

## Definitions

Please refer to the University's Glossary of Terms for policies and procedures. Terms and definitions identified below are specific to these procedures and are critical to its effectiveness:

**Injury:** A personal injury, for example, a cut, fracture, sprain, strain, disease, aggravation of a pre-existing condition, industrial deafness, and psychiatric or psychological disorders.

**Injury Management:** A process of consultation and communication between all stakeholders to ensure optimal working capacity for the injured staff member throughout the rehabilitation process.

**Non-work Related Injuries:** Injuries that are not significantly caused by employment and are not claimable through current workers' compensation legislation.

**Suitable Duties:** A program of employment which provides an injured staff member with meaningful work to allow a gradual and safe return to normal duties.

**Treating Medical Practitioner (TMP):** The nominated General Medical Practitioner (doctor) who provides appropriate medical treatment, certification and injury management.

**Q-Comp:** The workers' compensation regulatory authority of Queensland.

**Work-Related Injuries:** Where employment is a significant contributing factor in causing injury as defined by current workers' compensation legislation and accepted by WorkCover as a workers' compensation claim. Work-related injuries can happen during work, on a work break, while working away from the worksite, travelling between worksites, or travelling between work and home.

**WorkCover:** WorkCover Queensland is a Queensland Government owned statutory authority operating as a commercial enterprise for workers' compensation insurance.

**Workplace Rehabilitation:** The process of restoring injured staff to their maximal physical, psychological, social, vocational and economic capacity. It aims to assist injured staff to return to normal duties as quickly and as safely as possible.

**Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator (RRTWC):** Designated University staff responsible for liaising with the injured staff member and stakeholders, as well as developing, coordinating and evaluating workplace rehabilitation plans. The RRTWC is based in Human Resources.

## 1. Purpose of procedures

1.1 Workplace rehabilitation is the process of restoring injured staff to their maximal physical, psychological, social, vocational and economic capacity. The University aims to assist injured staff to return to normal duties as quickly and as safely as possible. The University approaches injury management as a process of consultation and communication between all stakeholders to ensure optimal working capacity for the injured staff member throughout the rehabilitation process.

1.2 These procedures operationalise the principles set out in the Workplace Rehabilitation – Operational Policy and clarify responsibilities of stakeholders.

## 2. Work-related injuries

2.1 Staff must report work-related injuries to their supervisor as soon as possible.

- Staff must complete an Incident Report form (available on MyUSC and the USC website) and forward the completed form to their supervisor and copy to Human Resources (email [hsw@usc.edu.au](mailto:hsw@usc.edu.au)).
- Staff must obtain a workers' compensation (WorkCover) medical certificate from their treating medical practitioner if they intend to claim for worker's compensation.

To apply for workers' compensation, a staff member must submit an application to WorkCover, which may be completed using an online claim form.

2.2 Work-related injuries are those where employment is a significant contributing factor in causing injury as defined by current workers' compensation legislation and accepted by WorkCover as a workers' compensation claim. Work-related injuries can happen during work, on a work break, while working away from the worksite, travelling between worksites, or travelling between work and home.

### APPROVAL AUTHORITY

Vice-Chancellor and President

### RESPONSIBLE OFFICER

Vice-Chancellor and President

### DESIGNATED OFFICER

Director, Human Resources

### FIRST APPROVED

2 September 1997

### LAST AMENDED

1 June 2018

### EFFECTIVE START DATE

29 March 2016

### REVIEW DATE

17 March 2021

### STATUS

Active

2.3 In some cases, staff may be asked to authorise a Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator, based in the Health Safety and Wellbeing team in Human Resources, to discuss their injury with their treating medical practitioner and supervisor.

2.4 Depending on the type of injury, compensatory benefits payable by WorkCover may include weekly compensation payments, medical, hospital and rehabilitation costs, and/or a lump sum payment for permanent impairment. WorkCover has a maximum approved amount that they will pay for medical and allied health services. If the treating doctor or specialist charges above that amount, the patient is responsible for paying the difference. More details can be found at Allied health fees.

2.5 WorkCover assesses an application according to the relevant workers' compensation legislation. This includes determining whether a staff member has suffered an injury and that employment at the University was a significant contributing factor to the injury. To assess an application, WorkCover may talk to the staff member, the University, the treating medical practitioner and other relevant stakeholders.

### 3. Non work-related injuries

3.1 Staff with non-work related injuries should inform their supervisor as soon as practicable. Non work-related injuries are those not significantly caused by employment and are not claimable through current workers' compensation legislation. Staff must obtain a medical clearance from their TMP to ensure a safe return to work.

3.2 If the staff member is unable to return to normal duties post injury, they should inform their treating medical practitioner of the availability of workplace rehabilitation at the University. Staff with non-work related injuries, may request that their treating medical practitioner complete a Work Capabilities form, to assist with the development of a suitable duties plan that enables a safe (and gradual if needed) return to work.

3.3 The University may request the opinion of alternate medical practitioners in consultation with the staff member, where clarification of a diagnosis/prognosis is necessary or further information is required. The suitable duties plan is a voluntary arrangement for the University and the staff member, and each case is assessed individually, and where required, in consultation with the treating medical practitioner.

### 4. Suitable duties plans

4.1 The University provides, monitors and reviews a suitable duties plan, which is a program of employment providing an injured staff member with meaningful work to allow a gradual and safe return to normal duties. The aim of the plan is to optimise the worker's rehabilitation and not place them at any further risk of injury. For staff with work-related injuries this is prepared in accordance with workers' compensation legislation.

4.2 When an injured staff member is unable to return to their previous position, a suitable duties plan is developed by the Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator based on the medical certificate provided by the treating medical practitioner, and in consultation with the staff member and their Supervisor. The plan includes:

- the goal of the plan
- a list of duties and restrictions
- the hours to be worked
- details of training required
- anticipated time frame of the plan

4.3 In accordance with workers' compensation legislation, staff on WorkCover must actively participate in suitable duties as per their suitable duties plans. Failure to participate in suitable duties may result in suspension of WorkCover benefits.

4.4 When a staff member with a non-work-related injury fails to progress during a suitable duties plan, the University has the right to request the staff member visit another medical practitioner, or an appropriate specialist practitioner. Failure to co-operate with these arrangements may result in the cancellation of the suitable duties plan.

### 5. Salary payments during workplace rehabilitation

5.1 For staff on approved WorkCover, the University ensures that staff receive the equivalent of their full wages for the duration of the claim.

5.2 For non-work-related injuries, the staff member will be required to take personal leave in the form of sick or annual leave, for any time not worked, whilst injured.

### 6. Responsibilities

#### 6.1 Injured staff

6.1.1 Staff are responsible for obtaining appropriate medical treatment for an injury.

6.1.2 Staff must provide appropriate medical certification and leave forms, and for work-related injuries, WorkCover forms and documentation.

#### 6.2 Treating medical practitioner

The treating medical practitioner provides injury management and suitable duties information through the WorkCover medical certificate or a Work Capabilities form for non-work related injuries to assist with the development of a suitable duties plan. In some cases, the treating

medical practitioner may be required to approve the suitable duties plan to ensure it is in accordance with their ongoing treatment of the injured staff member.

### 6.3 Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator

6.3.1 The Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator works in consultation with the injured staff member, their supervisor, the treating medical practitioner, allied health professionals and WorkCover (if applicable) to develop an appropriate suitable duties plan.

6.3.2 Through consultation with the above mentioned stakeholders the Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator identifies any failures to meet the requirements of the suitable duties plan and addresses these issues with stakeholders concerned.

6.3.3 The Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator maintains confidential and accurate records of the above process, including communications between stakeholders, medical certificates, suitable duties plans etc.

6.3.3 The Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator liaises with USC payroll and coordinates remuneration for the injured staff member.

### 6.4 Supervisors

6.4.1 Supervisors ensure that injured staff submit an incident notification report and where appropriate, consult with the Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator about the injured staff member.

6.4.2 Supervisors have a critical role in ensuring the success of suitable duties plans, identifying current and suitable duties and helping to determine an appropriate suitable duties plan. Supervisors provide support in the implementation of a suitable duties plan, and monitor job performance and progress.

### 6.5 Other Staff

Colleagues within the relevant work area are encouraged to be involved positively and actively wherever possible to support the injured staff member and their return to work.

END

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#### RELATED DOCUMENTS

Health, Safety and Wellbeing - Governing Policy

Workplace Rehabilitation - Operational Policy

#### LINKED DOCUMENTS

Workplace Rehabilitation - Operational Policy

#### RELATED LEGISLATION / STANDARDS

Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003 (Qld)

USC Enterprise Agreement