

# **Return to Work Resources for Injured Employees**

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. What is a return to work program?**

A return to work program is a plan set up by an employer to help injured workers return to work more quickly and safely while they heal, either with changes to their regular job or in a temporary alternate work assignment.

### **2. Why would my employer want me back at work before I am released to full duty?**

In most cases, some work is better than no work. Your employer will benefit from your being able to help the company in some way, even if it is not in your regular job.

### **3. My doctor filled out a Form DWC073 at my last appointment. What is that?**

The DWC073, also called the Work Status Report, is the form your doctor fills out to explain what parts of your job you can safely do – such as lifting, standing, and driving.

### **4. What happens to my benefits if my doctor releases me to work with restrictions, but my employer does not have any modified or alternate work for me?**

You will keep receiving Temporary Income Benefits (as long as you are qualified\*) if your doctor releases you to return to work with restrictions but your employer doesn't have a job that meets your medical restrictions.

### **5. What if my doctor says I can go back to work, but I don't think I can?**

If your employer makes you a bona fide offer of employment, and you choose not to take the offer, you may lose your Temporary Income Benefits.

### **6. What exactly is a bona fide offer of employment?**

A bona fide offer of employment is an employer's letter offering modified or alternate work to an employee within his or her medical restrictions.

### **7. What has to be included in the bona fide offer of employment?**

- a. A copy of the Work Status Report (DWC073) that the offer is based on
- b. The location, schedule and pay for the job
- c. The physical and time requirements of the position
- d. A statement that the employer will only give tasks within the employee's physical abilities, knowledge and skill and will provide training if necessary

**8. What happens to my benefits if I go back to work?**

If you are receiving Temporary Income Benefits, your weekly benefit check may be suspended or reduced while you are working, depending on what actual wages you earn. If you return to work and later your doctor takes you back off work, your checks may be restored, if you are still eligible.\* Your medical benefits continue, as long as they are for reasonable and necessary treatment that is related to the injury.

**9. My doctor told me that I will never be able to do my regular job again, because it requires very heavy lifting. I don't know how to do anything else. Is there someone who can help me learn a new job?**

Yes, the [Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services](#) is a state agency that can help in certain situations.

\*You are eligible for Temporary Income Benefits as long as you have disability and have not reached Maximum Medical Improvement.