

# Foundation of a Best in Class Early Return - to - Work Program



## Tip for Managers:

Conduct periodic self-assessments of a random sampling of departmental RTW files.

## Useful Resources:

**Disability Management & Return-to-Work Self-Assessment Tools:**  
[http://riskmanagement.mylacounty.info/cms1\\_181155asp#TopOfPage](http://riskmanagement.mylacounty.info/cms1_181155asp#TopOfPage)

**Return-to-Work Manual:**  
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov/RTW/pdf/RTW%20Reference%20Manual.pdf>

**Model Interactive Process Documents:**  
<http://ceo.lacounty.gov/RTW/lpmeeting.html>

Much has been said about the benefit of workers' compensation early return-to-work programs and how such programs improve the situation of injured workers and reduce costs to employers. A fundamental requirement to establishing a best in class program is communicating with injured workers in a respectful, kind, consistent, and knowledgeable manner. Department Return-to-Work staff should:

- Communicate with the injured employee early and provide them with information related to early return-to-work and the workers' compensation third party administrator.
- Become a resource and provide the injured employee with your contact information and return phone calls.
- Emphasize the collaborative nature of the early return-to-work process.
- Engage the workers' compensation third party administrator to obtain work restrictions and capacities from the treating physician.
- Work with the injured workers' supervisor to research and evaluate possible accommodations.
- Communicate temporary alternate or modified positions to the injured employee in a positive manner.
- Convey your willingness to assist the injured employee if problems arise during the workers' compensation process.

