

HOMES FIRST SOCIETY HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURE

19. EARLY AND SAFE RETURN TO WORK / ACCOMMODATION PLANS

PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to outline the Early and Safe Return to Work Program, which affords modified duties for injured employees and constitutes a written process for the creation of accommodation plans. The program will ensure that, as an organization, we will make reasonable efforts to accommodate injured employees with modified duties and will outline the steps taken in the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities.

Homes First Society is committed to establishing a fair and consistent Early and Safe Return to Work Policy and accommodation plans to provide meaningful and fulfilling employment for employees with injuries or disabilities. It is our intention to provide a practical rehabilitation program that will assist in the return of injured employees to a productive role while meeting the requirements of the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act. Homes First Society is committed to assessing every request for accommodation on an individual basis and ensuring that all communications are in a format that takes into account accessibility needs.

SCOPE

All staff of Homes First Society.

STANDARDS/PROCEDURES

Definition of "MODIFIED DUTY"

Modified Duty is the modification of an employee's position that allows the employee to carry out the work assigned within the employee's physical capabilities.

Homes First Society recognizes that employee's with permanent or temporary disabilities can and should be performing meaningful, productive employment. The modified duty program gives structure and organization to this principal and recognizes Homes First Society's and the employee's joint responsibility to participate in determining modified duties.

- Modified Duty is the modification of an employee's position that allows the employee to carry out the work assigned within the employee's physical capabilities.
- The employee's physician statement and the requirements of Homes First Society will be reviewed for the modified duty position.
- The work must be meaningful, productive, and safe and the result must have value.
- The work provided must not aggravate the employee's disability or injury
- The work provided whenever possible remains within the guidelines of the collective agreement.

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- The worker's disability must not constitute an additional hazard to the employee or fellow employee(s) while performing the duties assigned.
 - The duration of the modified duty will be determined at the commencement of the program wherever possible.
 - The employee will be required to schedule appointments and therapy at reasonable times so as not to conflict with Homes First Society's timetable.
 - The employee is required to supply medical progress reports as frequently as may be needed

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Homes First Society:

- To provide a fair and consistent rehabilitation policy for employees injured on or off the job or disabled due to illness or injury.
- To make reasonable efforts to provide meaningful employment for employees with permanent and temporary disabilities and promote modified duties where necessary.
- To assist in the modification of the workplace, if possible.
- To explain the objectives and requirements.
- To ensure that all information obtained is kept private to the extent possible, which includes maintenance upkeep of digital security and adherence to all privacy requirements.

Human Resources Department:

- To collaborate, support and consult with all key players in matters relating to the Early and Safe Return to Work process/ Accommodation Plan
- To determine in consultation with the manager, supervisor or designate, if the position can be modified.
- To monitor the progress of the employee's modified duties through regularly scheduled meetings or other means of communication with the employee and manager or supervisor.
- Ensure medical follow-up is obtained at a schedule defined by Homes First Society and, when necessary, request an evaluation from an outside expert.
- Determine and maintain medical monitoring and treatment. The frequency of medical contacts can be determined on a case by case basis.
- Engage in ongoing review of any modified work program or accommodation plan as necessary, but at least quarterly. This ongoing review may include requesting updated medical or soliciting feedback from the employee and/or their supervisor.
- Where an accommodation plan is denied, provide in writing the reason for the denial.

Immediate Supervisor:

- To assist in the creation of, and support the employee's modified duty program.
- To maintain communication with the employee on modified duty and monitor the progress and the effectiveness, on an individual case by case basis.
- Regular meetings will be scheduled with the employee to communicate and assist in the evaluation of the program's effectiveness.
- Communicate with the injured worker and document the communication. This communication is to be as frequent as may be required. This will be determined on a case by case basis.

The Employee:

- To maintain regular contact with the immediate manager/supervisor or designate.
- To take an active and co-operative role in developing their modified duty program and accommodation plan.
- To communicate any concerns or problems to their immediate manager/supervisor
- To obtain the necessary forms from the treating agencies as required by Homes First Society.
- If applicable, to ensure that other scheduled rehabilitation activities such as physical therapy or doctor's appointments are continued while on modified duty. These appointments are to be arranged whenever possible during non-work hours.
- To cooperate with all requests for documentation as required by the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board and Homes First Society.

Health Care Providers:

- To provide up to date medical information.
- Fill in the forms as requested.
- Act as a resource.

Workplace Safety and Insurance Board:

- Process a claim on timely basis.
- Act as a resource.
- Follow the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act.

Workplace Safety and Insurance Board Reporting Requirements

- Wage changes as a result of an injury or modified duty
- Change in duties/duration of work
- Medical Aid/Lost Time injury – Form 7
- Restrictions – Functional Abilities Form
- Failure of employee to cooperate
- End of modified duty program

Where Homes First is unable to provide a pre-injury or a comparable work assignment, efforts will be made to temporarily accommodate the employee in a value added manner within the organization and consistent with the collective agreement provisions.

During the process of temporary accommodation, work shall be temporarily accommodated within an employee's functional ability as outlined by the treating health professional. This temporary accommodation process shall consider many variables such as the hours of work prescribed, duties assigned, shift, and duration of temporary accommodation to name a few.

Each worker presents their own unique circumstances in terms of temporary accommodation and accordingly the scope and duration, where reasonable and medically supported, of such temporary accommodation will be discussed with the employee before their return to work. Homes First Society shall only accommodate an injured worker when it is safe and prudent to do so, and under terms where Homes First Society can monitor the safety & health of you, our employee.

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all staff, supervisors and managers to understand and comply with the Early and Safe Return to Work/ Accommodation Plan Program procedures

COMMUNICATION

This procedure will be communicated to all employees of Homes First Society upon hiring and orientation. The need for re-training will be reviewed and communicated on an annual basis.

TRAINING

All Management will undergo training regarding their responsibilities within the first 3 months of their hire date and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

EVALUATION

The Early and Safe Return to Work/ Accommodation Plan Program will be monitored on a regular basis for effectiveness.

FORMS

Functional Abilities Form (WSIB)

REFERENCE MATERIALS

Occupational Health and Safety Act
Ontario Human Rights Code
Workplace Safety and Insurance Act
Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act

