

Accredited Rehabilitation and Return to Work Program

Effective 1 July 2025

Table of Contents

Overview	3
Purpose	3
Referral to the Program	3
About WorkCover Queensland	4
What happens if I sustain a work-related injury or illness?	4
Roles, rights, and responsibilities for rehabilitation and return to work	5
Accessibility and inclusion — We're here to make things easier for you	7
What does research tell us about the benefits of work?	8
Our claims management approach	8
What happens after your claim is accepted	9
1. Getting started: First conversations	9
2. Your Rehabilitation and Return to Work Plan	9
3. Ongoing communication and support	10
4. Care conversations	10
5. Understanding your needs	10
6. Extra support if needed	10
Rehabilitation and return to work planning	10
Support for workers with mental injuries	12
What they do	16
How you can access this support	17
What if you're not happy with your provider?	17
How providers are chosen and monitored	17
Want to Learn More?	17
APPENDIX A – RRTW plan criteria and requirements	26
APPENDIX B - Services delivered by a return-to-work services provider	29

Overview

This document sets out WorkCover Queensland's Accredited Rehabilitation and Return to Work Program (**the Program**) as required under the [Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003](#) (Qld) (**the Act**).

The Program is primarily designed to explain to injured workers how we will facilitate early and safe rehabilitation and return to work, including how we use rehabilitation and return to work plans. It also provides clear guidance for employers and our claims managers.

Additional information and a link to the Program is available here

<https://www.workcoverqld.com.au/rehabilitation-and-return-to-work/our-accredited-rehabilitation-and-return-to-work-program>

Purpose

Your recovery, your journey — We're here to support you

At WorkCover Queensland, we understand that being injured at work can be overwhelming. That's why we're here to support you every step of the way through the Program.

The Program is designed with you at the centre. Our goal is to help you recover safely, maintain your dignity, and return to work in a way that feels right for you. We listen to your goals, respect your preferences, and work with you to create a plan that supports your health and wellbeing.

We believe that returning to work when it's safe for you to do so is an important part of your recovery. That's why we work closely with your treating doctor, your employer, and you to make sure your return is safe, timely, and tailored to your needs.

Everything we do is guided by Queensland's [Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 2003](#) (the Act) and national best practices. Our approach is based on evidence, early support, and genuine collaboration because we know that when you feel heard and supported, you're more likely to recover well.

The Program's purpose is simple: to help you heal, regain confidence, and get back to doing what matters to you at work and in life.

Referral to the Program

Once your claim is accepted, you'll be welcomed into our Program. We'll contact you by phone to confirm this and follow up with helpful information by email, so you know exactly what to expect and how we'll support you.

If we do not refer you to the Program or if you are no longer eligible to participate in the Program, we will provide written reasons for our decision.

If you are aggrieved by our decision, you are able to lodge an application for review with the Office of Industrial Relations within 3 months of receiving our written decision.

Further information on [Independent review of insurer decisions](#) is available.

About WorkCover Queensland

WorkCover is the main provider of workers' compensation insurance in Queensland. We are a government-owned statutory body established under the Act.

Our vision:

To be the best workers' compensation insurer and make a positive difference to people's lives.

We value:

- Excellence
- Integrity
- Respect
- Responsiveness

We aim to deliver valued experiences:

We care for and support injured workers and employers by engaging collaboratively.

Our [2024 – 2028 Corporate Plan](#) sets out more detailed information including our corporate goals, activities, and our performance indicators.

What happens if I sustain a work-related injury or illness?

If you're injured at work or become unwell because of your job, your health and safety come first. Here's what to do next to get the support you need:

- see a doctor or go to a hospital immediately for initial treatment
- get a [work capacity certificate](#) from your treating doctor
- let your employer know what has happened as soon as you can and provide a copy of the work capacity certificate to your employer
- [make a claim](#) with WorkCover and provide a copy of the work capacity certificate as we can only provide support from the date the doctor first assessed your injury
- [start your recovery](#) as soon as you can.

Further information on [what to do if an injury or illness occurs](#), [making a claim](#), [the claim process](#) and [getting back to work](#) are available on our [website](#).

Roles, rights, and responsibilities for rehabilitation and return to work

WorkCover

The rehabilitation and return to work process after a work-related injury or illness requires all parties to work together. WorkCover will give you and your employer an information statement outlining your rights and responsibilities after a claim is lodged:

- [Worker information statement](#)
- [Employer information statement](#).

WorkCover's role is focussed on supporting timely, effective, and sustainable rehabilitation and return to work outcomes for all workers after a work-related injury or illness. WorkCover does this by collaborating with all parties on the rehabilitation and return to work process including you, your employer, medical providers, and other stakeholders so you can return to work promptly and safely.

WorkCover's responsibilities for rehabilitation and return to work are set out under [section 220](#) of the Act, specifically that WorkCover must take all reasonable steps to secure the rehabilitation and early return to suitable duties of workers who have an entitlement to compensation and workers who are participating in the Program.

WorkCover is responsible for:

- determining claim liability and notifying an injured worker and their employer of its decision within 20 business days of receiving an application for compensation
- coordinating the development of a RRTW plan for each accepted claim within 10 business days, in consultation with an injured worker and their employer and treating health providers
- facilitating and guiding the RRTW process by maintaining collaborative communication with all relevant stakeholders (a worker and their employer, treating doctor and health providers, and the insurer)
- approving and paying for reasonable costs of medication, treatment, and rehabilitation
- developing this Program, that outlines how we will facilitate early and safe RRTW.

Workers

As someone recovering from a work-related injury or illness, you have a right to support and a role to play in your recovery. We'll work with you to make sure you understand what's expected, [your commitments](#) and how we can help. This includes satisfactorily participating in any return to work program or suitable duties arranged by WorkCover, which incorporates planning for your return to work with your employer.

Further information about your rights and responsibilities can be found in this [information statement](#).

Employers

Employers, including host employers where a labour hire worker is supplied, must take all reasonable steps to assist or provide a worker with rehabilitation. This includes cooperating with WorkCover to

take all reasonable steps to secure your rehabilitation and early return to suitable duties. Employers have additional obligations in relation to appointing rehabilitation and return to work coordinators and workplace rehabilitation policy and procedures under the Act.

Employers are also responsible for developing a suitable duties program for workers with reduced capacity who are unable to return directly to their pre-injury role. The purpose of a suitable duties program is to help workers recover and safely build their fitness and capacity to return to normal duties and work hours.

Information on [Understanding rehabilitation and return to work terms, roles and responsibilities](#), [Rehabilitation roles and responsibilities](#), [Employer obligations](#), and [other roles in a worker's rehabilitation](#) are available on our [website](#).

Further information about an employer's rights and responsibilities can be found in this [information statement](#).

Insurer, employer and worker responsibilities, and how these interact, are outlined below.

Accredited rehabilitation and return to work program (AARTW program)

The approach or overall system outlining how WorkCover Queensland will facilitate early rehabilitation and return to work.

Insurer's
responsibility

Rehabilitation and return to work plan (RRTW plan)

WorkCover must coordinate the development and maintenance of a RRTW plan for all workers who have been injured at work, within 10 business days of a claim being accepted.

A RRTW plan is a tailored written plan for an injured worker that:

- is developed with the worker
- promotes communication between stakeholders involved in the rehabilitation and return to work process
- sets out the responsibilities and actions required of WorkCover, the worker, employer and treating doctor
- identifies and focuses on the worker's goal and capacity
- identifies concerns, risk and perceived barriers to return to work and agreed strategies to address these
- is regularly reviewed.

WorkCover's
responsibility

Suitable duties program

Employers must provide suitable and meaningful work duties wherever possible to support a worker to recover at work. The suitable duties program in a RRTW plan details how an employer will provide suitable and meaningful work, including:

- tasks that an injured worker can safely perform at work while they recover from a work-related injury or illness
- timeframes to ensure it remains appropriate to the worker's recovery, as needs and circumstances may change over the life of a claim
- any necessary or recommended workplace accommodations, and other support measures required (for example, regular rest breaks, reduced work hours, a 'buddy' system, etc.).

A suitable duties program must be consistent with the standards prescribed in the *Guidelines for standard for rehabilitation (second edition)*.

Employer's
responsibility

- Report concerns, difficulties or increases in symptoms to their treating doctor.
- Take part in all rehabilitation designed to assist their recovery.
- Participate in planning their return to work with their employer.
- Ensure they understand their obligations.

Worker's responsibilities



Accessibility and inclusion — We're here to make things easier for you

We want to make sure you can access and understand everything you need during your recovery. If you need help reading or understanding this document, or if you'd prefer it in another language or format, just let us know. We can provide interpreters, translated materials, or accessible formats like large print or audio.

If English isn't your first language, or if you have difficulty communicating—whether due to language, hearing, or other reasons—we'll arrange the right support for you. This includes access to interpreters (including sign language) or translation services, in line with the [Queensland Government Language Services Policy](#).

You don't need to navigate this alone. Just ask, and we'll make sure you get the information and support in a way that works for you.

Please refer to our [glossary](#) for definitions of terms used in this document.

What does research tell us about the benefits of work?

WorkCover takes an evidence-based approach to rehabilitation and return to work.

Research confirms work is good for health and wellbeing. The Australasian Faculty of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (AFOEM) and the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (RACP) has published '[Realising the Health Benefits of Good Work](#)'. This research highlights that being off work for prolonged periods of time can significantly reduce the likelihood of you ever returning to work and can have a negative effect on you and your family.

Based on this evidence, we promote stay at work, or if you require time off work, we encourage early and safe recovery at work.

WorkCover supports AFOEM's focus to improve health and recovery outcomes and reduce barriers to care for people experiencing work injuries, outlined as part of AFOEM's '[It Pays to Care](#)' documents.

The Program uses a [tailored care and support approach](#) to claims management.

Further information on our [vision, values and goals](#), and our [research initiatives](#), including [customer feedback](#), are available on our [website](#).

Our claims management approach

We focus on identifying rehabilitation at work or return to work opportunities and risks at the outset of a statutory claim, even before liability is accepted. This is our tailored care and support approach to claims management.

We provide tailored care and support through two key methods:

- providing you with the level of support you need based on your individual circumstances
- using care conversations to better understand how we can support you and any barriers that may be getting in the way of your recovery and return to work.

You are at the centre of your rehabilitation and return to work planning. WorkCover will work with you to develop a [rehabilitation and return to work plan](#) that is focused on your specific goals and sets out your path to recovery. This plan will be created in collaboration with you, your doctor and other treating medical and allied health providers, your employer, and WorkCover.

In some circumstances, such as when ongoing rehabilitation and return to work support is not required beyond the time of a claim being accepted, a rehabilitation and return to work plan will not be developed.

Further information about our claim management approach is available on our [website](#).

What happens after your claim is accepted

Once you are in the Program, we will work closely with you, your employer, and your treating health providers to support your recovery and help you return to work safely.

Here's what you can expect:

1. Getting started: First conversations

We'll have an initial conversation with you and your employer to:

- confirm your details
- set expectations
- explain everyone's responsibilities under the law.

These responsibilities include:

- You: You're expected to take part in your rehabilitation and return to work planning ([Section 232](#) of the Act).
- Your employer: They must help with your rehabilitation and support your return to work ([Section 228](#)).
- WorkCover: We're responsible for helping you recover and return to work, and for referring you to the Program ([Section 220](#)).

2. Your Rehabilitation and Return to Work Plan

We'll work with you, your employer, and your treating health providers to create a Rehabilitation and Return to Work (RRTW) plan. This plan outlines:

- your recovery goals
- the steps we'll take together
- any suitable duties you can do at work.

We'll keep this plan updated as your recovery progresses. See the next section, '*Rehabilitation and return to work planning*' for more information on RRTW plans.

3. Ongoing communication and support

We'll stay in touch with you, your employer, your doctor, and other support people. This might include phone calls, emails, or meetings (called case conferences). We'll make sure your rehabilitation and return to work plan is focused on your goals and tailored to your situation.

We store your information securely, and you can access it anytime through our Worker Assist app, and your employer can use our WorkCover Connect portal.

4. Care conversations

You'll have regular "care conversations" with us. These are supportive chats where we:

- listen to your concerns
- help you understand your injury and recovery
- talk about your goals
- share helpful resources and services.

These conversations help us build a plan that works for you and keeps your recovery on track.

5. Understanding your needs

You may be asked to complete a short online questionnaire. It's based on research and helps us understand your situation better—especially if there's a risk of delayed recovery. Your answers help us match you with the right support.

6. Extra support if needed

We'll also:

- monitor for signs of mental health concerns and offer support early
- help develop suitable duties programs with your employer
- arrange job placement or training if needed
- refer you to workplace rehabilitation services or independent medical examinations if required.

Rehabilitation and return to work planning

Your Rehabilitation and Return to Work plan is built around you. It's a shared roadmap that outlines your goals, what support you'll receive, and how we'll work together to help you recover and return to work safely.

A RRTW plan is not only a planning tool, but a communication tool that outlines the ways to manage and support your return to work.

WorkCover takes a person-centred approach to RRTW planning. In practice, this means RRTW plans are specifically tailored to your individual needs and circumstances and written clearly and concisely so they can be understood by all parties.



The plan is developed in consultation with you, your employer and treating health providers and ensures coordination and collaboration to give a shared understanding of:

- roles, responsibilities, and actions
- steps and timeframes
- injury details and treatment plan
- your goals, capabilities, and restrictions
- work duties and workplace support to be provided to support your recovery.

A copy of the RRTW plan is shared with you, your employer and treating health providers following its development. If your plan contains any personal information, such as other health conditions or personal goals, we will obtain your consent before sharing your plan.

Your RRTW plan must be developed within 10 business days after your application for compensation is accepted, in accordance with [section 221](#) of the Act.

RRTW plans are:

- reviewed and modified as further information becomes available; your progress against the plan is assessed and decisions are made; and
- prepared and reviewed in consultation with you, your employer and treating health providers, to the extent that it is reasonably practicable to do so.

You will be provided with information outlining your rights relating to participating in your RRTW plan, the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved in the plan, and the privacy of your RRTW plan in accordance with the [Information Privacy Act 2009 Qld](#) (the IP Act). More information can be found in this [information statement for workers](#).

It is best to develop a RRTW plan as early as possible following an injury. This provides you with an early opportunity to discuss any concerns and ensures that you, your employer and treating health providers are involved in setting objectives, goals and planning for your RRTW.

The early development of the RRTW plan starts with contacting you and relevant parties such as your employer and treating health providers to gather information to understand your circumstances and progress your rehabilitation and return to work. For complex claims and/or claims for psychological injury, a [Return to Work Services provider](#) may assist in the development and/or implementation of the RRTW plan.

RRTW planning conversations may include:

- gaining an understanding of your RRTW goals and objectives
- outlining expectations, roles and responsibilities of each party and ensuring all parties understand the process and obligations.
- Gaining an understanding of your occupation, work duties, employment arrangement, the event, injury and symptoms, treatment, and investigations (past and present), pre-existing

injuries, capacity for work, availability of suitable duties, access to online services, and any barriers or flags.

- gaining an understanding of any factors that may lead to a delay in your rehabilitation or return to work. These factors include your rehabilitation and return to work expectations, social support available, psychological impacts of injury including your ability to cope with your injury, general health conditions, access to return to work focused treatment, and knowledge of the workers' compensation process. If any of these risk factors are identified, we will implement strategies to address them. For example, if you are not coping due to the impact of your injury, we will offer you [Adjustment to Injury counselling to help you understand your injury better and give you coping strategies.](#)
- reaching a shared understanding of the actions and strategies required to achieve your short-term and long-term goals, who is responsible for each action, and timeframes for each action.

As RRTW plans are specifically tailored, the level of detail included in these plans varies depending on the complexity of your injury and your individual circumstances and needs. [Appendix A](#) summarises the types of plans developed for different claim types.

RRTW plans are updated to reflect any changes in the direction, recovery timeframe (if known) or goal of the rehabilitation objectives for you, within five business days of the change being identified.

Amendments to the plan are communicated to all relevant parties. You will be contacted within five business days of receiving the latest information to discuss the amendments to your plan.

Support for workers with mental injuries

If you're experiencing a mental injury, we're here to support you early – because your mental health matters. We can help with counselling, medical appointments, and other services to support your recovery.

[Early psychological support services](#) are available to you during the period which starts from the day the application is made and ends on the day WorkCover determines your application.

This treatment might include:

- GP mental health appointments
- counselling or psychology sessions
- psychiatry appointments
- reasonable travel expenses incurred to access/attend treatment
- medication, such as antidepressants.

WorkCover can also help with mediation services, or a workplace facilitated discussion between you and your employer, to support rehabilitation and the return to work process.

WorkCover does not cover early psychological support services related to:

- in-patient hospital costs
- costs related to a hospital stay, such as nursing, or medications received in hospital.

If the claim is accepted, the services covered by WorkCover can continue as per the recommendations of your treating medical practitioner.

If the claim is not accepted, WorkCover will advise you that services are no longer funded. **Please note:** You will not be required to repay any services that have been previously funded by WorkCover.

You are not obliged to participate in early psychological support services during the determination of your claim. However, WorkCover will always inform you that we can coordinate early psychological support to help you with your recovery.

WorkCover will contact you at the earliest opportunity to discuss eligibility and options available to you relating to early psychological support services. This is undertaken in several ways:

- Phone conversation – this conversation will be documented in our claims system. This conversation is designed to help you obtain the right support service at the right time as prescribed by your treating medical team. The conversation will take place at the earliest opportunity.
- An SMS and/or email may be issued to you – this includes a link to our website where you can find further information regarding early psychological support services. This SMS and/or email is automatically sent to you at initial registration of the claim (when we have your contact details).

Further information on [mental injuries](#) are available on our [website](#).

This support is also available to you, if you have an accepted physical injury and later submit a [work capacity certificate](#) for a mental injury. It is also available if your application is initially denied, however that [decision](#) is set aside by Workers' Compensation Regulatory Services and a fresh decision is required.

Minimising risk of psychological harm

WorkCover must take all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of you sustaining a psychiatric or psychological injury arising from a physical injury, including by providing early psychological support services to you.

To meet this obligation, our approach to claims management includes care conversations that are focused on understanding how an injury is impacting you and your mental health. In addition to care conversations, as part of your recovery you may be asked to complete a short questionnaire – like the Orebro Musculoskeletal Pain Screening Questionnaire. This helps WorkCover understand if you might

be at risk of slower recovery or if you need extra support. If you are facing challenges returning to work, this tool can identify whether you might be at risk of developing a secondary psychological injury, so WorkCover can offer the right support early.

If you return a 'high-risk' questionnaire response, you may be offered support such as [Adjustment to Injury Counselling](#) to minimise the risk of a psychological injury arising. Your claim contact will continue to monitor the risk of a secondary psychological injury arising through ongoing regular care conversations and send further Orebro questionnaires to ensure this risk is minimised throughout your recovery and until your entitlement to compensation ends.

Supporting your rehabilitation and return to work

WorkCover must take all reasonable steps to secure your rehabilitation and early safe return to suitable duties.

Our approach to rehabilitation is focussed on ensuring your earliest return to work; or to maximise your independent functioning.

This includes focussing on returning you to:

1. pre-injury duties; or if not feasible
2. other suitable duties (temporary or permanent) at your pre-injury employer; or if not feasible
3. other suitable duties (temporary or permanent) with another employer; or if the first three options are not feasible
4. maximising your independent functioning.

WorkCover will work with your pre-injury employer to identify options for returning to pre-injury duties or suitable duties. We will aim to connect and engage you with the key people at your place of employment. This might include the following:

1. Rehabilitation and return to work coordinator (RRTWC)
2. Supervisor.

We will work together to develop shared goals and objectives that will be set out in your RRTW plan and any subsequent suitable duties program to support your return to work.

A suitable duties program sits within a RRTW plan and is developed by your employer. It is an official document that clearly sets out the tasks you'll do as part of your job while you get better. It'll also state how long you'll do these tasks for and whether they'll change as your work fitness improves.

Your suitable duties program will be developed by your employer in consultation with you, us, your treating health providers, and any external providers engaged by WorkCover to help with your RRTW plan. We will closely monitor your progress against these goals, facilitate any adjustments to the RRTW plan as necessary and help keep things on track towards your end goals.

We will also engage with your employer to ensure they meet their own obligations to assist with or provide rehabilitation under section 228 of the Act. This includes ensuring they are taking all reasonable steps to assist or provide you with rehabilitation of a suitable standard (as set out in the [Guidelines for Standard of Rehabilitation](#)) from the day you are injured. We will request employers specifically provide written evidence to us if they advise they are unable to provide you with suitable duties. If, after receiving all evidence we are unsatisfied with the evidence provided, penalties may be applied to the employer.

Your claim contact may also engage a [Return to Work Services provider](#) to work in consultation with us, you, your employer, and relevant stakeholders to help you achieve your rehabilitation and return to work goals.

If your employer is unable to provide appropriate suitable duties, WorkCover will look at a [host employment placement](#), an alternative opportunity and location where you can do suitable duties, for the purpose of rehabilitating you back to your pre-injury role. A placement is only used once it has been determined that your employer does not have suitable duties available.

The benefits of a host employment placement include a quick and safe return to work, the opportunity to develop a range of work skills and improve work fitness, less disruption to your family, work, and social life, as well as improved employment and financial security, less time spent recovering from an injury and potentially a reduced level of impairment.

Prior to sourcing a potential placement, your claim contact will consider the intended goals so that the most appropriate employer provides:

- **Work hardening:** The host employer provides a place of employment to perform work tasks. You build your capacity to work as you recover from your injury and return to your pre-injury role.
- **Vocational placement:** If you cannot return to your pre-injury role, WorkCover identifies a host employer who has a vacant job that you may be able to temporarily fill once you are able to work again. The ideal outcome is that you remain at work with that place of employment even after your claim finishes.

Your claim contact can identify and place you with a host employer; however, they may also engage an external Return to Work Services provider to help identify and find a host employment placement for you.

Raising concerns about your rehabilitation and return to work plan — We're here to help

If you have any concerns about your RRTW plan, it's important to know that you have support and options.

In the first instance, please contact your WorkCover claim contact. They're here to listen, work with you, and help ensure your plan is suitable and aligned with your functional abilities and personal goals. Open and early communication can make a big difference in resolving issues quickly and positively.

Still concerned? You have options

If you feel your concerns haven't been resolved, you can:

- ask to speak with a Customer Manager, a manager in our claims area, to escalate your concerns
- request a review of decisions made about your rehabilitation
- contact [Workers' Compensation Regulatory Services \(WCRS\)](#)
- contact the [Workers' Compensation Information and Advisory Service](#) for free, confidential and independent support as you navigate a workers' compensation claim.

Your recovery journey is important, and so is your voice. We're committed to working with you to make sure you feel safe, supported, and empowered every step of the way.

What happens if I am unable to return to my pre-injury employer or duties due to my injury?

In instances where you are unable to return to your pre-injury employer or duties due to your work-related injury, we will look at options for alternative employment by providing support with reskilling or retraining, vocational assessments, job coaching and advice and access to employment network services. We may also fund necessary and reasonable training that will assist you in achieving a sustainable return to work outcome.

Sometimes we are unable to provide all these services on our own. When this occurs, we will engage an external Return to Work Services Provider who specialises in workplace rehabilitation services to work in consultation with us, you, your employer, and relevant stakeholders to help you achieve your goals.

Getting extra help with your recovery – Return to Work Services Providers

In most cases, your rehabilitation and return to work will be straightforward. But if you need extra support, your claim contact may connect you with a Return to Work Services Provider. If a referral is required, you will be advised of this before the referral is made. These providers are specialists in workplace rehabilitation and can help you overcome challenges that may be affecting your rehabilitation or ability to return to work.

What they do

[Return to Work Services Providers](#) (also called workplace rehabilitation providers) are independent organisations made up of qualified health professionals. They work with you, your employer, WorkCover, and your treating health providers to:

- understand your situation and needs
- offer expert advice and practical solutions

- help you return to work safely and sustainably
- address any barriers that might be slowing your recovery.

They are not part of WorkCover or your employer, which means they can offer independent support and guidance.

How you can access this support

You don't have to wait to be referred. At any point during your claim, you can ask your claim contact to refer you to a Return to Work Services Provider. Your Advisor will assess whether this support is appropriate and helpful for your situation. If it is, they'll choose a provider from our approved panel who offers the services you need, ideally in a location that's convenient for you.

What if you're not happy with your provider?

If you're not satisfied with the provider you've been referred to, you have the right to request a different one. Just let your claim contact know, and they'll help you choose another provider from our panel. You can view the full [list of approved providers and their locations](#) on our website.

How providers are chosen and monitored

WorkCover only works with providers who meet strict quality and service standards. These providers are selected through a formal process and must follow the [Return to Work Services Table of Costs](#) (documents that list approved services, who can provide the services and the maximum fees payable), and the [Principles of Practice for Workplace Rehabilitation Providers](#).

We regularly monitor their performance through:

- service level standards (SLS) and quality checks
- feedback and complaints management
- quarterly performance scorecards
- a compliance framework to ensure high standards are maintained.

We offer specialised providers for different needs, such as:

- returning to the same employer
- finding a new employer
- psychological injury support
- host placement and return to work facilitation.

Employers can also nominate preferred providers if it helps with local knowledge or early intervention.

Want to learn more?

You can find more information about our [Return to Work Services Provider panel](#) and the types of services they offer in Appendix B of this document or by visiting our website.

Other services you can access

There are many different kinds of medical and allied health professionals that you can access to support your recovery.

Approved registered providers include:

- medical practitioners
- dentists
- physiotherapists
- occupational therapists
- psychologists
- counsellors
- psychotherapists
- speech pathologists
- chiropractors
- osteopaths
- podiatrists
- Chinese medicine practitioners for acupuncture only.

Employment Connect

Employment Connect, is a specialised service offering within the Program, designed for those workers who may need more targeted rehabilitation and vocational support.

Your claim contact may offer you the Employment Connect service if it's identified that you need more targeted rehabilitation support based on your individual circumstances. Rehabilitation may also be made available to you if you have a current [common law claim](#) – either you request it or WorkCover believes it could help you.

Employment Connect is focussed on your current needs and understanding how we can better support you to achieve your goals and empower you in your journey.

We do this by undertaking an early, whole-person initial needs conversation and assessment with you to best understand your current circumstances and to identify potential barriers that we may need to work through together. We need to better understand what may be impacting on your capability to return to employment or increase your employment capacity and then assist in developing your goals. This person-centred approach is the key to Employment Connect.

If you are participating in Employment Connect, developing a tailored, goal-orientated RRTW plan may include:

- a self-managed and supported pathway;
- the use of more specialised rehabilitation and return to employment services with ongoing support; or

- a hybrid version of both as required. This will involve the co-development and agreement on an action plan with key goals and steps to help support you on your specific journey.

You will be able to outline the goals that you identify in your RRTW plan. This will set out your short-term goals as milestones so you can track your success. Your action steps are what you are going to commit to or bring as part of building your future.

We will support you in creating your rehabilitation and return to work plan. We will review this plan together regularly as well as make any adjustments needed to achieve your goals.

You will have an Employment Connect support person who will be available with the aim to support, assist, monitor, adjust, change the focus, help you progress towards the agreed outcomes and be there for you throughout your Employment Connect service.

We encourage you to maintain open communication to ensure we are providing the necessary support for you to meet your return to work goals as part of the Program. We will also regularly check in with you as you progress in your plan to make sure you are on track to be successful against your goals. We will check in with all other parties to ensure we are all connected and on track for a successful outcome.

Policy and procedures

WorkCover has in place policies and procedures that outline how we approach RRTW options for workers and employers. These policies and procedures are available for our claims staff on our intranet.

These policies and procedures address:

- our operations and commitment to RRTW
- how we monitor and satisfy the requirements of the Act as they relate to RRTW
- our commitment to work with employers and providers to achieve the best outcome for workers.

These policies and procedures are reviewed to ensure they remain current and in line with the Act and best practice. We also undertake ongoing evaluation of return to work outcomes to ensure the effectiveness of current policies and procedures.

Continuous improvement initiatives are in place to ensure the current systems and policies for return to work remain appropriate and ensure return to work outcomes of the Program are achieved (for both workers and employers). These include:

- applying outputs from quality assurance activities, including an internal audit schedule
- reviews of business policies and procedures
- relationship management of key stakeholders e.g., unions, industry groups, provider associations

- our Voice of Customer program
- data and reporting.

Outputs from the above business activities and programs of work are applied across all our business activities. These include:

- quality assurance findings and feedback provided to leaders and individual staff for the purposes of training and development; plus, any general refresher training and updated resources on key focus areas identified in any quality assurance work.
- Voice of Customer program findings used to explore new ways of working and changes to policies and processes.
- direct stakeholder feedback in reviewing business policies and procedures, fees and external guidelines that underpin the Program.

Our [website](#) also sets out information and guidance for workers, employers, providers, and other stakeholders as they relate to RRTW.

Information about the Program has a designated section under the [Rehabilitation and Return to Work](#) section of our website.

Implementation

WorkCover is committed to ensuring that our claims staff are appropriately skilled and trained. We have rigorous selection and recruitment strategies to ensure we appoint people who match our values and have the skills and knowledge to support our corporate strategy, particularly successful RRTW outcomes.

We support ongoing staff professional development through:

- standardised and centralised onboarding and training programs for our new staff
- ongoing technical and professional training, delivered both internally and externally
- specialist claims reviews and clinics undertaken by internal subject matter experts and/or by external providers such as allied health and medical providers
- feedback from peer reviews and quality assessments of claim files
- sharing industry specific and relevant medical and allied health learnings
- access to relevant professional publications such as [Return to Work Matters](#)
- involvement in industry forums, industry events, seminars, workshops, and webinars as appropriate
- records of training completed are recorded in the individual's own learning and development plan
- ongoing performance measurement and monitoring that includes RRTW outcomes. These measures and results are discussed in monthly one on ones, team meetings and annual performance reviews.

Our Claims Capability Uplift (CCU) project was initiated in 2024 and has developed a framework for designing and embedding claims capability uplift initiatives. The framework aims to standardise WorkCover's processes for uplifting skills across claims teams and is focused on four key areas: reviewing and responding to compliance and/or capability needs; developing and operationalising standards and controls; delivering training and embedding change; and measuring the outcomes against intended success measures.

WorkCover is committed to communicating regularly with employers, workers and providers. We work in partnership with key stakeholders including medical and allied health associations, unions, employer, and industry bodies to help educate and improve our relationships with their members. Medical and allied health providers can have a significant impact on our service delivery and outcomes. WorkCover has established [provider panels](#) to support our claims staff and deliver services to our customers. These include:

- Return to Work Services
- Audiology
- Medical and Allied Health
- Independent Medical Examiners.

Providers are appointed via an open tender process and are closely monitored against service level standards and performance reporting to ensure they are supporting our business objectives including return to work outcomes. The scope of work and the nature of services delivered by our procured panels are reviewed and updated based on demand and evolving claims trends.

Further information on our [provider panels](#) is available on our [website](#).

Measurement and evaluation of the Program

WorkCover's [Corporate Plan](#) sets out our performance indicators. WorkCover's Board and Executive Leadership Team monitor our performance against these measures monthly and the results are reported in our [Annual Report](#).

A range of performance measures for RRTW are also monitored by the business. These are tracked in our claims system, dashboards, monthly operational reporting, and data analytics applications. These measures include:

- average weekly compensation paid days
- average stay at work %
- average first return to work days
- return to work % at 4, 6 and 12 weeks
- final return to work %
- final return to work % (by return-to-work hierarchy).

Internal quality assessments and reviews by internal and external auditors are conducted regularly. These reviews focus on key aspects of claims management and legislative requirements to identify training, areas of improvement and development opportunities and ensure that we are meeting our legislative obligations.

In addition to monitoring our overall rehabilitation and return to work results, we also review any specific trends in an industry, geographical location, or injury type. We also monitor return to work results and initiatives in other jurisdictions to ensure we are implementing best practice strategies and achieving superior results in comparison with other schemes.

Privacy

WorkCover provides a range of workers' compensation services to Queensland businesses and you as a worker. To provide these services, WorkCover handles a significant amount of personal and sensitive information. WorkCover is committed to managing and protecting information privacy by responsibly collecting, using, storing, and disclosing the personal and sensitive information it holds, in a way that is consistent with its legal obligations.

As a Queensland Government owned statutory body established under the Act, WorkCover is bound by the [Information Privacy Act 2009 \(Qld\) \(IP Act\)](#) and complies with *Queensland Privacy Principles (QPP)*.

Further information on [Privacy](#) and our [Privacy Statement](#) is available on our [website](#).

If I have concerns or complaints throughout the course of my claim or about the Program, how will it be dealt with?

WorkCover upholds procedural fairness in decision-making, reflecting our [corporate values](#) and customer strategy principles.

Claim-based decisions are made in line with the relevant sections of the Act; and, where required, written Reasons for Decisions are provided to you and/or your employer.

We act in line with our [Code of Conduct](#). Specifically, we: “treat all people equitably and consistently, and demonstrate the principles of procedural fairness and natural justice when making decisions.”

Insurer decisions

Workers' Compensation Regulatory Services (WCRS) in the Office of Industrial Relations is responsible for undertaking reviews of insurer decisions under [Chapter 13](#) of the Act. This function aims to provide independent, prompt, non-adversarial review of certain decisions made by insurers.

If you or your employer are unhappy with a decision made by WorkCover, you may ask us for reasons for decision within 20 business days of being advised of the decision.

You or your employer are then able to lodge an application for review with the Office of Industrial Relations within 3 months of receiving our written decision.

Further information on [Independent review of insurer decisions](#) is available.

Complaints

WorkCover recognises the importance of complaints management as part of quality customer experience. We are accountable for our actions and decisions. Customers and stakeholders have the right to complain when an issue arises.

Our complaints management policy was developed in accordance with Australian Standard AS/NZS 10002-2014 Guidelines for complaint management and the requirement for agencies to implement a complaint management system under section 264 of the [Public Sector Act 2022](#) .

WorkCover's complaints management system is based on the following principles:

- enabling complaints—providing easy access to make complaints, ensuring transparency for the complainant
- managing complaints—timely responses reached with objectivity, fairness, equity, and privacy
- facilitating an outcome—ensuring all parties are supported and understand their rights and responsibilities, and empowering our people to resolve issues as they arise
- accountability and continuous improvement—clearly explaining the outcome, learning from every complaint, and improving future service delivery
- customer experience—listening to and confirming the context of customer complaints; providing fair and transparent information to customers around WorkCover's processes and communicating openly when responding to customer complaints.

WorkCover's commitment to complaints includes:

- resolving customer complaints quickly and fairly and we empower our people to resolve issues as they arise.
- living our values of excellence, integrity, responsiveness, and respect when doing our work.
- supporting the right of workers, employers and stakeholders to have their complaints heard and actioned appropriately when they feel we have not met their expectations.
- believing that all customer feedback, both positive and negative, presents an opportunity for improvement.

WorkCover welcomes customer feedback and uses positive and constructive feedback as an opportunity to improve. Our people are expected to treat everyone fairly and equitably. Throughout

the complaints process, all parties must be treated respectfully and their issues managed with integrity.

We provide information, education, and training to our people on complaints management via on-the-job coaching, online courses, and resources on our intranet.

We have a dedicated Complaints Management team who are appropriately trained to oversee complaints resolution and review processes. The Complaints Management Specialist is also responsible for the quality of data recorded and reporting of feedback trends information for continuous improvement.

The WorkCover complaints management system functions as follows:

1. Frontline complaints handling
Our people are empowered to listen to and resolve complaints. Most complaints should not take more than one business day to resolve.
2. Internal complaints resolution workflow
The Complaints Management Specialist is responsible for coordinating the resolution process when the complaint:
 - cannot be resolved at the frontline within one working day
 - is a written complaint
 - is referred by an external agency; or
 - is received through social media.In these circumstances, the Complaints Management Specialist will:
 - review complaints and refer them to an appropriate person for investigation and resolution
 - review responses to ensure the issue/s has been addressed
 - ensure all details are recorded to allow analysis of complaints.
3. External review
If a complaint is not resolved to the complainant's satisfaction, we will advise of external review options.

How to make a complaint

If you would like to make a complaint you can do so in the following ways:

- [Lodge a complaint online](#)
- Call us on **1300 927 928**
- Write to the Complaints Management Specialist at GPO Box 2459, Brisbane QLD 4001
- Fax us on 1300 651 387, Attention: Complaints Management Specialist
- Email us at corporate.affairs@workcoverqld.com.au

Further information on WorkCover's [complaints policy](#) is available on our [website](#).

Customer Conduct

WorkCover is committed to providing a safe working environment for our people. This means any aggressive or abusive behaviour towards our people will not be tolerated in line with our [Zero tolerance of aggression towards WorkCover Queensland employees](#) policy. Professional conduct is expected of all parties and unreasonable complainants will be dealt with according to WorkCover's managing unreasonable customer conduct policy.

APPENDIX A – RRTW plan criteria and requirements

Medical expenses only		
Criteria	RRTW Plan required	Development timeframe
- Allowed claim - No psychological injury - Medical expenses only - Clear goal of return to pre-injury job/tasks - Duties easily accommodated in the workplace in line with Work Capacity Certificate.	A documented file note in the RRTW screen with details and dates (where applicable) that includes: - Clear title/heading detailing the file note is in place of a documented RRTW plan - Injury details and diagnosis - Medical treatment provided and treating health provider details - Future medical treatment and/or medical reviews required (including timeframes and treating health provider details) - Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator (RRTWC) details if applicable - Formal confirmation that a worker acknowledges the plan and their rights and responsibilities, including date insurer communicated this information to a worker.	Within 10 business days after the worker's application for compensation is allowed.
Less than one week of time off work		
Criteria	RRTW plan required	Development timeframe
- Allowed claim - Time off work less than one week (7 calendar days) from date of claim acceptance - Certified fit to return to full pre-injury job/tasks - Clear goal of return to pre-injury job/tasks.	A documented file note in the RRTW screen with details and dates (where applicable) that includes: - Clear title/heading detailing the file note is in place of a documented RRTW plan. - Injury details and diagnosis. - Medical treatment provided and treating health provider details. - Future medical treatment and/or medical reviews required (including timeframes and treating health provider details). - RRTWC details. - Formal confirmation that a worker acknowledges the plan and their rights and responsibilities, including date insurer communicated this information to a worker.	Within 10 business days after the worker's application for compensation is allowed.

Unfit for work for more than one week, or ongoing partial incapacity

Criteria	RRTW plan required	Development timeframe
- Allowed claim - Totally or partially unfit for work for more than 7 days from date of claim acceptance - Diagnosis of one or multiple conditions; complex physical conditions, which may include secondary psychological conditions.	- A documented RRTW plan - The RRTW plan tailored to the needs, goals, and objectives of the worker	Within 10 business days after the worker's application for compensation is allowed.

With either:

- Clear goals for return to pre-injury role
- Uncertainty in ability to return to pre-injury duties
- Likely requires graduated return to work
- Previous failed attempts at return to work
- Return to work goals is unclear
- Return to work goal is a new employer.

Unfit for work – more than 4 weeks (greater than 28 calendar days unfit or partially fit for work)

Criteria	RRTW plan required	Development timeframe
- Allowed claim - Totally or partially unfit for work for more than 28 calendar days from date of claim acceptance - Diagnosis: multiple conditions; complex physical condition; may include secondary psychological condition - May be unclear if can return to pre-injury duties and/or - Likely to require graded return to work and/or workplace accommodations and/or - Previous failed attempt at return to work and/or - Return to work goal is unclear and/or - Return to work goal is 'new employer.'	- A documented RRTW plan - Comprehensive consultation with stakeholders - The RRTW plan is tailored to the needs, goals, and objectives of the worker.	Within 10 business days after the worker's application for compensation is allowed.

Claims for mental injury

Criteria	RRTW plan required	Development timeframe
- For psychological injuries, as part of initial offers of reasonable support services, WorkCover must discuss the need to undertake RRTW planning - Development of the RRTW plan, however, commences only upon claim being allowed. - Diagnosis: psychological condition.	- A documented RRTW plan - It may not be possible for the RRTW plan to be finalised while a worker is acutely unwell, but the purpose of the plan may be discussed, and the expectation can be set early that a RRTW plan will be developed as soon as possible - Comprehensive consultation with stakeholders - The RRTW plan is tailored to the needs, goals, and objectives of the worker.	Within 10 business days after the worker's application for compensation is allowed.

APPENDIX B - Services delivered by a return to work services provider

SERVICE	DESCRIPTOR
Workplace Evaluation/Assessment (Worksite assessment)	This involves the provider visiting the workplace usually with both the worker and employer to complete an assessment/evaluation of the workplace to identify appropriate duties for the worker considering job performance and recommend viable solutions, identification of suitable duties, advice on workplace design, modification or provision of aids and appliances.
Suitable Duties Program (SDP)	Documentation of suitable duties for a worker, detailing specific information necessary for a safe and effective return to the workplace.
Job seeking skills assessment	Identification of transferable skills to a new job/career or to assist in finding a host placement.
Job preparation service	Career counselling and job search preparation which may include interview preparation and practice, job seeking skills and resume writing.
Job placement service - New employer	Actively sourcing and placing a worker in new employment includes durable recover at work placements.
Job placement service - Work Hardening	Actively sourcing and placing a worker in an appropriate temporary job placement where the current employer cannot provide appropriate duties for them. Includes temporary RAW placements.
Vocational assessment	Comprehensive evaluation of a worker's job potential and identification of realistic vocational options in the current job market or environment.
Functional Capacity Evaluation (FCE)	Assessment of a worker's functional capacity for work or potential to return to suitable work where the information is not available through other means. It is a comprehensive assessment of a worker's functional abilities tested in an in-room environment.
Workplace Facilitated Discussion	A meeting to resolve significant barriers in the workplace and support workers and employers in their return-to-work efforts.
Psychological Functional Capacity Evaluation (PFCE)	Assessment of a worker's capacity to perform cognitive tasks, offering a baseline measurement of current symptoms and fitness for work.
Monitoring Suitable Duties program	Communication with relevant stakeholders including the worker, employer, doctor, and insurer about a worker's progress on an existing suitable duties program.