

Wholesale and Retail Trade Industry – Facilitating Recovery at Work

Industry Highlights

The Wholesale Trade and Retail Trade Industry captures operations involved in the wholesale and retail of products and services such as food and beverages, apparel and dry goods, household goods, motor vehicle parts and accessories, hardware, plumbing, heating and building materials, machinery, equipment and supplies.

Lost time claims by top 5 occupations, 2020-2024

Occupations	% Total Lost time Claims
Retail salespersons and sales clerks	16%
Grocery clerks/store shelf stockers	16%
Auto service technicians/truck mechanics	13%
Material handlers	7%
Cashiers	7%

Duty to cooperate in ESRTW

All employers and workers are obligated under section 100 of the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act, 2022 to cooperate in a worker's early and safe return to suitable and available employment with the injury employer.

Challenges within the wholesale trade and retail trade industry

- Difficulty in identifying ESRTW duties due to repetitive nature of work and worksites
- A lot of soft tissue injuries including sprains, strains and tears
- Many jobs in the industry involve a lot of repetitive duties and lifting
- Difficulty accommodating injury workers who do not fully recover from their injuries (permanent accommodation)
- High staff turnover rates

Tactics and Possible Solutions

Employers

Program level

- Adopt a collaborative care approach for RTW understanding the concept that RTW starts with the injured worker
- Start talking about recovery at work during orientation
- Compile a list of light and modified duties for various positions within your company
- Cross train employees. This will allow employees who become injured the ability to work in other areas which may be better suited to their abilities
- Have clear roles and responsibilities for everyone involved in RTW process
- Evaluate RTW program each year to ensure it is meeting objectives

Claim specific

- Maintain regular communication with injured employees (once a week for anyone in ESRTW)
- Contact WorkplaceNL even before claim is accepted if you need help with any part of the ESRTW process
- Ensure you are receiving health care provider forms from injured employees within 24 hours after each visit
- Involve the injured worker in the development of their RTW plan
- If there is difficulty in obtaining functional information, contact the case manager

If you are having difficulty with arranging ESRTW you can:

- Utilize a RTW Facilitator at WorkplaceNL. They can:
 - Assist in developing RTW plans before the claim is accepted
 - Assist with clarifying medical information
 - Provide education sessions to staff
 - Help with mediation and communication concerns
 - Site visits to help identify potential RTW duties (suitable & available work)
- Contact a Case manager at WorkplaceNL They will:
 - Assist with early ESRTW intervention
 - Ensure progression of RTW plan
 - Help with conflicting medical documentation
 - Ensure roles and responsibilities for RTW are clearly communicated

Workers

- Report the injury to your supervisor immediately
- Ensure that all health care provider forms are returned to the employer within 24 hours
- Help identify potential RTW duties with your employer
- Discuss RTW options with your health care providers
- Maintain communication with your employer throughout your recovery