WHS DOCUMENTS & TEMPLATES

DOC-RTW-TPL · Return to Work Plan Template

Product Overview

For: Australian employers of any size: return to work coordinators, managers, supervisors, HR and WHS advisers

Version 1.0 · 15 November 2026

A return to work plan, agreed with the injured worker, that sets out what they can do now, the goal, suitable duties within their restrictions, a week-by-week program of hours and duties, support and review.

The plan records the worker's details and the people involved, the capacity and each restriction on the current medical certificate and what it means for the work, the goal, the suitable duties and how each fits the restrictions, duties to avoid, an eight-week graded program of hours and duties, the support and adjustments, how the worker and supervisor keep in touch, and the agreement.

Workers' compensation and return to work schemes differ by state, so the plan uses general wording and the guide sets out each jurisdiction's scheme, who runs it, and the times for telling the insurer about an injury or a claim.

Written once for Australia, to the model WHS laws, in plain terms that also work in Victoria. The guide's state and territory notes show where the law differs, including the regulator to contact. Made by Orana Skills Centre.

What is included

Item	File
Return to work plan: details, capacity and restrictions, goal, suitable duties, graded program, support, review and agreement	02_TEMPLATE/Return to Work Plan.docx and .pdf
How to Use This Template: how to complete and adapt it, the law in brief, state and territory notes, records and every placeholder	01_START_HERE/How to Use This Template.pdf
Read Me First, Product Overview, Permitted Use Terms and Version Information	01_START_HERE/ (PDF)

Who it is for

- Return to work coordinators preparing a plan with an injured worker
- Small businesses without their own return to work forms
- Supervisors who need a clear plan for suitable duties

File formats

- Word (.docx), editable, with your logo and business name in the header
- PDF copies of the Word documents, for printing blank

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SAMPLE · Return to Work Plan Template · Buy the full editable version:
training.oranaskillscentre.com/documents/return-to-work-plan-template

How to Use This Template

How to complete, adapt and keep the return to work plan template

1 What this template is for

An early, safe return to suitable work helps injured workers recover, and keeps their connection with work and their team. A return to work plan sets out, in writing and agreed with the worker, what they will do, for how long and with what support, within the limits their doctor has set.

Every scheme is different. This plan uses general wording that fits them all; your insurer or agent, and the scheme's rules, decide what else you must do.

2 How to use it

Step	What to do
1	Report the injury to your insurer or agent within the time your scheme sets (see the notes), and make contact with the worker early.
2	Get the current medical certificate, and talk to the treating doctor about the restrictions and suitable duties, with the worker's consent.
3	Meet the worker, with a support person if they want one, and agree the goal and the suitable duties. Make sure each duty fits the restrictions.
4	Set a graded program of hours and duties, with review dates, and the support and adjustments needed.
5	Have everyone sign the plan and give each person a copy. Send it to the insurer if they ask for it.
6	Check in at least weekly. Review the plan with each new certificate and on each review date, and change it if something is not working.
7	Find out what caused the injury, and fix it, so the worker returns to safer work and others are not hurt the same way.

3 Who does what

Who	What they do
Return to work coordinator	Prepares and reviews the plan with the worker, and is the contact with the insurer and the doctor
Supervisor	Provides the suitable duties, keeps the restrictions and checks in with the worker
Worker	Takes part in planning, does the agreed duties within their restrictions, and says when something is not working
Treating doctor and insurer	Set the restrictions and capacity, and the scheme's requirements

4 The law, in brief

Each state and territory, and the Commonwealth, has its own workers' compensation and return to work law. Most require an employer to tell its insurer about a workplace injury or claim within a set time, to provide suitable duties where it reasonably can, to take part in planning the worker's return to work, and in many cases to have a return to work program or coordinator. The detail, the forms and the time limits differ: check them with your insurer or agent and the scheme's regulator.

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Right-click > Change Picture

[Company name]

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Return to Work Plan

A plan, agreed with the injured worker, for a safe and timely return to suitable work

How to use it

- Prepare the plan with the worker as soon as their medical certificate shows they can do some work. Talk to their treating doctor and the insurer, and use any form your insurer requires alongside or instead of this one.
- The duties and hours must fit within the restrictions on the current medical certificate. Update the plan with each new certificate, and at each review.
- Keep medical information confidential: share only what the people involved need to know to support the return to work.

A Details

Worker		**Pre-injury role, hours and work area**	
Date of injury		**Claim number (if any)**	
Insurer or agent: [Workers' compensation insurer]		**Return to work coordinator: [Return to work coordinator]**	
Supervisor		**Treating doctor**	
Rehabilitation provider (if any)		**Plan number and date**	

B What the worker can do now

Medical certificate dates (from, to)	
Capacity: pre-injury duties, suitable duties, or not fit for work	

Restriction on the certificate	Limit	What it means for the work
Lifting and carrying		
Standing, walking or sitting		
Bending, reaching, kneeling, climbing		
Repetitive tasks, keyboard work		
Driving or operating plant		
Hours per day and days per week		
Other: psychological, environment, travel, medication		

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Return to Work Plan Template

END OF THE FREE SAMPLE

This sample shows a few pages, so you can judge the layout and the quality. A return to work plan, agreed with the injured worker, that sets out what they can do now, the goal, suitable duties within their restrictions, a week-by-week program of hours and duties, support and review.

What the full product contains

- **Return to work plan: details, capacity and restrictions, goal, suitable duties, graded program, support, review and agreement**
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