

Communicating with injured workers

A quick reference guide for managers and supervisors

Initial contact (within 24-48 hours)

DO:

- ✓ Express genuine concern: *"I'm calling to see how you're doing."*
- ✓ Use active listening and acknowledge the worker's feelings.
- ✓ Confirm that medical care has been received.
- ✓ Ask about preferred contact method.
- ✓ Set the next check-in time.

DON'T:

- ✗ Discuss fault or liability.
- ✗ Press for return date.
- ✗ Discuss claim details (unless the worker's incident information hasn't been provided).
- ✗ Minimize the injury.
- ✗ Dismiss emotional concerns—recognize that injuries impact both physical and mental well-being.
- ✗ Communicate if you are involved original injury claim (e.g. bullying) - delegate someone else to communicate.

Key phrases to use:

- *"How are you feeling?"*
- *"What support do you need?"*
- *"We're here to help."*
- *"Take the time you need to recover."*
- *"Let me know if anything changes."*
- *"If you're feeling overwhelmed, please let us know how we can support you."*
- *"Injuries can be challenging—please let us know how we can support you."*

- **Week 1:** Every 2-3 days.
- **Weeks 2-4:** Weekly.
- **Beyond 4 weeks:** Bi-weekly.
- **Always:** Adjust to employee preference and communication method (phone, text, email).



Handling difficult conversations

- If an employee is frustrated: *"I can see this situation is difficult. How can we make things easier for you?"*
- If an employee is worried about job security: *"Your health is the priority. We're here to support your recovery and return to work when you're ready."*
- If an employee seems withdrawn or isolated: *"Would you like to stay connected with a co-worker or receive team updates?"*

Document every contact

- Date and time.
- Communication method.
- Key points discussed.
- Next steps.
- Follow-up date.

****Note: Some of the tasks may be done by your HR department or EDMP***

Return-to-work basics

- Provide employee with return-to-work package/forms.
- Review medical limitations.
- Discuss suitable temporary modified work.
- Develop and document a gradual return to work plan.
- Set check-in schedule.
- Coordinate with human resources.
- Follow up after the first day/week back to ensure a smooth transition.
- Monitor and maintain regular communication after the employee has returned to full duties.

Additional resources:

- Injury management program | A manual for employers
- Injury management program templates
- Webinar | Bill 41 information session - Duty to cooperate and duty to maintain employment
- Webinar | Return to work after PTSD - An occupational therapy case study
- Seven principles for successful return-to-work programs



WEBINAR


Learn about the amendments made to the Worker's Compensation Act and the legal requirements for both employers and workers.

SafeCare BC

**BILL 41 INFORMATION SESSION
DUTY TO COOPERATE AND
DUTY TO MAINTAIN EMPLOYMENT**

WATCH ON-DEMAND

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Remember: Be consistent, show genuine care, maintain privacy, and document everything.