

## **16.0 THE UL LAFAYETTE EARLY RETURN TO WORK PROCEDURE**

The procedure in this section has been adopted by the university administration. The purpose of this procedure is to establish a process for University employees injured on the job to safely resume their employment. Specifically, this document:

- Defines responsibilities among University personnel for this policy.
- Assigns various levels of returning to work for the purpose of implementing this policy.
- Identifies requirements for determining the level of work the employee is suitable to perform.
- Provides documentation and instructions for their use in association with this policy.

Because on-the-job injuries pertain to campus safety, this procedure shall be included in the UL Lafayette Environmental Health and Safety Policy. The university Human Resources Department shall administer the UL Lafayette Early Return to Work Procedure.

### **UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA AT LAFAYETTE'S EARLY RETURN TO WORK POLICY**

**EFFECTIVE DATE:**

**JULY 1, 2000**

#### **I. PHILOSOPHY**

The health and well being of all employees is of great importance to the University of Louisiana at Lafayette (UL - Lafayette). It is well documented that injuries affect the whole person and that an effective rehabilitation and treatment must address the whole person. Part of that treatment includes keeping physically and mentally active within the restrictions of the particular injury. UL - Lafayette will make reasonable efforts to help employees maximize their healing and facilitate their early return to work.

#### **II. POLICY**

Consistent with the general intent of Senate Concurrent Resolution 50 of the 1997 Regular Legislative Session regarding a Return-to-Work Policy for employees on Worker's Compensation, UL - Lafayette will make reasonable efforts to return to the workplace those employees of UL - Lafayette who have sustained job-related injuries or illnesses, and as a result, are temporarily prevented from returning to their full former employment. To return an employee to the workplace, UL - Lafayette will make

reasonable efforts to place the returning employee into a meaningful assignment, which he/she can perform while on light or limited duty on a temporary basis.

**UL - Lafayette does not guarantee placement and is under no obligation to offer, create, or encumber any specific position for the sole purpose of offering placement.** All final decisions regarding placement shall be made by the Human Resource Director of UL - Lafayette.

This policy is not intended to instruct the procedure applicable to employees who are eligible for reasonable accommodation under the Americans With Disabilities Act. Should an employee be eligible under the Americans With Disabilities Act (i.e., an employee having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such an individual, who, with or without reasonable

accommodation, is qualified for and can perform the essential functions of the position), the department head should contact the Human Resource Office for guidance.

First priority for any placement offered will be within the employee's department; second priority will be for placement in another department within UL – Lafayette's campus.

### **III. APPLICABILITY**

This policy applies to all employees of UL - Lafayette and to all departments of UL – Lafayette (student workers, faculty, staff, civil service employees).

### **IV. RESPONSIBILITY**

#### **A. UL - Lafayette Safety Coordinator Responsibility**

1. Reviews and analyzes injury data to spot trends of injuries and accidents;
2. Reviews Job Safety Analysis and acts as liaison with appropriate entities to correct and/or eliminate hazard;
3. Develops and implements employee safety training programs

#### **B. Fiscal Responsibility**

The salary and benefits of the injured employee will be the responsibility of the original employing department unless and until appropriate transfers have been approved by the Human Resources Director and finalized.

#### **C. Human Resources Responsibility**

1. Facilitates all case management activities;
2. Reviews forms for completion by correct person;
3. Informs injured employee of benefit options, rights, and responsibilities;
4. Maintains contact with the Human Resources Director, injured employee and Office of Risk Management (ORM);
5. Maintains injury records and history; and provides copies to the UL - Lafayette Safety Coordinator;
6. Acts as liaison for all interested parties;

7. Works with the supervisor to identify specific job tasks and suggests appropriate schedule/job modifications;
8. Concentrates on returning the employee to work activities that are based on physical capabilities and transferable skills.

Due to the scope of the various positions at UL – Lafayette, each job description will be done on a case to case basis. That is, if someone becomes injured and is unable to return to work at full capacity, a job description will be done at that time.

#### **D. Office of Risk Management**

The Office of Risk Management has the responsibility for the administration of claims for medical and disability benefits to employees who are injured on the job as well as responsibility for the coordination of the Early Return-To-Work Program, including light duty or alternate duty assignments (L.R.S. 39:1527-1544).

#### **E. Department Head Responsibility**

1. Initiates immediate medical attention for injured employee when necessary;\*
2. Reports the injury to and completes all paperwork required by the Human Resources Office as soon as possible;\*
  - a. Incident Investigation/Accident Investigation Report,
  - b. Employer's Report of Occupational Injury or Disease, and
  - c. Medical Release.
3. Informs employee of UL - Lafayette and department policies and practices;
4. Maintains contact with the injured worker and the Human Resources Office;
5. Develops a list of essential duties, on the OF-750 (attached), for the position to which the employee is permanently assigned, presents the completed document, along with the Physician's Certification (OF-752), to the employee for presentation to and completion by the employee's physician. The department head of any department where a position is being considered as a light-duty alternative shall develop a list of essential duties for that position being considered on the OF-750, for the same purpose.

6. Provides to the Human Resources Office an updated Physician's Certificate and List of Essential Duties upon receipt from the employee;
7. When appropriate, identifies or develops modified work assignment for employee, within medical restrictions.
8. After approval by the Human Resources Director and in conjunction with the immediate supervisor will advise the employee of the modified duty assignment or work schedule chosen and the stated period of the temporary assignment.
9. Concentrates on returning the employee to work activities that are based on physical capabilities and transferable skills.

**\* Applies to any employee incurring injury whether or not early return to work applies.**

#### **F. Employee Responsibility**

1. Reports injury immediately to supervisor;\*
2. Completes all needed paperwork as soon as possible;\*
3. Follows UL - Lafayette and department policies and practices (particularly regarding attendance);
4. Maintains regular contact with original supervisor;
5. Presents the List of Essential Duties (OF-750) and the Physician's Certification (OF-752), (which is provided by the department head), to his/her physician for completion. Returns the completed documents in the time period specified or presents to the department head legitimate justification for delay.
6. If offered, returns to modified duty status or modified work schedule which is within medical restrictions as set by the treating physician.
7. Provides original supervisor with regular updates on status. At least once a month, provides supervisor with a newly completed Physician's Certificate (OF-752) and List of Essential Duties (OF-750).

**\* Applies to any employee incurring injury whether or not early return to work applies.**

**V. EXCEPTIONS**

Exceptions to this policy must be requested of and approved by the Human Resources Director.

**IV. QUESTIONS**

Questions should be directed to the Human Resources Office