



## Policy # 53038

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### TRANSITIONAL RETURN TO WORK POLICY

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**Effective Date:** January 15, 2009

**Revised Date:** October 10, 2017

**Responsible Office:** Human Resources Division: Finance

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#### I. PURPOSE/OBJECTIVE

To ensure the safe and expedient return of Grambling State University employees with job related injuries and illnesses to transitional or regular employment, and to comply with R. S. 39:1547, which requires creation of a return to work program.

#### II. STATEMENT OF POLICIES

Grambling State University (GSU) is committed to providing for the earliest possible safe return to work of employees who previously sustained occupational related injuries or illnesses. The Transitional Return to Work Program has been established to ensure that the university makes a concerted effort to return employees to productive and meaningful assignments. This program allows an employee to be assigned to light/restricted duty for a temporary period (one year or until the employee reaches maximum medical improvement, whichever is less). Employees returning to work in a light/restricted capacity should effectively reduce the overtime load required by other employees who have fulfilled the job responsibilities during the absence of the regular employee.

The employee is responsible for reporting job related accidents, incidents, injuries and illnesses to the unit supervisor or the designated alternate employee within twenty-four (24) hours. The supervisor is responsible for ensuring all related accident forms are completed and the originals forwarded to the Human Resources Department within twenty-four hours of being notified of the employee's incident.

This program is not intended to interfere with the procedure applicable to employees who are otherwise eligible for reasonable accommodation under the American's with Disabilities Act (ADA). In a case where an employee refuses an accommodation or reassignment to duties, which is within his/her restrictions and ability to perform, the university is not obligated to provide further alternatives. If all efforts fail to "return the employee to work," it may be necessary to terminate the individual.

Training on the G.S.U. Transitional Return to Work Program is required for all employee supervisors, regardless of the employee type (i.e. classified, unclassified, etc.). Upon employment, all employees receive a copy of the Transitional Return to

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Work Program policy. A university-wide training class will be conducted every five years by the Office of Human Resources and Safety and Risk Management. However, this training will be part of the mandatory courses for all existing and new supervisors who have not participated in the class.

**III. RESPONSIBILITIES & ASSOCIATED PROCEDURES****A. Employee Responsibilities**

Immediately report all injuries to a supervisor. Complete all necessary paper work as soon as possible per date, time, place, activity, nature of injury, medical attention received, and a prognosis. Follow departmental procedure regarding attendance and leave. Maintain periodic contact with supervisor providing an update of return to work status. Present list of Essential Duties/Transitional Duties and Physician's Certification to physician for completion. If offered, return to a modified duty or modified work schedule which is within medical restrictions as determined by the treating physician for the transition period.

**B. Immediate Supervisor/Department Head Responsibilities**

Initiate immediate medical attention for employee when necessary. Report the injury and complete all paperwork (Employer's Report of Injury) immediately. Inform employee of Worker's Compensation benefits, attendance and leave policies and procedures, and return to work procedures if applicable. Maintain contact with the injured worker and with the HR Office. When appropriate, find or develop modified work/work schedule for the employee within medical restrictions. Be a participant on the Transitional Return-to-Work Case Management Team. Identify and offer modified duty assignment to the injured employee, when appropriate. Determine specific job tasks and make appropriate modifications. Develop a list of Essential Duties/Transitional Duties and give to employee with the Physician's Certification form to be completed by the employee's physician. Focus on returning the employee to work activities based on physical restrictions and based on transferable skills to other areas. Contact the Office of Safety & Risk Management to assist with accident investigation. Report safety problems and coordinate with the Director of Safety & Risk Management's efforts to identify and correct hazards.

**C. Director of Safety & Risk Management (GSU) Responsibilities**

Provide assistance to supervisor/department head for investigating accident and completing accident investigation report. Identify hazards to be corrected. Make safety recommendations. Review safety manual with supervisor/department head and obtain their assurance that all employees within their area are aware of any safety hazards identified and have received safety orientation. Develop and implement employee safety training programs. Be a member of the Transitional Return-to-Work Case Management Team or designee.

**D. Office of Human Resources Responsibilities**

The Human Resources Analyst B shall coordinate all return-to-work procedures and act as liaison for all interested parties. Finalize Employer's Report of Injury. Follow-up on

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Employer's Supplemental Report of Injury. Primary liaison to Office of Risk Management ORM/Sedgwick. Coordinate all documentation necessary for ORM/SEDGWICK. Immediately submit loss time reports to ORM/SEDGWICK. Upon receipt, immediately submit claims to ORM/SEDGWICK. Inform injured worker of benefit options, rights, and responsibilities. Maintain contact with injured employee, department head, Safety Office, and ORM/SEDGWICK. Maintain injury records and history. Review and analyze injury data. Assists with development of modified duty assignments. Focus on returning the employee to work activities that are based on physical limitations and transferable skills.

Member and coordinator of Transitional Return-to-Work Team. The team is comprised of the following positions: Human Resources Analyst B, Director of Safety and Risk Management, Director of Health Services, Chief of University Police, and the Coordinator of Employee Benefits.

**E. Office of Risk Management ORM/SEDGWICK Responsibilities**

ORM/SEDGWICK claims staff and vocational rehabilitation counselors will assist the employee, the Department of Human Resources, and the Transitional Return-to-Work Case Management Team. ORM/SEDGWICK will assume the responsibility to conduct all communications with treating medical personnel. ORM/SEDGWICK will process all medical claims and loss time compensation promptly.

**IV. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS****A. Supervisors of Employees in Loss Time Status are required to:**

1. Advise the employee to keep in contact with the designated Human Resources Office staff member
2. Serve as a member of the Case Management Team to assist in the modification of the employee's job duties
3. Forward a copy of all health care provider's orders and follow-ups to the Office of Human Resources
4. Ensure that a copy of the approved appropriate leave form is forwarded to the Office of Human Resources
5. Report all problems or non-compliance of modified job duties
6. Ensure the employee does not return to a full work load without a release from the attending health care provider

**B. Employees in Loss Time Status are required to:**

1. Follow departmental procedures regarding attendance and leave
2. Maintain contact bi-monthly with supervisor to provide updates of return to work status
3. Ensure a Family and Medical Leave Act Health Care Provider form is filled out completely by the attending health care provider and turned into the Office of Human Resources
4. Ensure a checklist of the duties and type of work is completed by the health care provider and forwarded to the Office of Human Resources

**C. Human Resources Staff member is required to:**

1. Serve as a member of the Case Management Team

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2. Act as a liaison for all interested parties

**D. Transitional Return to Work Coordinator is required to:**

1. Be responsible for overall coordination of Team and Team meetings.
2. Develop, facilitate, and monitor transitional return to work program.
3. Develop and facilitate accommodations as necessary.
4. Monitor progress and maintain reporting statistics and compliance.
5. Maintain confidentiality of employee and program.

**E. Transitional Return to Work Case Management Team is required to:**

1. Determine the employee's restrictions/limitations based on the job description, FMLA Health care provider's form and health care provider's checklist
2. Assess how the restrictions impact the employee's ability to perform his or her duties
3. The Office of Human Resources representative (Human Resources Analyst B) will address any question(s) to the attending health care provider
4. Notify the employee of the "Return to Work" job description and/or request to see the University's health care provider for a second opinion (This second opinion of the employee's condition is at the employer's expense)
5. If the employee cannot return to his or her former department, the team will work with the employee to attempt to place the employee in another position with the University that is commensurate with the employee's restrictions and job skills. The employee's department will be responsible for the wage and benefit costs during the period of time the employee is placed temporarily outside the department.
6. Review job duties and tasks of employee.
7. Review and consider physical capabilities worksheets or functional capacity surveys.
8. Assist to define job specific tasks and assignments that may provide a return to transitional duty in the same department or alternate department within guidelines.
9. Assist to develop a Transitional Modified Duty Plan to meet specifications of job and employee restrictions.
10. Reevaluate the plan every 30 days.
11. Seek assistance from the Office of Risk Management for vocational rehab counseling.
12. Participate in quarterly team meetings or in ongoing meetings necessary for progress.
13. Maintain confidentiality of employee and program.