Returning to work

**TAC information for new employers**

About us

The TAC is a Victorian Government-owned organisation whose role is to pay for

treatment and support services for people injured in transport accidents. It is also

involved in promoting road safety in Victoria and improving the state’s trauma system.

A key role of the TAC is to work with injured clients, employers and treaters to

help the injured person return to work.

1300 654 329

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Sam was injured in a motorbike accident and sustained

as part of the employer incentive package.

Following a period of rehabilitation, Sam was cleared by

necessary to complete all his new duties, the TAC

The TAC referred Sam to a return to work specialist who

for a further two weeks until Sam had received

vocational plan to assist him to return to work. The plan

By working together, Sam’s return to work plan is on

employer incentives such as a work trial, WorkCover

employer is happy to have a motivated staff member

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**Sam’s story**

**Before his accident Sam was a highly active worker,**

phase to monitor Sam’s initial return to work. As part

**employed as a full time commercial plumber.**

of the trial phase, the TAC reimbursed the employer

100% of Sam’s wages and paid WorkCover insurance

multiple injuries that left him unable to return to work

to perform the physical duties associated with

After the four week trial phase, Sam’s employer was

plumbing. Sam let the TAC know that he couldn’t return

so impressed with his performance that he decided

to his job but would like to look at some alternatives.

to employ him on a full-time basis. As Sam had not

yet completed training with the in house systems

his doctor to look at returning to suitable employment.

continued to pay 100% subsidies to the employer

conducted a vocational assessment and completed a

further training.

helped Sam search for employment in the plumbing

An ongoing return to work plan was created to assist

and building industry in roles which involved less

Sam to increase his productivity and working hours.

physically demanding duties. With help from his return

Throughout the plan, the employer received a graded

to work specialist, Sam found a job selling plumbing

wage subsidy based on Sam’s productivity, along with

supplies for a large retail outlet. The return to work

WorkCover insurance and the assistance of the return

specialist discussed a return to work program with the

to work specialist provider.

new employer and also talked about the different

insurance and wage subsidies that the TAC could offer.

track. Sam is happy he is back in the workforce and the

Together with Sam and his new employer, the return to

with great knowledge to provide the best service for

work specialist conducted a worksite assessment and

their customers.

a return to work plan was devised starting with a trial

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Working together

There are many people involved in supporting a person to

recover and return to work after an injury. Working together, we can support a return to productive employment following a transport accident.

**The role of the return**

**to work specialist**

The TAC engages external Vocational Rehabilitation Providers who employ qualified return to work specialists. A return to work specialist will work with you, your new employee and the TAC coordinator to plan a return to work program that meets your needs and the needs

of your employee.

**The role of the TAC client**

Work is considered a valued life role and returning to work forms a key part of a person’s recovery after a transport accident. The earlier a person can begin the return to work process, the more successful it is likely to be.

The return to work specialist may:

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conduct a worksite assessment to determine

a working environment and duties appropriate for you and your employee

assess and recommend any necessary workplace modifications or equipment

liaise with your new employee’s health care professional(s) to ensure hours and duties are appropriate

work with your occupational health and safety manager (if applicable)

facilitate the development of a return to work program and plan and monitor your employee’s progress

be the key contact in relation to the return to work program

Our clients are encouraged to actively participate in the

return to work process. They will work with you, the employer, the TAC and their return to work specialist (if one is required) to ensure a safe and sustainable return to work.

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**The TAC’s role in helping**

**injured clients return to work**

In some instances a person who is injured after an accident is unable to return to their pre-accident employer and/or their pre-accident role.

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Where the pre-accident role is not suitable and the

pre-accident employer does not have any other roles to offer, the TAC can assist an injured person to find new employment.

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As part of the return to work process, the TAC can provide

support to both the injured person and new employers to facilitate a successful return to work.

return to work. These supports will vary according

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**Your role**

You provide the essential ingredient in the

* a work trial opportunity: a short term trial role

return to work process, the job!

that helps build work readiness

This may be in the form of one or more

The TAC and the return to work specialist will discuss

of the following:

with you what benefits and supports are available if

* a full time employment opportunity

you are considering supporting a TAC client in their

* a part time employment opportunity

to both the prospective employees’ needs and your

* a casual employment opportunity

needs as an employer.

TAC Support for Employers

A range of supports and services are available to help you

to facilitate a successful return to work for your employee.

During the trial phase the TAC will reimburse you

100% for the hours the TAC client works.

The number of hours they work depends on a number of

factors, including: their capacity, the worksite assessment conducted by the return to work specialist and your business needs.

**Employer Incentive Package**

The TAC may be able to offer you the following supports:

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Work trial phase

Wage subsidies

WorkCover insurance premium protection

A one off payment to assist with administrative costs Workplace modifications and/or equipment

The return to work specialist can use the results of the trial

phase to plan the remainder of the return to work program with you and your employee.

Short term work trial

In some circumstances you may not have any permanent work available, but may be able to offer a TAC client the opportunity to do a short term work trial (eg. to cover annual leave or sick leave). This would provide a TAC client with an opportunity to build skills and experience

in a workplace.

The package is designed to ensure your new employee

can return to work as safely and productively as possible as well as minimising any potential financial impact on you and your business.

To access the TAC Employer Incentive Package, your

employee must have an accepted TAC claim and in most cases a TAC referral to an authorised return to work specialist.

During a short term work trial the TAC will reimburse you

an agreed wage subsidy. The return to work specialist supervises the program and the TAC client gains invaluable experience and potentially a current reference.

**Please contact us on 1300 654 329 to discuss**

**the Employer incentive package further with a TAC coordinator**

The work trial can be beneficial to you as an employer.

You can:

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benefit from the services of a suitably qualified worker

develop skills in a potential future employee should

longer term employment become available receive wage subsidies from the TAC

receive WorkCover insurance premium protection during the trial

The trial phase

The return to work specialist may recommend a trial phase as part of the return to work program to support your new employees’ transition back to work.

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The trial phase is normally up to 4 weeks in duration

and is designed to:

Graded wage subsidy

The graded wage subsidy is designed to support you while your new employee becomes confident and familiar in their new workplace and reaches their full productivity.

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allow you as the employer to view your new employee

at work and to be confident in their skills, work ethic and capacity to undertake the job.

help a person build work readiness for their new role within the workplace

allow the return to work specialist to fine tune their recommendations, if necessary, before a graded return to work commences

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Productivity is identified by a return to work specialist

in collaboration with you and your employee as part of a return to work plan.

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The graded wage subsidy forms part of an ongoing

return to work plan. If it is required, the productivity of the employee is established and the wage subsidy paid

to the employer is based on the productivity while at work.

Some exclusions apply to accessing the WorkCover

insurance premium protection. These include:

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interstate employers (that is, outside Victoria)

employers who self-insure for WorkCover employers covered by ComCare

where a WorkCover claim has not been accepted by the TAC’s WorkCover agent

For example, if the employee is 70% productive in his/her

required duties, the TAC will reimburse the employer 30% of the wage for the hours worked. The wage subsidy decreases as the employees’ productivity increases.

WorkCover insurance premium protection

The WorkCover insurance incentive protects your WorkCover premium if your employee is injured or re-injured during a TAC return to work program.

**You can contact us on 1300 654 329 to see if**

**your business is eligible for WorkCover insurance.**

One off payment

Employers may be eligible for a one off payment of up to $1000, to assist with the administrative costs of supporting a TAC client to return to work such as recruitment and training.

This means that, as an employer, your WorkCover

premium is not affected in the unlikely event of a workplace injury during a return to work program.

In addition, the TAC will reimburse the WorkCover

excess incurred as a result of that WorkCover claim.

It is best to discuss your eligibility for this payment

with a TAC coordinator or the return to work specialist.

Safety is essential in the workplace. This is why a return

to work specialist and other health practitioners where required can support you by making recommendations for safe and suitable duties that your new employee can do in the workplace.

Equipment and/or modifications

The TAC can consider paying the cost of reasonable workplace modifications that will assist with an employee’s return to work. The TAC can arrange for a return to work specialist to conduct a worksite assessment and make recommendations to the TAC for modifying your workplace and/or the provision of equipment that will enable your new employee to work safely.

During the return to work program you will be responsible

for the usual components of the employment relationship. These include supervision, performance management, superannuation, industrial relations, human resources, standard equipment required for the role and all other WorkCover obligations.

This incentive can be provided alone or together with

the trial phase or graded wage subsidy.

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What to expect in the return to work process

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The following steps are a guide to what you can expect AFTER the TAC client begins work:

The client will start work as per the return to work plan

During the return to work plan you should pay your new employee only for the hours they work

In the case of wage subsidies, either you or your new employee should send or email payslips to the TAC. This will ensure you are reimbursed the agreed wage subsidy (for hours worked) and help us calculate any partial income benefit to be paid to the client

The return to work specialist will conduct regular reviews throughout the return to work plan and will provide regular progress reports to all parties detailing any changes in productivity, duties and hours to be worked.

There is no set timeframe for a return to work program, however it will normally run for a minimum of 12 weeks and the return to work specialist will finalise the program once the return to work goals are achieved and sustained.

The following steps are a guide to what you can expect BEFORE a TAC client begins work:

The return to work specialist will conduct a work-site assessment. During this assessment, your new employees’ productivity will be assessed. If a wage subsidy is needed, the initial wage subsidy will be agreed upon at this stage.

The return to work specialist will then provide a report cleared by a medical practitioner to all parties, confirming duties, work hours, wage subsidies and any other recommendations (eg equipment needs)

The TAC will confirm in writing the details of the return to work plan, WorkCover insurance and subsidy payments.

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Frequently asked questions

Can I expect my new employee to

be fully fit?

In most circumstances, a person is fully fit for the duties required of them. If your new employee does have any restrictions, you will be made aware of these, however they would normally not impact on what is required of them in the role.

Who will pay for sick leave if my employee

has to have time off for treatment of their

accident injuries?

It is expected that your new employee arrange any medical appointments outside of work time.

However if your new employee has to have time off work

due to their accident injuries, they need to advise the TAC of this via a certificate of capacity, or a medical report from their treating practitioner.

Depending on the length of time out of the workforce

due to injury, the client may require a graded return to work. So, although they are cleared as fully fit to undertake the required duties, it may be recommended that they increase their work hours and/or work demands over

a number of weeks.

If approved, the TAC can organise a reimbursement to

you for the sick leave taken or pay the TAC client directly for the time they require off work.

I’m worried that if I employ someone who

isn’t fully fit, my business may suffer due

to lost productivity. What type of assistance

is available?

As part of the Employer Incentive Package, the TAC

can consider paying a wage subsidy to compensate your business while you support your new employee in their return to work. These subsidies will be developed with the help of a return to work specialist and will be agreed upon by all parties before any return to work program commences, so you know exactly what to expect.

How long will it take to receive the wage

subsidies? Who can I contact for support?

When the return to work program is established, you will be provided with an email address or fax number where payslips must be sent.

Generally, payments will be received in your bank account

within two business days, once the TAC income officer has received all the necessary paper work and has processed the payment.

**If you have questions that you need answered in**

**regards to payments, you should call the TAC general enquires department on 1300 654 329.**

What happens if the worker injures

themselves during their new employment?

Contact the TAC immediately to discuss the injury and the next steps.

How long will the return to work specialist be

involved in my TAC client’s return to work?

The return to work specialist will monitor your new employee for a minimum of 12 weeks once their return to work goal has been achieved. In some instances, a new employee may need support for a longer period. This can be negotiated between the return to work specialist, the TAC and any other relevant party involved in the return to work program (eg. GP, occupational therapist).

Depending on the injury, the return to work program can

be modified or suspended for a period, and/or a WorkCover claim form can be lodged. As an employer, you are given premium protection in the event of an accepted WorkCover claim during a TAC return to work program, regardless of the nature of the injury. In addition, the TAC will reimburse the WorkCover excess incurred as a result of that claim.

If your new employee requires further vocational

assistance after the return to work specialist has ceased services it is important that contact is made with the person’s TAC coordinator. The coordinator can talk

to you about available options to assist your employee in maintaining their employment.

Where a WorkCover claim is lodged, the TAC’s insurer

will assess the claim as per the normal processes.

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The TAC will work with you and your employee to ensure they have a safe and productive return to work



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**Contact us**

8.30am to 5.30pm, Monday to Friday

1300 654 329 (local call)

1800 332 556 (toll-free outside the Melbourne metropolitan area)

Address

60 Brougham Street, Geelong VIC 3220

Mailing address

TAC, GPO Box 2751 Melbourne VIC 3001

[www.tac.vic.gov.au](http://www.tac.vic.gov.au/)

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For information about the TAC in your own language, call one of the numbers listed here:

Tieng Viet