

Return to Work Practices for Work Related Injuries

It is the intent of Franklin County Schools to provide temporary or alternative duty assignments to employees who have been released to return to work for light or alternative duty by the appropriate assigned, treating physician, after the employee sustained work related injuries in the course and scope of employment with Franklin County Schools.

Purpose: The following procedures shall be used as a general guide for the “Return to Work” of an employee that has been released to return to work with noted restrictions by the appropriate, assigned, treating physician, after the employee sustained verified work-related injuries in the course and scope of his/her employment with Franklin County Schools:

1. It shall be the responsibility of the appropriate school principal or supervisor to make available a temporary “alternative” duty assignment for an injured employee under his or her supervision who is temporarily partially disabled and has been released back to work with written restrictions by his/her appropriately assigned, treating physician. The principal or supervisor may, with the permission of the Director of Schools, find a temporary alternative duty assignment for the injured employee within another school, work, site, or department of the school system if the principal or supervisor cannot provide an alternative duty assignment at the regular work site due to a clear unavailability of work; a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of the employee in question; a threat to the health, safety, and welfare of fellow employees; or due to a legal restriction to providing such alternative duty assignment. However, it is first and foremost the responsibility of the immediate supervisor (principal or supervisor) to provide an alternative duty assignment at the employee’s regular work site.
2. An employees who is offered a temporary alternative duty assignment is expected to report for duty and to fulfill the responsibilities of his/her alternative duty assignment during the period of time he/she is deemed to be temporarily disabled by the attending physician just as the employee would in his or her regular position a the regular work site.
3. Temporary alternative duty shall mean all periods of time when the employee’s assigned, treating physician has determined that the injured employee may return to some form of restricted duty. Such temporary alternative duty assignments(s) shall continue until terminated by the treating physician; until the employee reaches Maximum Medical Improvement (medical release with no work restrictions); or until all statutory requirements have been exhausted.
4. Such temporary alternative duty shall take into account and accommodate those restrictions, which have been placed upon the injured employee by their assigned, treating physician. As restrictions or limitations may change during the recovery process, the principal or supervisor shall continue to modify the work environment to accommodate the employee and his or her allowed work assignment. Efforts shall be made to return the employee to his/her regular work assignment as soon as possible and as allowed by the assigned, treating physician.
5. During the alternative duty assignment, the employee shall continue to receive his or her normal rate of pay for the hours worked in accordance with the current, appropriate salary index of the school system. Other benefits to which the employee may be entitled shall be paid in

accordance with *Tennessee Workers' Compensation*.

6. Once the employee has reached Maximum Medical Improvement, the employee is responsible for reporting this (written documentation from the assigned, treating physician must be provided) to the appropriate principal or supervisor. Upon reaching Maximum Medical Improvement, the employee's medical condition shall be assessed as to his or her permanent medical restrictions and his or her ability to perform the duties of the position to which assigned. If the injured employee cannot return to his/her regular position, the Director of Schools along with the employee's principal or supervisor shall attempt to find employment within the school or department. If such employment cannot be accommodated, the Director of Schools shall attempt to find an applicable employment opportunity in another school or department within the school system. Such attempts are not a guarantee that a position will be offered or that future employment is assured.