



## COUNTY OF ALAMEDA

### TEMPORARY MODIFIED WORK POLICY

#### PURPOSE

Temporary modified work assignments enable employees to return to work while receiving treatment during their recovery process, and provide a safe bridge for employees to return to their regular job assignment, as soon as it is medically feasible. The County of Alameda recognizes the value of all its employees and the importance of returning injured/disabled employees to good health and productive employment as early as possible. Early intervention and effective case management is critical in reducing prolonged absences, conserving human resources, and minimizing County costs.

#### POLICY

It is the policy of the County of Alameda to make a reasonable effort to provide temporary modified work assignments to employees who may be temporarily unable to perform their usual job assignment due to injury/disability (both industrial and non-industrial), consistent with their work restrictions/limitations.

Focusing on employees' abilities to perform temporary modified job duties consistent with their restrictions/limitations, supervisors and managers must work closely with their Department's Disability Coordinator/Workers' Compensation Liaison and assist in the return to work process. Department coordinators/liaisons can facilitate an employee's early return to work by involving the workers' compensation claims examiner (if industrial-related), physician/clinician, employee and supervisor.

Temporary modified work assignments are not to exceed 90 calendar days per injury/illness. Under extraordinary circumstances, a temporary modified work assignment may be extended up to 210 calendar days on a case-by-case basis. The availability of temporary modified work assignments is determined by the employer and is based on the employee's temporary work restrictions/limitations and the availability of temporary work. Temporary modified work assignments are not limited to the employees' specific work unit/division within the agency/department. Temporary modified work assignments are intended to address temporary medical conditions and restrictions/limitations, and are not intended to be permanent. These temporary assignments shall not be used as a means to establish new assignments or displace other employees.

Employees may be temporarily assigned to (1) an existing vacancy or an assignment that has been created by shifting or re-combining duties, (2) portions of his/her usual job assignment, or (3) special projects based on the business and operational needs of the division/unit within the agency/department. The provision for continuing temporary modified work assignments should be re-evaluated every 30-45 days as employees continue to improve and progress towards full duty in their usual job assignment.

## RESPONSIBILITY

### Employee

- Immediately notifies supervisor when released to return to work with temporary work restrictions/limitations.
- Provides acceptable medical documentation following subsequent medical appointments or every 30-45 days to supervisor specifying work restrictions/limitations.
- Returns to work when a temporary modified work assignment has been identified consistent with his/her temporary work restrictions/limitations.
- Immediately notifies supervisor when work restrictions/limitations change, released to full duty, and/or is unable to work.

### Supervisor

- Reviews employee's medical documentation and temporary work restrictions/limitations.
- Creates and/or provides temporary modified work assignment whenever possible.
- Monitors employee's temporary modified work assignments and medical documentation following subsequent medical appointments or every 30-45 days.
- Ensures current Description of Employee's Essential Job Functions (EF5) is on file.
- Continues employee's regular hourly rate.
- Ensures employee's time sheet is appropriately coded.
- Supports the County's Temporary Modified Work Policy.

### Workers' Compensation Liaison/Disability Coordinator

- Serves as liaison between employee, workers' compensation claims examiner, physician/clinician.
- Coordinates, monitors and documents employee's temporary modified work assignments.
- Notifies employee, workers' compensation claims examiner, and physicians/clinicians of the availability of temporary modified work.
- Provides Description of Employee's Essential Job Function (EF5) to physician/clinician and/or workers' compensation claims examiner.
- Assists supervisors/managers in creating temporary modified work assignments.
- Closely monitors temporary modified work assignments, on-going medical documentation and concludes assignments when appropriate (before and no later than 90 days).
- Initiates the County's Reasonable Accommodation process when appropriate.

Departmental Human Resources Manager/Administrator

- Assigns and provides training to Disability Coordinator(s)/Workers' Compensation Liaison(s) to represent the agency/department.
- Oversees departmental temporary modified work assignments to ensure timely response and processing in accordance with the Alameda County Temporary Modified Work Procedures.

Agency/Department Head

- Ensures that all supervisors and managers receive the County's Temporary Modified Work Policy and make every effort to provide temporary modified work assignments consistent with the employees' temporary work restrictions/limitations, in accordance with this policy.

County Administrator's Office - Risk Management Unit

If employee is industrially injured:

- Serves as liaison between agency/department workers' compensation liaisons, claims examiners/third party administrator and/or medical case manager.
- Provides consultation, advice and training to agency/department workers' compensation liaisons and assists in the process of returning employees to work.
- Monitors and analyzes countywide temporary modified work assignments for industrially injured employees to reduce workers' compensation costs and liability.

Human Resource Services – Disability Programs Division

- Provides countywide consultation, advice, technical support and training to agencies/ departments on managing employee disabilities and the benefits of returning employees to temporary modified work assignments, in accordance with this policy.
- Ensures County agencies/departments make a reasonable effort to provide temporary modified work assignments to employees, whenever possible.
- Monitors and analyzes countywide temporary modified work assignments to reduce prolonged absences, County costs and liability.

**APPROVED FOR DISTRIBUTION**

BOS Approved: 01/26/10 (revised 12/09/09)