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United States Coast Guard

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COMDTINST 12800.2

FEB 6 2002

COMMANDANT INSTRUCTION 12800.2

Subj: U. S. COAST GUARD NON-APPROPRIATED FUND BACK-TO-WORK (BTW) PROGRAM

1. PURPOSE. This Instruction establishes policy, responsibilities and procedures for the U. S. Coast Guard Non-Appropriated Fund Back-To-Work (BTW) Program. The purpose of this Instruction is to assist management in controlling labor costs, and is not intended to create or vest in the injured party any new or additional, benefit, entitlement or right.
2. ACTION. Area and district commanders, commanders of maintenance and logistics commands, commanding officers of headquarters units, assistant commandants for directorates, Chief Counsel, chiefs of special staff offices in Headquarters, and Chief, Office of Exchange and Morale shall ensure compliance with the provisions of this Instruction. Internet release authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES AFFECTED. None.
4. DISCUSSION. The BTW Program is intended to return employees who have incurred an on-the-job injury to productive work as quickly as possible without risk to the employee's health. Some change in the job may be required in returning the injured employee to work. This may involve simple changes to the physical characteristics of the original job; temporarily reassigning the employee to productive alternate duties or providing adaptive devices (such as lifting equipment) to reduce the physical demands of the job. New positions will not be established to accommodate the BTW Program.

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5. APPLICABILITY. Any Non-Appropriated Fund employee who is disabled as a result of an on-the-job injury as described in Chapter 16 of Nonappropriated Fund (NAF) Personnel Manual, COMDTINST M12271.1A dated April 25, 2000.
6. UNION RIGHTS. Management will fulfill their labor obligations to the local Union in accordance with Title VII, PL-95-454, Civil Service Reform Act of 1978 and any other local agreement established between the unit and the union.
7. BACK-TO-WORK (BTW) COORDINATING TEAM. GatesMcDonald is the Third Party Administrator (TPA) for the Coast Guard Exchange and Morale System. The primary function of the TPA is to provide technical and administrative support in the area of claims management. The team leader is the TPA and is responsible for initiating conference calls to discuss cases and coordinating team activities. The BTW team establishes communication with the employee and medical provider. The BTW team consists of representatives of:
 - a. Management/Employee's Supervisor.
 - b. Local Personnel Assistant or Administrative Assistant.
 - c. Third Party Administrator.
 - d. Commandant (G-WPC-6) and/or Commandant (G-WPX) as needed.
8. THE BTW PROGRAM PROCEDURES. If an employee has a potentially long term, disabling injury, which results in work restrictions or limitations imposed by the medical provider, the team is convened. The TPA will review the worker's compensation case and identify necessary actions to be executed by the appropriate personnel. An effective program requires coordination and communication with all interested parties. When necessary, on-the-job training will be provided to ensure employees receive adequate knowledge of a new position. The BTW team will establish follow-up plans on a case-by-case basis. A sequential approach to developing a Back-To-Work plan is as follows:
 - a. The first priority is to return the employee to the same job, if medically advisable. Building on existing work experience and work relationships avoids adding stress of adjusting to new tasks and surroundings.
 - b. Return the employee to familiar, but modified, work in the same department. Job or work site modifications may include a temporarily reduced work schedule, changed duties, trading heavier parts of the job with co-workers, altering the way duties are performed, physical changes in the work place and specialized tools or adaptive devices.

- c. Return the employee to work in a different position. Capitalize on transferable employment skills or provide on-the-job training. In some instances, it may be necessary to reassign the injured employee to a different area of the activity. For example, if the employee was injured while working in the Warehouse, they might be put back to work as a Cashier. These circumstances are usually dictated by the physical characteristics of the jobs within the department or legitimate safety reasons. In all instances, the BTW Team should coordinate with other supervisors the return of the employee in the activity.
 - d. Management will ensure that the employees understand that a new position will not be created to accommodate their injury. The injured employee may be assigned to a less strenuous existing job or their current job may be modified to accommodate their injury.
 - e. If another position is offered, a letter must be sent by certified mail to offer the alternate position. See Exhibit 1. A copy of this letter must also be sent to our Third Party Administrator.
 - f. When necessary, the Third Party Administrator will refer to appropriate alternate resources, such as outside agencies (Department of Labor (DOL)) or sub-contractors, for vocational rehabilitation.
9. RESPONSIBILITIES. Commitment to the BTW Program must be at all levels of management. Line supervisors play a critical role in the return of injured employees to the work force. The single most important element of a successful BTW Program is management's continued support for the program on an ongoing basis. This program will result in significant financial savings to the Coast Guard NAF Programs and will ensure employees' return to a productive work environment. Periodic reviews performed by the TPA will be done to ensure the BTW Program is operating in accordance with DOL policies.

Sally Brice-O'Hara
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard
Director of Personnel Management

Encl: (1) Exhibit 1 (Sample Letter)

(SIC)
(DATE)

From: Name and Title of Supervisor/Manager

To: Name of Employee

Subj: Job Offer Under the Back-To-Work Program

1. The limitations resulting from your on-the-job injury prevent you from returning to your former job duties. Upon reviewing your condition and restrictions recommended by your doctor, the position described below will enable you to return to work:

Job Title:

Duty Station/Location:

Pay Band/Grade:

Duty Hours:

Expected Back-To-Work Date:

If this is a change from your pre-injury average weekly wage, benefits will be adjusted.

2. The following is a brief outline of the duties assigned to the above position:
 - a. Describe duties and responsibilities here.
 - b. Any other information the employee needs to know about the position.
3. The following is an advance notice of your work schedule:
 - a. Monday – 11/19/2001 – 10:00am to 3:30pm
 - b. Tuesday – 11/20/2001 – 08:00am to 1:30pm
4. Please complete the bottom portion of this letter and return to this office within seven calendar days from the date of this letter. Your worker's compensation benefit could either be adjusted or suspended regardless of whether you accept or reject this job offer. **Please be advised that "no response" by the above date will be considered a refusal of this offer.**

SIGNATURE

I ACCEPT THIS JOB OFFER

I REJECT THIS JOB OFFER

Signature

Date

Signature

Date