Policy: Stay at Work/Return to Work (SAW/RTW) Assistance
Policy Number: WC-03
Effective Date: June 20, 2018
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I. Policy Statement

It is the policy of the MUS Workers’ Compensation Program (Program) to provide Stay-at-Work/Return-to-Work (SAW/RTW) Assistance to facilitate the restoration of health and minimize disruption caused by a work-related injury or occupational disease by reintegrating the worker to the same position or to a temporary transitional position, within the employee’s current capabilities, as soon as possible after an injury or an occupational disease occurs.

II. Procedures

A. Each campus shall develop policies and procedures to assure compliance with current Montana statutes and rules for SAW/RTW Assistance requirements including, but not limited to, the following provisions:
   1. Evaluate SAW/RTW opportunities with at least the following minimum considerations:
      a. Medical Status Form (MSF) and worker’s current ability to safely perform work activities;
      b. Worker’s skills and qualifications;
      c. Temporary Transitional Employment (TTE) opportunities consistent with MUS business needs;
      d. Potential strategies to address return to work barriers;
      e. Conditions for terminating SAW/RTW Assistance or TTE position.
   2. Facilitate communication between injured worker and employer, and others as needed, regarding TTE;
   3. Review TTE assignments periodically to:
      a. Verify that duties assigned and as performed by the injured worker conform to the functional capabilities outlined on the Medical Status Form;
      b. Monitor injured worker’s release to increasing functional capabilities, progress toward release to time of injury job and/or claim resolution.
   4. Track and provide timely notification to the Claim Examiner if/when any of the following occur:
      a. TTE work start date;
      b. Employee refusal of a TTE offer;
      c. Date released to full duty;
      d. Termination of SAW/RTW services or TTE and reason for termination.

III. DLI Notification and Reporting

A. In the event the Program is notified by Montana Department of Labor and Industry (DLI) that an MUS employee has requested SAW/RTW assistance, or the Program Director receives an
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employee request for SAW/RTW assistance, the Program Director will notify the Campus Claim Coordinator. The Campus Claim Coordinator or designee shall initiate campus policies and procedures for providing SAW/RTW assistance to the injured worker.

B. The Program reserves the right, with the concurrence of the Campus Claim Coordinator, to defer to DLI for the provision of assistive services if liability has not yet been determined.

C. The Program Director is designated as the single point of contact to DLI for coordination of SAW/RWT Assistance requests made to DLI by MUS workers.

D. The Program will comply with any SAW/RTW reporting required by the Department of Labor and Industry.

IV. Limits

MUS endeavors to provide a safe and healthy working environment for all employees at all times. In the event of a work-related injury or occupational disease, the Program will facilitate return to work opportunities with the employing campus to the extent practical. SAW/RTW Assistance and TTE opportunities are intended to be temporary. All employment decisions are made by the campus on a case-by-case basis and there is no guarantee that transitional employment will be available, offered or continued.

History: MUS Workers’ Compensation Policy WC-0003 adopted by Committee September 12, 2012; Revision WC-03 adopted by Committee June 20, 2018.