

Procedure for Light Duty Pool Jefferson County

Purpose

To establish a policy regarding the rapid, safe return to work after an on-the-job injury through the utilization of a Light Duty Pool, as established by Administrative Order 96-2.

Policy

It is the policy of the Occupational Health Office of the Human Resources Department of Jefferson County to return Injured Workers to work safely and as quickly as possible. From time to time, an Injured Worker's limitations on returning to work may be too restrictive to allow an Injured Worker to return to his/her home department. If this situation occurs, the Injured Worker will be placed in the Light Duty Pool, until such time as his/her home department is able to accommodate the return to work limitations. Once an Injured Worker is returned to work with limitations, the following responsibilities, by job title, must be met:

Definitions

Injured worker – a Jefferson County Commission employee who has suffered an on-the-job injury while performing assigned work duties.

Supervisors – the immediate line supervisor of the Injured Worker. However, this definition may be expanded to include any superior within the Injured Worker's department, up to and including the Department Head.

Payroll Coordinator – the designated individual within the Injured Worker's department assigned to compile, complete, and submit payroll information to the Payroll Department of Jefferson County.

Occupational Health Nurse – any of the four Occupational Health Nurses located throughout Jefferson County.

Occupational Health Manager – the Supervisor of the four Occupational Health Nurses of Jefferson County.

Procedures

Injured Worker

If returned to work after receiving treatment for a job related injury or if the job related illness is imminent, the employee must bring a written statement from the physician to their Supervisor immediately after the physician's appointment. Injured Workers should read the physician's statement before leaving the physician's office to ensure the restrictions, if any, are clear and specific. Injured Workers must provide statements from any follow-up physician appointments to their Supervisor.

It is the responsibility of the Injured Worker to report to the job assigned through the Light Duty Pool in accordance with the appropriate Supervisor. Every effort to accommodate the Injured Worker's current shift will be made, but frequently, Light Duty Pool Assignments result in changes in regular shift.

It is the Injured Worker's responsibility to contact either Human Resources (325-5249) or the Occupational Health Manager (325-5249) four times during each assigned shift. The Injured Worker is to notify one of the above mentioned offices at the following times during the shift: 1) upon arrival to work, 2) when leaving the work area for a meal, 3) when returning to the work area after a meal, and 4) at the end of the shift, before leaving for the day. Failure to contact either Human Resources or Occupational Health may result in errors in payroll or disciplinary action.

If the Injured Worker feels that they cannot work, even though the physician has returned them to work, the Injured Worker must request the use of sick pay, vacation pay, or leave without pay. Otherwise, any absence will be an absence without leave.

Supervisors

The Supervisor must follow the physician's instructions for the return to work date and work restrictions, if any, when the Occupational Health Nursing Office refers an employee to a physician.

When the physician issues a return to work order with restrictions, the Supervisor must notify the appropriate Occupational Health Nurse, and forward copies of the return to work form to the Nurse. Until the Occupational Health Nursing Office or the Department of Human Resources can make a Light Duty Pool assignment, **the Supervisor must find the Injured Worker a task that conforms to the physician's orders.**

Every attempt to return an Injured Worker to their home department must be made by the Supervisors. As an Injured Worker's limitations become less restrictive, every effort to locate some work within the home department that honors the limitations should be made. Only in the extreme situation where there is positively no "light duty" available within the home department, will the Injured Worker be placed in the Light Duty Pool. Should the Injured Worker be placed into the Light Duty Pool, the responsible Occupational Health Nurse and/or Occupational Health Manager will provide the Supervisor with periodic updates on the Injured Worker's progress and limitations.

When the physician releases Injured Workers to work, and they feel they cannot work, the Supervisor may approve an Injured Worker for sick leave with pay, or vacation with pay, if the Injured Worker has time accrued.

Payroll Coordinators

It is the responsibility of the responsible Payroll Coordinator to contact the Occupational Health Manager (325-5249) during each payroll period to verify hours worked by the Injured Worker in the Light Duty Pool. The responsible Payroll Coordinator will then process payroll as indicated by Departmental Procedure.

Occupational Health Nurses

Should an Injured Worker be returned to work with limitations, the responsible Occupational Health Nurse will notify the Supervisor of these limitations, including estimated length of time the limitations will be in effect. If the Supervisor is not able to utilize the Injured Worker in their department, due to an inability to accommodate limitations, the Injured Worker may be placed in the Light Duty Pool. In order to place the Injured Worker into the Light Duty Pool, the responsible Occupational Health Nurse will need to contact the Occupational Health Manager for further instructions.

Throughout the course of recovery, the Occupational Health Nurse must maintain routine contact with the Injured Worker's Supervisor, and provide information on any change in work limitations. Any time after an Injured Worker has been returned to work with limitations and the supervisor is able to utilize the Injured Worker while honoring the limitations, the Injured Worker should be returned to their home department on the next regular business day.

In addition, the responsible Occupational Health Nurse will provide copies of this procedure to each Injured Worker returning to work with limitations, their Supervisor, and their Payroll Coordinator. Each of these persons will be required to sign and return an Acknowledgement Receipt Form (see attachment A).

Occupational Health Manager

Requests for utilization of the Light Duty Pool employees will be directed to the Occupational Health Manager. As closely as possible, the skills and experience of an Injured Worker in the Light Duty Pool will be utilized to fill the requests from the various departments to use Injured Workers in the Light Duty Pool. The Occupational Health Manager will instruct the Injured Worker on the location, hours of work, dress requirements, parking arrangements and other rules and details as needed.

It is the responsibility of the Occupational Health Manager to periodically evaluate an Injured Worker's performance while working in a Light Duty Pool Assignment. The Occupational Health Manager will review each Injured Worker in the Light Duty Pool no less frequently than every 30 days to determine continued eligibility.

If an Injured Worker fails to report as directed for a Light Duty Pool Assignment, it is the Occupational Health Manager's responsibility to contact the Worker's Supervisor to report the incident. Further, it is the responsibility of the Occupational Health Manager to verify payroll hours for each Injured Worker in the Light Duty Pool on a bi-weekly basis.

Director of Human Resources

The Department of Human Resources will perform payroll and personnel functions in accordance with Personnel Board Regulations. Human Resources will coordinate payroll reporting, Personnel Board evaluations, and all actions based on rule violations among the departments involved, with the appropriate Payroll Coordinator.

Human Resources will provide written notice to all Injured Workers and their Supervisors when employees are no longer qualified for a Light Duty Pool assignment. Human Resources will instruct the Injured Worker to report to their Supervisor for further assignment.

Attachment A

Acknowledgement of Receipt

I, _____, acknowledge that on _____ (date), I received from the Occupational Health Nurse a copy of the Procedure Related to Light Duty Pool Assignments. I have read this procedure, and agree to abide by the guidelines contained within the procedure.

Employee's Printed Name

Employee's Signature

Date

Supervisor's Signature

Payroll Coordinator's Signature

Occupational Health Nurse's Printed Name

Occupational Health Nurse's Signature

Date

Supervisor's Telephone Number

Payroll Coordinator's Telephone Number