win-win for both employees and the City.

*Investing in the well-being of our City employees not only supports them but also the community they serve.*



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## CONTACT INFORMATION

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[www.cityofportorchard.us](http://www.cityofportorchard.us) for more information  
and other resources.



**A guide in helping on-the-job injured employees return to work in a safe & timely manner through light duty.**

## What is Return to Work (RTW)?



RTW simply means helping employees get back to work as soon as possible after an on-the-job related injury or illness. Workplace strategies promote a faster recovery and prevent a downward spiral into disability.



### Benefits for Employees

- Reduced stress over job security and boredom that typically results in the recuperation phase.
- Contact and support from co-workers will be maintained.
- Keeps the injured worker mentally & physically conditioned to their regular work schedule.
- Reduced financial hardship with benefits maintained.

### Benefits for the City

- Minimize Workers' Compensation costs.
- Reduce the cost of training replacements.
- Keep their experienced workers connected to the workplace.
- Maintain productivity.

## RTW Light Duty

Light-duty assignments under the City of Port Orchard's Light Duty Policy are temporary assignments for employees who suffer an on-the-job illness or injury that temporarily limits their ability to perform their regular work assignment. The Return to Work position temporarily addresses the restrictions placed on an individual by the employee's treating doctor. The priority is to return the employee to the position he or she held prior to absence.

### How long does light duty last?

The answer is, it varies. Each individual is different and recovery times will vary. The injured employee should talk to their healthcare provider and their supervisor as to their goal for recovery and how long they may need to be on light duty.



## Return to Work process

### How does it work?

Returning to work following a workplace injury is a step-by-step process for the employee that starts right after they are injured.

- Report injury immediately to supervisor;
- Complete all needed paperwork as soon as possible;
- Follow the City's RTW guidelines and practices;
- Maintain contact with their supervisor;
- Provide regular updates on health condition, medical status and restrictions issued;
- Return to temporary light duty that is within medical restrictions as set by the doctor.

*There is only a 50% chance that an injured employee will return to work after a six-month absence; this declines to a 25% chance following a one-year absence and is further reduced to a 1% chance after a two-year absence.*