

**MERCER COUNTY SCHOOLS
Policy Comment(s) / Suggestion(s)**

**Policy: G-34
Employee Return-To-Work Policy**

Individual / Organization: _____
Title: _____
Address: _____

Comment(s) / Suggestion(s)

Please write your comments below in the sections that apply to the policy.

Use additional paper if necessary.

1.0 Purpose	Agree (reason)	Disagree (reason)
This policy is being changed to update and clarify language and to make grammatical changes.		

2.0 Definitions	Agree (reason)	Disagree (reason)

3.0 Procedures	Agree (reason)	Disagree (reason)

General Comments	Agree (reason)	Disagree (reason)

Return comments **NO LATER THAN April 19, 2018** to:

Dr. Kristal Filipek - Director, Human Resources
Mercer County Schools
1403 Honaker Avenue
Princeton, WV 24740

EMPLOYEE RETURN-TO-WORK POLICY

1.0 Purpose

Mercer County Schools is committed to providing a safe and healthy workplace for the employees of the school system. Preventing injuries is a primary goal. The philosophy of the Mercer County Schools regarding the return-to-work (RTW) program is to return employees safely and efficiently, based upon physician's guidance, while maintaining the long-term best interest of the employee as well as the school system. Accidents are undesirable, unplanned occurrences which can result in serious bodily harm, loss of time, property damage, and legal issues; therefore, the Mercer County Board of Education does hereby institute this policy.

2.0 Definitions

- 2.1 **Return-to-Work** – ~~Is the p~~Program established to ensure quality medical care, return the injured worker to productive, gainful employment, and contain Worker's Compensation costs.
- 2.2 **Transitional Duties Plan**—Plan established to modify normal work duties for an employee to return to work established by the immediate supervisor and approval by the Superintendent or designee.
- 2.2.a **Alternative Work**—A different job that allows ~~you~~ an employee to be employed within the defined restrictions of ~~noted by you~~ his/her physician.
- 2.2.b **Job Shadow**—A substitute employee assigned to ~~you~~ a supervisor that will productively work along with ~~you~~ the supervisor and ~~also~~ perform tasks that ~~you're~~ the employee's medical restrictions will not allow ~~you~~ him/her to perform.
- 2.2.c **Transitional Duties**--Return to Regular Position independently within the defined restrictions of ~~your~~ attending physician.
- 2.3 **Work-Related Injury** – ~~Is defined as a~~ An injury to the employee that occurs while he/she is engaged in the performance of his/her employment duties.

3.0 Procedures

- 3.1 All employees are required to participate in the return-to-work program.

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- 3.2 All employees shall receive training regarding the return-to-work program.
- 3.3 The return-to-work program should assist in the employee's recovery, ~~as well as,~~ **and** should be productive and economically feasible for the Mercer County Board of Education. The employee's health and safety shall be the first priority in the decision **making** process.
- 3.4 The return-to-work program will be applied fairly and consistently to all employees.
- 3.5 It is the responsibility of each employee to immediately report any work-related injury sustained by the employee to his/her immediate supervisor, regardless of whether or not medical treatment is required at that time.
- 3.6 The immediate supervisor or designee must provide the injured employee with an "Accident Package" which includes the necessary forms to be completed.
- ~~3.7~~**3.6.1** An Accident Report Form, which is part of the Accident Package, shall be completed by the employee and his/her immediate supervisor within **twenty-four (24)** hours of the injury to ~~insure~~ **ensure** the prompt reporting of accurate data. In the event the injured employee is incapacitated and unable to complete the form, the immediate supervisor or designee ~~is to~~ **shall** complete the form by the end of the next working day.
- ~~3.8~~**3.6.2** The injured employee is responsible for providing the attending physician with the remaining portion of the Accident Package ~~which notifies~~ **notifying** the attending physician that Mercer County Schools has a return-to-work program which includes modified or alternative duties.
- ~~3.9~~**7** The Director of Human Resources or designee shall contact the employee and shall communicate with the appropriate medical provider to determine the work that the employee may do without harm while participating in the return-to-work program.
- ~~3.10~~**8** The Director of Human Resources or designee, ~~and~~ the employee's immediate supervisor, **and the department head supervisor in conjunction** shall develop and recommend a transitional duties plan to the Superintendent.
- ~~3.11~~**9** The Superintendent shall determine if the transitional duties plan is feasible while considering the cost-benefit for the district. If deemed feasible, the employee's normal work duties will be modified ~~to accommodate the employee~~ based upon the physician's guidance in accordance with those duties delineated in the transitional duties plan **to accommodate the employee.**

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- 3.119.a Employee's Transitional Duties Plan shall be reviewed periodically, making modifications when appropriate by the immediate supervisor, ~~and~~ the Director of Human Resources **or designee, and the department head supervisor.**
- 3.119.b Once an employee's return-to-work has been deemed feasible, ~~and~~ in order to ensure the needs of the school or department affected by a reduction in the employee's normal work duties, the Director of Human Resources shall work with the immediate supervisor of the school ~~or~~ **and** department **head supervisor** to make any necessary accommodations.
- 3.1210 Any employee released to return to modified or alternative duties within the Transitional Duties Plan that refuses to return to work may have his/her benefits terminated by Workers' Compensation.
- 3.1311 Rehabilitation referrals will be considered for those cases that involve extended lost time.
- 3.1412 The injured employee is responsible for having the attending physician complete the necessary Workers' Compensation insurance carrier forms, as well as any return-to-work program related forms, and is responsible for assuring that forms are returned to the Mercer County Schools' ~~Personnel~~ **Human Resource** Department within five (5) working days from the date of the injury.
- 3.1513 Mercer County Schools' Director of Human Resources or designee shall act as the liaison between the Mercer County Board of Education, the injured employee, the attending physician, and the Workers' Compensation insurance carrier.
- 3.1614 Mercer County Schools will ~~make sure~~ **ensure** that the appropriate paperwork and forms have been properly handled and submitted to the appropriate parties.
- 3.1715 Mercer County Schools will evaluate the attending physician's recommendations for modified or alternative duties within the Transitional Duties Plan and determine if accommodations can be made in order ~~to return~~ **for** the injured employee **to return** back to work.
- 3.1816 Once it has been determined that the attending physician's recommendations for modified or alternative duties within the Transitional Duties Plan can be made, the injured employee shall return to work to the ~~modified or alternative position~~ **temporary accommodation.**
- 3.17 Temporary accommodation shall not exceed thirty (30) days from the initial return-to-work date.**

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- 3.1918 Once an injured employee has returned to work, it is his/her responsibility to work within the physical limitations that have been specified by the attending physician. The injured employee shall only perform duties assigned to him/her within the Transitional Duties Plan and shall immediately notify his/her immediate supervisor of any difficulties in performing those duties.
- 3.2019 The injured employee shall keep his/her immediate supervisor **and the Director of Human Resources or designee** informed of the recovery process and shall return to his/her regular duties upon release from the attending physician and/or the Workers' Compensation insurance provider.

4.0 Severability

If any portion of this policy or the application thereof to any person or circumstances is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this policy.

Authority: W.Va. Constitution, Article XII, §2, and W.Va. Code §§~~16-9A-4, 16-9A-9, 17A-1-1~~, 18-2-5, 18-2-5a, 18-2C-1 et seq., 18-5-1, 18-5-13, 18A-1-1, 61-2-15, 23-2-1 et seq.

Source: Board of Education Minutes

Date(s): 5/26/09, 7/15/14