



# PATTERSON LAKES PRIMARY SCHOOL

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P.O. Box 330, Patterson Lakes, 3197

Principal: Stan Szuty

Website: <http://www.patterson-lakes-ps.vic.edu.au>

## WORKCOVER POLICY

### MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

The WorkCover scheme is a 'no fault' work related injury compensation scheme. This means that a worker's entitlement to compensation is not a question of who was responsible for the injury, but is determined by whether the injury was employment related, according to the provisions of the Accident Compensation Act.

The key objective of the scheme is to ensure that the social and economic costs of workplace injuries and illnesses are minimised by:

- Improving the health and safety of people at work and the rehabilitation of injured employees
- ensuring that injured employees receive appropriate entitlements as compensation for workplace injuries
- ensuring that employers provide suitable employment for employees who have been injured at work
- ensuring employers contribute equitably to the costs of the scheme through the payment of WorkCover premiums.

Further information about the VWA and the WorkCover scheme can be found at the Victorian WorkCover Authority website:

<http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/WorkSafe>

### THE DEPARTMENT'S WORKCOVER MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS

#### WorkCover Insurance Policy

The Department's authorised WorkCover Agent is CGU Workers Compensation Insurance (CGU Insurance). The Department's WorkCover policy covers all DOE employees in both schools and non school locations.

School council employees are not covered by the Department's WorkCover insurance policy. Any school council that has an annual payroll in excess of \$7,500, or employs an apprentice/s, is required to have a WorkCover Insurance policy.

### KEY LEGAL OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Principals, in conjunction with CGU Insurance, are responsible for the management of WorkCover claims lodged by DOE employees. Principals are supported in this role by:

- DOE's network of specialist Occupational Rehabilitation Providers
- advisory support from the Employee Health Unit
- advisory support from Schools HR Services on WorkCover leave and payroll matters.

### PRINCIPALS' KEY WORKCOVER OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

In the event of employees lodging WorkCover claims principals are required to ensure that:

- The claims are sent to CGU Insurance within 10 days from the date on which the employee lodges the claims.
- CGU Insurance is provided with timely and accurate information about the circumstances of the claim.
- Employees in receipt of weekly compensation payments are paid correctly on their scheduled pay days.
- Arrangements are in place to manage employees' work-related injuries through an appointed Return to Work Coordinator for the school. (See Section 6 below for further information.)
- Return to work plans are prepared and forwarded to CGU for employees who are absent for 20 or more calendar days.
- Suitable employment is provided for injured employees.
- CGU is provided with information on claimants' wages and return to work dates and a copy of the DOE Offer of Suitable Employment
- They participate in Conciliation conferences and/or court hearings in the event of disputed WorkCover claims.
- That there is an appointed Return to Work Coordinator for the school.

### Other Important Considerations:

- The WorkCover poster 'If you are Injured' and a 'Risk Management Occupational Rehabilitation Statement' must be displayed in the school and brought to the attention of all staff.
- When employing new staff, applicants must be provided with a written description of the proposed duties and asked to disclose any pre existing injury or illness that could be affected by the nature of the proposed duties. Applicants should also be advised that a failure to disclose a pre existing injury or illness may jeopardise their entitlement to compensation should the injury or illness recur.

### EMPLOYEES' RESPONSIBILITIES

WorkCover claimants are required to:

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- Notify their employer of a work related injury or illness within 30 days of becoming aware of it
- participate in assessments of their capacity for work and approved rehabilitation programs and make reasonable attempts to return to work in suitable employment if they have an accepted WorkCover claim
- provide evidence of current weekly earnings to both CGU Insurance and school principal to ensure that the correct rate of compensation is applied
- cooperate with their employer's attempts to return them to work
- provide valid WorkCover Certificates of Capacity if there is an entitlement to receive weekly compensation payments.

Where employees do not meet these requirements they may jeopardise their entitlement to compensation.

It should also be noted, that as part of the pre employment process, applicants are required to disclose any pre existing injury or illness that may be affected by the proposed duties of the position. Failure to disclose a pre existing injury or illness may jeopardise an employee's entitlement to compensation if that injury or illness recurs as a result of their employment.

## **INJURY PREVENTION**

Prevention of injuries is the most effective means of minimising the human and financial costs associated with workplace injuries. A successful prevention program will depend on schools and workplaces having:

- a leadership team which is seen by the staff as supportive
- an effective means of resolving conflict
- positive staff interaction and peer support
- an effective Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) management system
- an active process of risk identification, risk control and risk management

The school or workplace should clearly articulate their approach to health, safety and wellbeing through an appropriate policy statement. Schools may also wish to include such a statement in the goals of their strategic plan.

<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/ohs/accp/riskm.htm>

To support schools and workplaces to meet OHS legislative compliance and injury prevention needs, DOE has engaged the services of Noel Arnold and Associates. Their team of consultants can be contacted by telephone on (03) 9890 8811 to provide advice and assistance on:

- occupational health and safety management systems
- conducting safety and compliance audits
- reviewing accident/incident data for risk assessment
- identifying and implementing risk control strategies
- OHS training

In addition, the department's Employee Health Unit is available to support staff with a range of employee support services. These include an Employee Assistance Program short term counselling service, leadership development and support, team facilitation and promotion of safe, healthy workplaces. The Employee Assistance Program can be accessed by calling 1300 361 008 or by going to: <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/ohs/health/morale.htm>

The Department also provides a telephone Medical Advisory Service (MAS) to assist principals and managers in the management and support of staff with health related problems which may be impacting on them in the workplace. The MAS can be accessed by calling 03 9692 7756. Additional information is available at:

<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/workm/perform/medicadvisory.htm>

## **PROCEDURES TO TAKE SHOULD YOU BE INJURED AT WORK:**

- General information on WorkCover and the WorkCover scheme is available from the VWA website at [Victorian WorkCover Authority](#) or by phone on (03)9641 1444 or from CGU Insurance on (03) 8630 1311.
- General information concerning Conciliation processes or the Accident Compensation Conciliation Service is available from the ACCS Website at [Accident Compensation Conciliation Service \(ACCS\)](#) or by phone on (03) 9940 1111.
- Information concerning WorkCover leave and payroll management is available from Schools HR Services on 1800 641 943.
- Assistance with complex or difficult to manage WorkCover claims and return to work issues is available from the Employee Health Unit. Email [employeehealth@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:employeehealth@edumail.vic.gov.au) or phone (03) 9637 2386, (03) 9637 2392 or (03) 9637 2391.
- Advice on employee relations issues such as employees' award entitlements and conditions of employment is available from the HR Website at:
- <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/default.asp>

## **RETURN TO WORK CO-ORDINATOR:**

Our return to work coordinator is: Stan Szuty

Our return to work coordinator will attend appropriate training:

(contact CGU on 8630 1348 to arrange)

Following any workplace injury our return to work coordinator will:

- Take all practicable steps to identify, assess and control any known or potential risks to workers and visitors.
- Encourage the early reporting and recording of any symptoms of an injury or disease related to the work we undertake.
- Ensure that an injured worker receives appropriate first aid and/or medical treatment as soon as possible.
- Investigate all incidents, accidents, injuries or near misses to identify their cause(s) and prevent them happening again.
- Comply with all our legal obligations, including notification of incidents to Worksafe Victoria when required.
- Provide the injured worker with all necessary documentation – a WorkCover Claims Management Kit which provides details on claims management procedures, and contains all necessary documentation for the employee.
- Contact our injured worker and their treating practitioner to implement the commitments outlined in the risk management program and our return to work policy.
- Determine the need for any occupation rehabilitation assistance in consultation with our injured worker and their treating practitioner, and offer the injured worker a choice of one of three approved occupational rehabilitation providers.

### **OCCUPATIONAL REHABILITATION**

Specifically our RETURN TO WORK POLICY is that:

- Return to work planning will commence as soon as possible after an injury, consistent with medical advice.
- Remaining at or early return to work following injury is a normal expectation of this workplace.
- Treatment, return to work activities and any reasonably necessary occupational rehabilitation services will begin as soon as they are necessary.
- Appropriate suitable duties, including modified or alternative duties which do not jeopardise the well being of the employee, other employees or students, will be provided, as part of the return to work program.
- Where suitable duties cannot be provided within the employee's workplace, reasonable attempts will be made to find other locations where these duties can be provided.

NB: An individual return to work plan will be established with any worker who is unable to work for 20 calendar days or more. This plan will be developed at the earliest opportunity, in consultation with our injured worker and their treating practitioner.

Where disagreements about the return to work program or suitable duties arise, we will work together with the injured worker and, where applicable, union representing them, in an endeavour to seek resolution.

Confidentiality of worker's information obtained during their return to work or while undertaking occupational rehabilitation services will be maintained.

Participation in a return to work plan will not, of itself, prejudice any injured worker.

### **COMMITMENT**

This program represents our commitment to workplace occupational rehabilitation and return to work following work related injury. As representative of its development and our mutual commitment, this program is endorsed by:

Principal: Stan Szuty

Return to work Coordinator: Stan Szuty

OHS Representative: Luke Milgate

### **EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle.

### **CERTIFICATION**

This policy was adopted at the School Council Meeting held at Patterson Lakes Primary School, August 2013.

Signed.....  
School Council President

Signed.....  
Principal