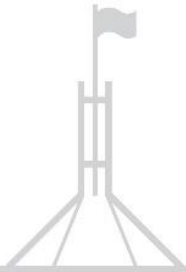




Australian Government



**Rehabilitation and Injury Management
Policy for *Members of Parliament*
(*Staff*) Act 1984 employees**

APRIL 2022

Contents

Rehabilitation and Injury Management Policy for *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* employees

- 1. Introduction 3**
- 2. Principles 3**
- 3. Rehabilitation and Injury Management 4**
- 4. Roles and responsibilities 4**
- 5. Related legislation and Guidelines 6**
- 6. Further Assistance 6**
- Attachment A: Supports and resources 7**

1. Introduction

1.1 The Department of Finance (Finance) is committed to contributing to a safe and healthy working environment for staff employed under the *Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984* (MOP(S) Act employees) by implementing, monitoring and continually improving our rehabilitation and injury management services.

1.2 Research indicates that early return to work has important health and wellbeing benefits and can help in recovery from injury and illness. Long-term work absence, work disability and unemployment generally have a negative impact on health and wellbeing.

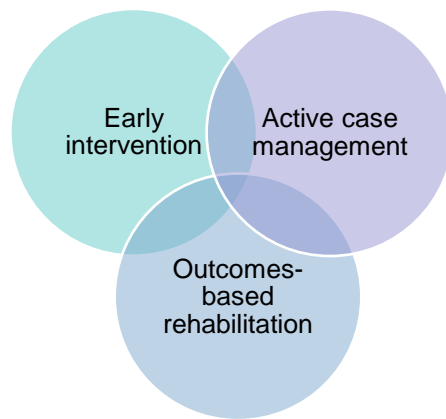
1.3 This policy provides guidance to Parliamentarians and their staff on an integrated approach to reducing the risk of a workplace injury or illness through focusing on preventing workplace harm, promoting positive aspects of work and supporting employees who require assistance to return to work through implementing sustainable workplace rehabilitation and injury management activities.

2. Principles

2.1 SafeWork Australia's *National Return to Work Strategy 2020 – 2030* provides guiding principles, which this policy adopts and endorses. These principles are:

- workplaces should support the early reporting of work-related injury and illness and assist workers to navigate the compensation claim process.
- employers and supervisors should appropriately and effectively prepare for, respond to and manage work-related injury and illness in the workplace.
- workers should know their rights and responsibilities and are supported to play a proactive and positive role in their own recovery and return to work.
- support and intervention activities should be tailored to meet the needs of workers and provided as early as possible.
- the return to work process should not exacerbate existing conditions or create new ones.
- return to work programs and planning support optimal recover and a timely and positive re-engagement in work that is productive for the worker and the employer
- workers should return to a physically and psychologically safe and supportive workplace.
- stakeholders should understand, promote and embed the principles of good work in practice, recognising that good work is for health and supports recovery.
- stakeholders should share relevant information and engage in a coordinated and collaborative approach to return to work.
- workplaces should commit to using data and evidence, measuring success and sharing learning to drive innovation and continual improvement.

2.2 Finance will assist MOP(S) Act employees to achieve a safe return to work in a way that will facilitate the best recovery so far as reasonable practicable by focusing on three components:



3. Rehabilitation and Injury Management

What is rehabilitation and injury management?

3.1 Workplace rehabilitation is the process of assisting someone to return to work after sustaining an injury. Part of the rehabilitation process may involve developing a program that allows them to return to duties that are suitable during the recovery period or to return to their role over time. This may include gradually returning them to their pre-injury role, or in some cases training to gain new skills or provide other assistance.

3.2 The type of return to work program will depend on the type of injury and the employee's role.

3.3 When Finance is made aware of an employee sustaining an injury or illness in the workplace, or returning to the workplace following an injury or illness, a MaPS Case Manager will be appointed to provide supports and options, including in relation to rehabilitation and injury management, to the employee.

4. Roles and responsibilities

MOP(S) Act Employees

4.1 MOP(S) Act employees with a work-related injury or illness have particular rights and responsibilities in the return to work process. Workers should notify their manager and Finance of a work injury or illness as soon as practicable.

4.2 MOP(S) Act employees are encouraged to participate in the design and implementation of rehabilitation programs. Employees should make all reasonable efforts to return to work where they have the capacity to do so.

4.3 MOP(S) Act employees are encouraged to work closely with their employing Parliamentarians, managers and Finance to coordinate and navigate through their physical and/or psychological incapacity while managing the challenges that may occur in the return to work process.

4.4 In addition to the above, MOP(S) Act employees should:

- make reasonable enquiries to find out and familiarise themselves with the relevant rehabilitation policies and procedures
- report signs and symptoms of injuries or illness to their manager as soon as possible
- inform their manager or MaPS Case Manager of expected absences for extended periods of time as a result of the injury or illness and ensure that all absences are actioned in accordance with the *Commonwealth Members of Parliament Staff Enterprise Agreement 2020-23* comply with any medical restrictions and recommendations

- undergo an assessment for rehabilitation if required
- make reasonable steps to speak to their MaPS Case Manager about their obligations and rights regarding the rehabilitation and injury management process
- reasonably participate in the return to work programs and processes
- talk to their MaPS Case Manager or rehabilitation provider if they have any concerns about the return to work plan

Parliamentarians and Managers

4.5 Parliamentarians and managers are often the first point of contact for MOP(S) Act employees with an injury or illness and should therefore ensure they understand their legislative responsibilities.

4.6. Parliamentarians and managers should engage early with the injured employee and provide support immediately following the notification of a workplace incident or at the first sign of injury or illness to promote better return to work outcomes.

4.7 Parliamentarians and managers must:

- implement and promote relevant rehabilitation policies
- promote a workplace culture that prevent injuries, supports MOP(S) Act employees and demonstrates a commitment to early intervention, rehabilitation and return to work
- work in partnership with relevant parties (including Finance and external rehabilitation providers) in performing their duties and achieving positive early intervention outcomes and sustainable return to work
- support staff and their teams through the rehabilitation and return to work process
- facilitate discussions where employees identify illness or injury to consider supports for the employee and encourage engagement with Finance
- maintain the privacy of the employee in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*.

Finance

4.8 In addition to the above, Finance will:

- provide a Case Manager to assist the employee throughout the process
- facilitate the return to work process as soon as possible following an employee's illness or injury by providing information and support services
- for workplace injuries or illness, provide MOP(S) Act employees with information relating to lodging a workers' compensation claim
- work with the MOP(S) Act employee and their employing Parliamentarian and/or manager (if applicable), the nominated treating doctor, workers' compensation insurance providers and other relevant team throughout the return to work process
- provide early access to rehabilitation services, including accredited workplace rehabilitation providers (WRP), where required
- develop and implement the MOP(S) Act employee return to work program in conjunction with the employee's Parliamentarian or manager, treating doctors and the WRP
- consult with all relevant parties to assist Parliamentarians and managers to provide suitable alternative duties as an integral part of the rehabilitation and return to work process
- maintain the privacy of the employee in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*.

Workplace Rehabilitation Providers (WRP)

- facilitate the rehabilitation process
- maintain regular communication with relevant parties throughout the rehabilitation process
- provide a prompt response to referrals and other requests
- engage the employee, treating physician, and employing Parliamentarian or manager in the development and implementation of a tailored return-to-work plan
- actively monitor the return-to-work plan and engage regularly with all parties to make sure goals are achieved
- promote engagement of relevant parties at each step of the rehabilitation process

- provide impartial and objective expert assessment, advice, and assistance
- adhere to the approval criteria, code of practice (e.g., Heads of Workers' Compensation Authorities and other professional bodies), and the Operational Standards for WRPs.

5. Related legislation and Guidelines

This policy is to be delivered in accordance with:

- [Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988](#)
- [The Guidelines for Rehabilitation Authorities](#)
- [The Privacy Act](#)
- [National Return to Work Strategy 2020 – 2030](#)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011
- Members of Parliament (Staff) Act 1984
- Early Intervention Policy

6. Further Assistance

For queries relating to the operation of this policy please contact MOPSWHS@finance.gov.au

Attachment A: Supports and resources

HR Advice and Support Team, MaPS, Finance

The HR Advice and Support Team offers access to a team of trained case managers who can provide support and advice on options to Parliamentarians and employees engaged under the MOP(S) Act by calling (02) 6215 3333 or via email on MOPSupport@finance.gov.au.

Employee Assistance Provider (EAP)

You can access EAP services for work or personal issues or to access the Manager Support Program by calling 1300 360 364 or booking an appointment at www.benestar.com
Available to MOP(S) Act employees' families, friends and colleagues.