

TITLE: RETURN TO WORK

1. It is the policy of the Gilmer County Board of Education to provide our employees injured on the job with the best possible recovery program so that they can return to work with minimal emotional and financial disruption in their lives. The Board endorses a Return to Work (RTW) program that provides a unified effort to return injured employees to their regular assignments as soon as possible. The goal of this policy is to increase productivity and our employee's sense of security, while reducing premium costs and temporary disability payments. The employee's health and safety shall be a priority in the implementation of a return to work plan.
2. The RTW program is limited to employees who have been injured on the job and who are undergoing active medical and rehabilitative treatment. Modified duty will continue until the employee is determined to have reached Maximum Medical Improvement as it relates to the work related injury, the employee is released to his or her regular job duties by the treating physician, or, participation in the RTW program for a period of 3 months, whichever occurs first.
3. An employee returning to work from a non-worked related, non-compensable injury/surgery/illness must be able to perform all essential job functions. Documentation from his or her treating physician must be provided to the Finance Office prior to their return to their work location.
4. An employee participating in the Board's RTW program may be placed in a temporary transitional work assignment. A temporary transitional work assignment may be in another building, and hours scheduled may be modified to meet the needs of the temporary assignment. Reasonable accommodations include modifications to the work environment or to the manner in which the job is performed. Possible types of accommodations may include, but not limited to, making facilities more accessible, modifying the job, modifying work schedules, altering equipment, or participating in job-related training as determined the employee's supervisor and Safety Director.
5. An employee's participation in the program will not exceed a period of three months. Employees with permanent or indefinite work restrictions will be evaluated to determine if an employee can perform, with or without reasonable accommodation, the essential functions of the employee's regular position.
6. Alternative and modified job assignments will be structured to meet the physical capabilities and therapy needs of the injured employee where feasible. An Alternative Duty Job Bank Worksheet (Appendix A) completed by administrators and supervisors will be utilized to ensure that an employee recovering from an injury can perform the essential functions of his or her job based on restrictions set by the treating physician.
7. Success of the Board's RTW program depends on all employees, including administrators, teachers, other professionals, and service personnel understanding and adhering to the roles and responsibilities outlined in this policy.

Responsibilities

8. Employer
 - a. Establish clear, consistent return to work policies and procedures.
 - b. Provide all employees with orientation/training on return to work policies and procedures.
 - c. Ensure that return to work policies and procedures are followed.
 - d. Report all workers' compensation claims immediately.
 - e. Inform medical providers of the Board's RTW program.
 - f. Follow up with medical providers and employees regarding prescribed therapy and recovery process.
 - g. Utilize Alternative Duty Job Bank Worksheets when necessary to structure alternative and modified job assignments.
 - h. An individual in the Finance Office at Gilmer County Board of Education will follow up with your treating provider and BrickStreet Insurance's return-to-work specialist to alert them that we have a return-to-work program in place.
 - i. Once it has been determined a modified or alternative job is available, Gilmer County Board of Education Finance Office will submit the job offer to your provider for their approval and signature. A copy of the job offer will be sent to you when we contact you by letter with the starting date and time you are to report to work. It is your responsibility to notify your BrickStreet claims adjuster if only part-time work is available so eligibility for partial benefits can be reviewed.
9. Immediate Supervisor
 - a. Understand and adhere to return to work policies and procedures.
 - b. Ensure that employees receive a thorough RTW program orientation and that they understand return to work policies and procedures.
 - c. Report and file accident/injury reports immediately.
 - d. Forward medical status and medical documentation for injured employee to the Finance Office when received.
10. Injured Employee
 - a. Report all injuries, no matter how slight, to your immediate supervisor.
 - b. Inform your medical provider of the Board's Return to Work program.
 - c. Return to work following medical treatment and report to your immediate supervisor. If it's not medically possible to return to work, report to your supervisor immediately following your medical evaluation. Report your medical status and provide documentation to your supervisor within 24 hours following any related medical evaluations.
 - d. Report to work in your job assignment with accommodation if necessary. Understand that refusal of an offer of return to work with accommodation will jeopardize your workers' compensation and other benefits.
 - e. Follow your medical provider's recommendation with respect to established work restrictions, limitations, therapies, and physical capacities on and off the job.

- f. Return to your normal work assignment as soon as your medical provider deems it is safe.
- g. Follow up with medical provider every 30 days to that physical/work abilities may be re-addressed.
- h. It is your responsibility to report to your direct supervisor and someone in the Finance Office at Gilmer County Board of Education if there are job duties you feel you are not able to perform while working modified duty. Gilmer County Board of Education's Finance Office will discuss this with your provider and BrickStreet's return-to-work specialist. A field case manager may be assigned to your claim if you are unable to successfully return to work.

11. Supervisor Training and Responsibilities

It is essential that Board's school administrators and supervisors understand and follow through with practice and enforcement of the Return to Work policies and procedures. They must understand and fulfill their roles and responsibilities in implementation and maintenance of the program. They must have in-depth knowledge of RTW in order to accurately and thoroughly communicate the policies and procedures to employees.

- a. The key elements of administration/supervisor RTW orientation/training
 - i. What is Return to Work?
 - ii. Why do we do it?
 - iii. Return to Work Policy
 - iv. Administration/supervisor responsibilities
 - v. Illness/injury reporting process
 - vi. Employee responsibilities

12. Employee Training and Responsibilities

Training employees in the policies and procedures of the Return to Work program establishes the expectations and responsibilities for a successful program. Through training employees may understand that tasks/jobs modified under RTW are provided to assist workers' recovery process and speed the workers' return to their regular employment.

- a. The key elements of employee RTW orientation/training
 - i. What is Return to Work?
 - ii. Why do we do it?
 - iii. Return to Work Policy

- iv. Illness/injury reporting responsibilities
- v. Employee responsibilities

13. Enforcement

An employee, who violates any provision of **Gilmer County Policy - Return to Work**, or any regulations or procedures related thereto, shall be subject to the following incremental disciplinary steps:

- a. Documented conference with immediate supervisor
 - b. Formal written reprimand from immediate supervisor
 - c. Five-day suspension without pay by the Superintendent and approval of the Gilmer County Board of Education
 - d. Dismissal
14. Review Schedule. This policy shall be reviewed in accordance with the Policy Review Schedule published by the Superintendent.

Legal authority:

Board Adoption: July 21, 2014

Appendix A.

Gilmer County Schools

Alternative Duty Job Bank Worksheet

Department:

Contact Person: Position:

Shift:

Brief Job Description:

Physical Requirements of the Job (Check all that apply and give % or hours to right)

<input type="checkbox"/> Sit - % or hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Climb - % or hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Stand - % or hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Balance - % or hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Walk - % or hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Push/pull - % or hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Crawl - % or hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Reach below shoulder- % or hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Squat - % or hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Reach above shoulder- % or hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Pinching - % or hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Bend/stoop - % or hours
<input type="checkbox"/> Other - % or hours	<input type="checkbox"/> Crouch/kneel - % or hours
Describe Other:	

Does this job require lifting or carrying weight?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, how many lbs. and how frequently?	lbs. /hr., shift, day	
Does this job require repetitive wrist motion?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate:	Right <input type="checkbox"/> Left <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/>	
Does this job require repetitive hand motion?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Please indicate:	Right <input type="checkbox"/> Left <input type="checkbox"/> Both <input type="checkbox"/>	
Please check those that apply:		
0 Simple/light grasping		
0 Firm/strong grasping		
Does this job require use of personal protective equipment?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

Please indicate: i.e. gloves, eye protection, etc.

Does this job require specialized skills? Please check all that apply. Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>		
<input type="checkbox"/> Read English	<input type="checkbox"/> Telephone	<input type="checkbox"/> File
<input type="checkbox"/> Write English	<input type="checkbox"/> Computer skills	<input type="checkbox"/> Copier
<input type="checkbox"/> Speak English	<input type="checkbox"/> Data base	<input type="checkbox"/> Driving
<input type="checkbox"/> Other language (list)	<input type="checkbox"/> Word processing	<input type="checkbox"/> Cell phone/Radio
<input type="checkbox"/> Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Fax Machine	<input type="checkbox"/> Leadership

Please provide any additional information that may be helpful:

Completed by: _____ Date: _____