

**VILLAGE OF BLOOMINGDALE**  
**Early-Return-To-Work Program**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

An Early-Return-to-Work program provides temporary work for employees who are temporarily disabled and cannot be assigned to regular work duties but are able to perform another type of productive work. The duties to be performed by the employee will consist of bona fide work that will be limited in duration and is intended for employees who are expected to return to full duty in the near future. The Village is not obligated to provide Early-Return-to-Work assignments.

**II. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The Village of Bloomingdale (Village) Early-Return-to-Work Program is intended to:

- A.** Assist employees in the rehabilitation process when an early-return-to-work restricted duty assignment is approved by the attending physician and is consistent with an overall medical plan.
- B.** Prevent and discourage abuse of sick leave and/or workers' compensation benefits, and reduce reliance on such leave.
- C.** Assist in evaluating the injured employee when making a determination of fitness for duty.
- D.** Protect the best interests of both the employee and the Village.

**III. DEFINITION AND ASSIGNMENTS**

Early return-to-work also referred to herein as restricted duty is work that, in accordance with written medical authorization, can be performed without risk to the injured employee's recuperation process and without potential harm to others. Restricted duty assignments are made for work of a temporary duration as further outlined in this Program. They may include work within the employee's normal duties, duties normally handled by another position within the affected Department, duties in another Department within the Village, or a combination thereof.

Early-return-to-work assignments will be pursued in accordance with the following procedures:

- A.** An employee may be assigned to an available restricted duty assignment, whether the injury was sustained on duty or off duty. However, the number of restricted duty assignments available is limited. Therefore, on-duty injuries have priority over off-duty injuries in the selection of restricted duty assignments. The Village is under no obligation to provide restricted duty assignments.
- B.** When the need for a restricted duty assignment occurs, the affected Department/Division will establish a list of restricted duty assignments, with a brief explanation of work efforts involved, particularly lifting and mobility requirements.
- C.** Each restricted duty assignment is unique, and will be considered on its own merits.

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**IV. PROTOCOL FOR ON-THE JOB INJURIES**

**A. Reporting Injury**

1. In accordance with the worker compensation benefit guidelines, the employee is required to provide the Assistant Village Administrator with a copy of the medical providers completed duty status report.
2. If the employee was treated by his/her own physician the employee should contact the Assistant Village Administrator, who in-turn will forward a copy of the injured employee's job description and the Village's Medical Duty Status Report Form to the treating physician to complete and return to the Village.
3. If in the opinion of the Village, an evaluation is needed by the Village's Medical Management Network facility, to determine return to duty status, said evaluation will be requested by the Village Administrator prior to a restricted or full duty assignment.
4. Should the duty status report include work restrictions, the Assistant Village Administrator will notify and consult with the applicable Department Director.

**B. Restricted Duty Assignment**

1. The Village's designated occupational medical management facility shall be the primary source of medical information upon which decisions are based when evaluating an employee's capability to return to work with physical restrictions or limitations. Each time the injured employee is treated or examined, the designated Village medical management facility shall complete a medical "Duty Status Report" and submit a copy to the Assistant Village Administrator. Injured employees have the legal right to obtain medical treatment from whomever they choose. However, no employee shall be granted worker's compensation for lost work time or be approved for restricted duty until he/she submits to an examination/evaluation by the Village's designated medical management facility, as requested.
2. The applicable Department Director, in consultation with the Assistant Village Administrator, shall make a determination as to whether or not the Department can accommodate a restricted duty assignment. The Assistant Village Administrator shall notify IRMA staff of the Village's decision regarding the restricted duty assignment.
3. A restricted duty assignment shall normally not exceed 90 calendar days, and may be terminated before that time limit at the Village's sole discretion. The Village's medical management evaluation report shall indicate the time for which restricted duty will be needed. Early-return-to-work may be denied when an employee has no reasonable expectation of returning to regular duty within 90 days. Extensions of restricted duty assignments may be granted if, in the determination of the Village Administrator, such an extension would be in the

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best interest of the Village. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of and as approved by the Village Administrator in ninety (90) day renewable increments and shall not exceed a total of 12 months for the same injury.

4. Restricted duty assignments should only be made for work that is important to the mission of the affected Department and the Village. Employees shall serve in a restricted duty assignment for as long as they can perform valuable, productive work as determined by the Village. Employees will be removed from the restricted duty assignment if appropriate work is no longer available, or if employee cannot satisfactorily perform the work assigned.
5. No regular full-time or part-time employee shall be moved from his/her regular job in order to make a restricted duty assignment available to another employee.
6. Notwithstanding the above, an employee may be required to attend training sessions, staff meetings, seminars, or continuing education programs as deemed necessary by the Department Director and in consultation with the Assistant Village Administrator as part of an early-return-to-work assignment.
7. Restricted duty assignments are not limited to an employee's Department. When the employee's department cannot find suitable work, suitable restricted work may be sought in other Village Departments.
8. The Village may arrange for a medical evaluation of the employee at any time during an early-return-to-work assignment. Based on the physician's recommendation, the Village may modify or remove the employee's restricted duty assignment.
9. If the employee refuses a restricted duty assignment, a certified letter shall be sent to the employee, advising where and when to report to work in accordance with the medical evaluation. This letter shall advise the employee that failure to report for this work will result in notification to the Village's workers compensation insurance carrier, currently the Intergovernmental Risk Management Agency (IRMA), and that Temporary Total Disability (TTD) payments may be terminated. If the injured employee does not report for a restricted duty work assignment, the Department Director shall immediately advise the Assistant Village Administrator. The refusal of restricted duty may also result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Payment for reasonable and necessary medical treatments related to work injuries shall continue accordingly. The employee has the right and may appeal discontinuance of TTD payments to the Illinois Industrial Commission.
10. Employees on restricted duty are hereby advised that they are not permitted, under any circumstances, to perform any work that violates their return to work restrictions.
11. The direct Supervisor shall keep the Department Director and Assistant Village Administrator advised of any progress or setbacks during the restricted duty assignment. Employees on restricted duty shall be evaluated on a regular basis

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by their direct supervisor according to the employee's ability to perform the restricted duty assignment and compliance with work restrictions. A copy of the supervisor's evaluation report shall be submitted to the Department Director and Assistant Village Administrator if the supervisor notices a change in the employee's ability to perform the restricted duty assignment or in complying with work restrictions. The reported changes may result in modification or termination of the restricted duty assignment by the Village.

12. When the employee receives a full duty release from his/her treating physician, said release shall be forwarded to the Assistant Village Administrator to confirm that the release is comprehensive. The Assistant Village Administrator will make arrangements with the Department Director for the employee's full duty return as appropriate.
13. The Assistant Village Administrator will notify the IRMA staff of the full duty release and return to unrestricted duties.
14. The Assistant Village Administrator and IRMA claims representative will continue to monitor employee medical treatment until released by physician.
15. If there is any question concerning an employee's fitness for duty or fitness to return to duty following an injury or illness, the Village may require, at its expense, that the employee be examined by a qualified physician and/or another appropriate medical professional selected by the Village. The foregoing requirement shall be in addition to any requirement that an employee provides, at his/her own expense, a statement from his/her own doctor upon returning to duty.

**V. PROTOCOL FOR OFF-THE-JOB INJURIES**

**A. Reporting Injury:** An employee shall report an injury/illness to his/her immediate supervisor, before the start of the workday. If the employee's injury/illness is expected to exceed three working days, medical documentation is required in accordance with the Employee Personnel Manual.

**B.** Should the employee request to return to work on a restricted duty assignment, the Human Resources Director may send the employee's physician a Medical Report Form to complete along with a job description for the employee's position. The completed Medical Report Form should be returned directly to the Human Resources Director who will forward a copy of said restrictions to the applicable Department Director

**C. Restricted Duty Assignment**

1. The employee's personal physician shall be the primary source of medical information upon which decisions are based when evaluating an employee's capability to return to work with physical restrictions or limitations. Each time the injured employee is treated or examined; the employee's physician shall complete a medical report provided by the Village, and send to the Human Resources Director. The applicable Department Director, in consultation with the

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Human Resources Director, shall make a determination as to whether or not the Department can accommodate a restricted duty assignment.

2. A restricted duty assignment normally shall not exceed 90 calendar days, and may be terminated before that time limit, at the Village's discretion. The physician's medical report shall indicate the time for which restricted duty will be needed. Early-return-to-work may be denied when an employee has no reasonable expectation of returning to regular duty within 90 days. Extensions of restricted duty assignments may be granted if, in the determination of the Village Administrator, such an extension would be in the best interest of the Village. Extensions may be granted at the discretion of and as approved by the Village Administrator in ninety (90) day renewable increments and shall not exceed a total of 12 months for the same injury.
3. Restricted duty assignments should be made for work that is important to the missions of the Village and/or the respective Department of the assignment. Employees will be removed from the restricted duty assignment if appropriate work is no longer available, or if employee cannot satisfactorily perform the work assigned.
4. No regular full or part time employee shall be moved from his/her regular job in order to make a restricted duty assignment available to another employee.
5. Notwithstanding the above, an employee may be required to attend training sessions, staff meetings, seminars, or continuing education programs as deemed necessary by the Department Director during a restricted duty assignment.
6. Restricted duty assignments are not limited to an employee's department for an off the job injury/illness and may be made in other departments as determined solely by the Village.
7. The Village may request a medical evaluation by the employee's physician at any time during an early-return-to-work assignment, at the employee's expense. Based on the physician's recommendation, the Village may modify or remove the employee's restricted duty assignment at the Village's sole discretion.
8. Employees on restricted duty are herein advised that they are not permitted, under any circumstances, to perform any work that violates their return to work restrictions
9. Employees on restricted duty shall be evaluated periodically by their direct supervisor according to the employee's ability to perform the restricted duty assignment, and compliance with work restrictions. A copy of the supervisor evaluation report shall be submitted to the Human Resources Director and Department Director if the supervisor notices a change in the employee's ability to perform the restricted duty assignment or in complying with work restrictions. The reported changes may result in modification or termination of the restricted duty assignment by the Village.

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10. When the employee receives a full duty release from their treating physician, said release shall be forwarded to the Director of Human Resources who shall confirm that the release is comprehensive and who shall make arrangements with the Department Director for the employee's full duty return as appropriate. If there is any question concerning an employee's fitness for duty or fitness to return to duty following an injury or illness, the Village may require, at its expense, that the employee be examined by a qualified physician and/or another appropriate medical professional selected by the Village. The foregoing requirement shall be in addition to any requirement that an employee provides, at his/her own expense, a statement from his/her own doctor upon returning to duty.