

## **Return to Work Policy**

### **Purpose**

As a health promoting service, we will promote the health and wellbeing of all staff during their return to work after injury or illness through policies, creating a safe and healthy physical environment, promoting good mental health and emotional wellbeing.

This policy confirms our commitment to:

- providing our staff with a safe, healthy and supportive environment for their return to work
- recognising that the health and wellbeing of our staff during this time is important.
- providing a supportive workplace culture for staff when returning to work.

### **Policy statement**

#### **Background**

Research has shown that an early return to work after a worker sustains an injury gives the best outcomes for both employees and employers. It's important for both employers and employees to take an active role in the process of returning to work, with a positive focus on what the worker can do rather than what they cannot\*

<https://www.rrp.com.au/vic-rtw-guidelines/>

#### **Whole service engagement**

It is recognised that every member can contribute to a positive return to work environment. All staff, relief staff, visiting students and volunteers will be supported to meet this policy.

#### **Responsibilities**

Management has a responsibility to:

- ensure all staff are supported during injury or illness
- ensure effective communication channels are in place between the kindergarten service, the employee and any medical professionals.
- enable and cultivate a workplace culture that promotes connectedness, is inclusive and provides support during a staff members illness or injury
- monitor the implementation of this policy
- ensure the policy is available to all staff and easy to access
- ensure that all staff are encouraged to contribute at review
- discuss any changes to the policy.
- Staff are encouraged to: read, fully understand and action the staff return to work policy in the event of injury or illness
- support the policy to ensure the workplace culture is supportive and positive for staff returning to work.
- be respectful of each other

#### **Procedures**

In the event of an injury or illness occurring at our workplace we will:

- Provide relevant first aid
- Document injury on the 'Register of Staff Injuries' form kept in the Workplace Health and Safety Folder. Any injuries must be brought to the attention of the Director/Nominated Supervisor. They will then inform the Committee of

Management. Any incident will be addressed on an individual basis.

- Advise staff members of their rights and go through the *Return to Work Information* document that is kept in the Workplace Health and Safety folder.
  - Attain relevant information from the staff member or medical practitioner about their capacity for work. Review their current *Certificate of Capacity*  
<https://content.api.worksafe.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-06/ISBN-Certificate-of-capacity-no-barcode-2014-07.pdf>
  - Find suitable tasks that is consistent with the staff members current or anticipated capacity for work. Consider if there are reasonable workplace supports or modifications that will assist the staff members return to work. Talk to the staff member, director, colleagues or medical practitioner/ Worksafe agent
  - Propose suitable tasks/ employment to the staff member. The following *Return to Work Arrangements* template can be used for this.  
[https://content.api.worksafe.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-06/FOR-Return-to-work-arrangements-2017-03\\_0.pdf](https://content.api.worksafe.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-06/FOR-Return-to-work-arrangements-2017-03_0.pdf)
- Where possible it is best to work collaboratively with the staff member and any other person involved in the return to work arrangements as this assists successful return to work, the form should then be signed by all parties.
- Ensure all staff members have an understanding of what the staff member returning to work can and can't do to help support them.
  - Monitor the staff members return to work and update the form as needed.
  - During this process the service will consider each worker's individual circumstances so that a return to work can be tailored to both themselves and their injury or illness.
  - The service will maintain the staff members privacy by communicating only information that is relevant to their return to work, information like staff members duties, restrictions and breaks. Medical information relating to their injury or illness should not need to be shared.
  - Additional resources regarding staff returning to work are kept in the Workplace Health and Safety folder.

In the event of an injury or illness to a staff member occurring outside of our workplace we will follow the above steps but all parties will take into consideration the circumstances and that WorkSafe or an agent will not be involved in the Return to Work process.

### **Return to Work Issue Resolution Procedure**

Any return to work complaints or issues will be resolved as per our Complaints and Grievances Procedure.