



WR&C ACT 1986
INJURY MANAGEMENT PRACTICE NOTE
FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR

INJURY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To ensure the injury management systems of public sector agencies:
- 1.1.1 Contributes to the achievement of the 'Safety and Wellbeing in the Public Sector 2010-2015' strategy;
 - 1.1.2 Incorporates the elements of 'best injury management practice';
 - 1.1.3 Leads to sustainable reduction in the human and financial costs associated with work related injury; and
 - 1.1.4 Assists agencies to fulfil the requirements of legislation and Government policy, including the Public Sector Audit & Verification (Safety & Injury Management) System.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The public sector is committed to a vision of zero harm and 100% return to work for all public sector employees who are injured at work. The 'Safety and Wellbeing in the Public Sector 2010-2015' strategy outlines Government's commitment to its employees in the area of occupational health, safety and injury management.
- 2.2 To meet its injury management commitment, Government recognises that early, safe and sustainable return to work is a key imperative. Public sector agencies need to have a dynamic and responsive injury management system that incorporates the following elements of 'best practice':
- 2.3 An early reporting system, that allows injuries to be reported immediately by a variety of means, e.g. electronic, phone, mail etc;
- 2.4 A responsive early intervention program, where contact is made with the injured employee as soon as reasonably practicable, to ensure they can:
- 2.4.1 Obtain access to timely and appropriate medical treatment;
 - 2.4.2 Have their rehabilitation needs promptly assessed and commenced where necessary;
 - 2.4.3 Be provided with meaningful and appropriate suitable duties in accordance with their medical capacity, to assist their recovery from injury.
- 2.5 There is an ongoing identification and review of an injured employee's skills and attributes with their established capacity for work, to ensure appropriate suitable employment is provided;
- 2.6 With the overall objective of reducing the cost and duration of existing disputes, government agencies will have a dispute management framework that is complementary to injury management, which includes:
- 2.6.1 An internal grievance/complaints procedure for claim related and other issues;
 - 2.6.2 A reconsideration process that reviews each decision once a dispute is received; and
 - 2.6.3 The use of alternate dispute resolution strategies, such as the use of Medical Panels SA, as a mechanism to facilitate resolution of issues that give rise to a dispute or resolve new disputes in a timely manner.

3. PRACTICE

3.1 It is recommended that:

3.1.1 To assist the delivery of prompt, equitable and efficient injury management services, public sector agencies ensure that:

- Injury management teams/units are adequately resourced;
- Injury management personnel are appropriately trained and/or qualified and are authorised to act and decide matters on behalf of the agency;
- Initial entitlements to compensation are considered as quickly as possible;
- Claim related decisions are made fairly, without bias and consistent with the provisions of the Act and supporting Regulations. Further, it is expected that claim related decisions comply with the requirement stipulated by the WorkCover Ombudsman that there “*be a proper basis to the decision, or that the decision be arguable on the law and facts*”;
- Injured workers are treated in an open, honest and courteous manner;
- The confidentiality of an injured employee’s information is maintained;
- Claim file documentation is date stamped, well maintained and decision-making is documented.
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3.1.2 To support this practice note, each agency details how its injury management activities are performed within its own operational policies and procedures.

3.1.3 To support managers and supervisors fulfil the injury management and return to work requirements of their role, agencies should have in place and implement a training program appropriate to the agency’s needs.

3.1.4 To ensure the injury management system operates as intended and is continuously improved, the key activities performed and their various elements should be the subject of regular audit, measurement and management review.

Should you have any questions in relation to this advice please direct your enquiry to Public Sector Workforce Relations (Workers Compensation Performance), Department of the Premier and Cabinet (phone 822 62683).

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