

Supporting your employee through a mental health Workers' Compensation claim:

Why reaching out matters.

When an employee is navigating a Workers' Compensation claim due to mental health challenges, it can be difficult for employers to know how, or even whether, to stay in touch. Many feel uncertain or fearful of saying the wrong thing. However, staying silent can unintentionally lead to feelings of isolation and disconnection for the worker. This guide is here to reassure you: **it is okay to reach out** – unless medically directed not to. Make sure the person that does has a good relationship with the worker.

In fact, compassionate and respectful contact from an employer can play a crucial role in a worker's recovery. Our experience has been that when workers feel supported and valued during a claim, they often experience better mental health outcomes and are more likely to return to work sooner.

By staying connected in a thoughtful way, you not only contribute to your workers' well-being, but also foster a healthier, more resilient workplace.

We've created a tip sheet you may find helpful when connecting with a worker during a mental health claim. This tip sheet provides actionable tips on how to support a worker with a mental health claim, regardless of legislation, liability, or industry.

What you should know

Guild are here to support you

Our Workers Compensation team is available to assist employers with any questions or suggestions on the claims process or how to best support injured workers.

Our Early Intervention Specialist is available during business hours for advice on how to get the best outcome for all parties.

It's important to reach out early

Statistics show that 77% of workers who had early contact from their workplace returned to work, compared to 53% who had no contact.

Your worker's perception of the process is crucial

A positive experience with an employer during the return-to-work process significantly improves their engagement.

Key factors for your worker will include:

- > Their perception of your support.
- > Their perception of what their peers think, if they're aware of a Workers' Compensation claim.
- > Adequate and timely information about all parties' rights and responsibilities.
- > Being provided suitable work in-line with their capabilities as they come back.
- > Being treated fairly during and after the claims process.



Tips for you to improve return-to-work outcomes for the worker

Regular check-ins:

- > It's helpful to assign a dedicated person to stay in touch with the worker. Regular check-ins can make a significant difference and prevent feelings of isolation.
- > Including the worker in activities such as team meetings, graduations, etc, unless they have medical restrictions prohibiting them from doing so, assists in keeping them connected to the workplace.

Workplace adaptations:

- > Consider adapting the workplace to ease the worker's return. This could involve removing certain

tasks or allowing the worker to focus on one job, such as replying to emails.

Alternative work locations:

- > Provide a different location for the worker to work in, away from any stressors, if available.

Mediation and team training:

- > Address any team issues through mediation or training to ensure a supportive and connected workplace. This can help with the current situation and prevent future incidents.

Additional considerations:

- > **Confidentiality:** Ensure that all communications and actions respect the worker's privacy and confidentiality.

- > **Flexibility:** Be open to flexible working arrangements that accommodate the worker's needs.

- > **Resources:** In addition to any treatment recommended by the GP provide access to mental health services such as an Employee Assistance Program (confidential counselling service provided to employees)

- > **Feedback:** Encourage feedback from the worker to improve the support provided continuously.

By following these tips, employers can create a supportive environment that facilitates a smoother return-to-work process for workers with mental health claims. And don't forget, Guild is here to help if you have any questions or need further assistance.



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Don't go it alone