

WMATA's Transitional Duty Program

Office of Workforce Availability

Candidates: Applicable to Operations employees who have approved/accepted workers' compensation claims and are undergoing medical treatment in an attempt to return back to full duty work after their injury. There is no cap on the availability of Transitional Duty positions, however, if restrictions are too restrictive at the time of the release, the employee may be denied placement until the restrictions are decreased.

Duration: Assignments are a maximum of 90 days. With only one period of Transitional Duty allowed per claim. The only time an employee would be authorized to have an additional 90 days of Transitional Duty is if they have surgery related to their injured body part.

Assignments: Employees are generally placed within their department doing various tasks that increase WMATA's safety posture and enhance customer service. These various jobs can range from sedentary to medium duty and are customizable. WMATA tries to create an environment where "if you can walk, you can work".

Schedules: Employees are paid their regular wages while they participate in Transitional Duty and are able to work up to 40 hours per week. Employees may be assigned any work shift while participating in the program and are guaranteed two consecutive days off within the week. These days and hours are all based on the needs of the department and the assignment that is given.

Attire: Due to the fact that employees are working a safety sensitive environment proper PPE to include acceptable footwear is required. Employees are not able to work in Transitional Duty if they have a need to take prescription pain medication or any other medication which may cause drowsiness or fatigue. Employees are not allowed to work in Transitional Duty if they are unable to ambulate on their own and require any assistive devices such as canes, walkers or crutches.

Monitoring: Employees who return to the Transitional Duty Program are monitored by the Workforce Availability Office who sit down with the employee and their Supervisor to discuss the nature of their restrictions in detail and determine the type of assignments that the employee can be given within the Transitional Duty period. All parties sign a Transitional Duty Letter of Agreement at the conclusion of the meeting.

Bi-weekly follow ups occur between the employee and the Transitional Duty Coordinator. They vary between in person follow up visits and over the telephone.

TPA: The TPA is responsible for educating the physicians about the availability of Transitional Duty at WMATA. They are responsible for obtaining releases to light duty and gathering the employees detailed work restrictions. Restrictions should be as detailed as possible and should not simply just indicate a category of physical ability such as "sedentary or desk work only".

The TPA is expected to immediately notify WMATA of the release to light duty with the corresponding disability slip. Each time that the employee returns to the doctors for a follow up the TPA should

readdress the work restrictions to see if they can be decreased or if they should remain the same. The TPA will have to communicate with the Workforce Availability Office via telephone and email to discuss specifics about the Transitional Duty assignment as well as confer about specifics related to the injury and treatment.

Workforce Availability, The Office of Risk Management and the TPA should work closely together to achieve the goal of returning each employee to work as quickly and safely as possible.

Workforce Availability Office Staff: The Transitional Duty Program is monitored by employees with experience in Workers' Compensation Claims. The Transitional Duty Coordinator was a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor and the Management have both Workers' Compensation litigation and claims handling experience making for an easy partnership with individuals who are familiar with the claims process.