

# Quick facts:

## Facts for return-to-work programs

### Evaluation and Communication

WorkplaceNL recognizes the importance of developing and implementing workplace-based return-to-work programs. These programs allow employers and employees to take a proactive approach in assisting injured workers to return to safe and productive work activities as soon as possible following an injury. An effective return-to-work program can provide many benefits to all partners in the return-to-work process.

Evaluation is critical to identifying the strengths and weaknesses in the return-to-work program. Information obtained through an evaluation can be used to focus on continuous improvement. There are many different methods of conducting an evaluation of the return-to-work program; however, any conclusions must be supported by quantifiable information. Therefore, the process of conducting the evaluation is as important as the results. Once the results are validated they must be communicated to all staff.

#### Who should conduct an evaluation?

The evaluation should be conducted by people in the organization who are knowledgeable of the return-to-work program and have the experience and skills to conduct an evaluation. Individuals who are involved in the joint consultation mechanism will provide valuable input in this process.

#### How often should an evaluation be performed?

An evaluation should be performed at least annually. The goal is continuous improvement and the schedule of evaluation should reflect that.

#### How should the results of the evaluation be communicated to staff?

The results of the evaluation can be communicated to staff through presentations, memos, bulletin board postings, staff meetings.

#### When should an employer prepare for an evaluation?

Preparation for an evaluation begins when the program is being designed and developed. At this stage the objectives of the program can be defined to include any information that would be needed for the evaluation.

“Data points” need to be identified throughout the program’s design and must be collected on an ongoing basis.

Examples of data points include, but are not limited to:

- Injury frequency
- Injured worker satisfaction with the return-to-work program
- Time from injury to start of return to work
- Return-to-work plan duration
- Cost of accommodating injured workers
- Cost of workers’ compensation premiums

#### How can WorkplaceNL assist in evaluating a return-to-work program?

WorkplaceNL has staff available that are trained to audit return-to-work programs. If you would like further information on this you should contact WorkplaceNL’s Return-to-Work Coordinator.



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### What are the benefits of evaluating the return-to-work program?

#### **Benefits to the employer**

- Information can be used to validate the program.
- Improves workplace safety.
- Ensures that program objectives are being met.
- Ensures compliance with PRIME practice incentive criteria.

#### **Benefits to the Worker**

- Recognizes the strengths of the program.
- Creates better understanding of the return-to-work process.

## Your PRIME Readiness **CHECKLIST**

**Employers with over \$48,000 in average annual base assessments must have an evaluation and communication plan in place.**

- Does the business/organization evaluate the return-to-work program in joint and meaningful consultation between management and employees on an annual basis?
- Does the business/organization communicate the outcomes associated with the Return-to-Work program in joint and meaningful consultation between management and employees on an annual basis?

### **For more information on return to work program injury reporting please contact**

St. John's	t 709.778.1000	t 1.800.563.9000
Grand Falls-Windsor	t 709.489.1600	t 1.800.563.3448
Corner Brook	t 709.637.2700	t 1.800.563.2772