



City of Palm Springs

Return to Work Policy (Modified Duty or Prohibited Work)

GENERAL

Temporary modified (light) duty is intended to provide employees who have sustained an occupational or non-occupational injury that temporarily limits their ability to perform their regularly assigned duties the opportunity of continuing to work. Temporary modified duty will consist of tasks with a defined completion objective, and a timeframe not to exceed six (6) months, absent exceptional circumstances. The temporary modified duty, if available, will accommodate the employee's temporary disability and the needs of the City.

POLICY

1. It is the policy of the City of Palm Springs to reasonably accommodate injured employees in modified duty assignments, at the discretion of the Department of Human Resources and the Department Director or designee. In making the determination of a modified duty assignment, the nature of the injury or illness shall be taken into consideration and balanced against City needs.
 - a. Modified duty assignments are temporary and shall not exceed six (6) months in duration without approval from the Department of Human Resources and City Manager.
 - b. Modified duty assignments will be managed by the Human Resources Department and the Department Director. The availability of modified duty assignments will be determined on a case by case basis and nothing in this policy should infer any expectation of a modified duty assignment by any employee.
 - c. Modified duty assignments may include performing the employee's regular assignment on a limited or part-time basis or other assignments not related to their regular assignment. Modified duty assignment will first be considered within the employee's regular department and then in other City departments and may be modified as necessary.
 - d. Modified duty assignment requests beyond the six (6) month maximum period may be considered based on the employee's need for continued modified duty and the needs of the City. Extensions will be considered on a case by case basis and in management's sole discretion; extensions should not be considered as precedent for any other/future extensions.
2. It is also the policy of the City of Palm Springs to maintain open communication with injured or ill employees by keeping in regular contact with them for the duration of their employment with the City during any injury or illness.

PROCEDURE

1. Employees restricted from working their regular work assignment because of injuries or illnesses shall comply with this policy.



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2. Any employee released to work with or without restrictions must obtain a written release from the attending physician that indicates the following as applicable:
 - a. date available to return to work
 - b. available for full non-restricted duty or restricted (light duty)
 1. that a light or modified duty assignment is permissible;
 2. the type of restriction(s) or limitation(s);
 3. the duration of the restriction or limitation; and
 - c. the expected prognosis of recovery.
3. Employees must provide a copy of the medical status report from their doctor to the Human Resources Department and their direct supervisor or designee upon receipt. Supervisors shall forward any report to the Human Resources Department.
4. All medical information received regarding an employee shall remain confidential and all medical reports will be maintained by the Department of Human Resources. Departments will not retain any copies of medical documentation.
5. The Department of Human Resources and the Department Director will work with the employee to identify any modified duty opportunity. An employee who refuses to participate in a modified duty assignment without adequate medical documentation may risk any continued worker's compensation or disability benefits.
6. Employees prohibited from work due to an injury or illness shall not engage in any City work-related activity, including but not limited to on-duty training, schools, or conferences, nor shall they be eligible for extra duty assignments without the prior written authorization from the Department of Human Resources and Department Director or designee.
7. Employees prohibited from work due to an injury or illness shall contact their supervisor by phone twice weekly, Mondays and Wednesdays at 8:30am, or as otherwise mutually agreed.
8. In cases when the Department is unable to accommodate the work restrictions of the employee, the City will work with the employee towards a reasonable opportunity for return to work.
9. Employees may use any applicable available accrued leave during modified duty or prohibited work. Other leave policies may run concurrently.