

## **What if people at work make me feel bad about my claim?**

If people make negative comments remember that making a claim is your right, and your workplace should keep your medical details private. Keep notes on any unfair treatment or bullying and report it to your employer if you feel safe and comfortable to do so. If not, consider seeking support from your case manager or union.

## **Do I have to let my employer come to my medical appointments?**

No. Your medical appointments are private. The only time your manager might be there is at a case conference. This is a meeting with you, your doctor, manager and others to talk about your return to work. If you're not sure what kind of meeting it is, ask your case manager or union.

## **Can I choose my own doctor and healthcare providers?**

Yes, you can choose your own doctor and other health services to get treatment. The only time you might have to see a different doctor is for a review in an Independent Medical Exam (IME).

## **What is an Independent Medical Exam (IME)?**

The insurance company might ask you to see an independent doctor – usually a specialist suitable to your injury type. This doctor checks:

- Your diagnosis, what caused the injury and your prognosis
- What treatment is recommended
- What work you can do

The insurer must:

- ☒ Give you time to plan for the visit
- ☒ Choose a reasonable location for the appointment
- ☒ Pay for your travel costs

Remember: This doctor provides an independent opinion only. Keep seeing your own doctor too.

### **Can I make a claim if I'm young, casual or part-time?**

Yes. All workers can get workers' compensation. Your employer has to let you file a workers' compensation claim if you choose to.

### **What if I need an interpreter?**

If English is not your first language, you have the right to an interpreter for all claim-related communications. You can call the Telephone Interpreting Service on 131 450. They provide free interpreters who can help you to make phone calls about your claim. Ask your case manager or your union if you need an interpreter for meetings about your claim.

### **What if my claim is disputed?**

You'll get a letter explaining the reason, and you are allowed to ask for this decision to be reviewed. Your insurer will outline the process for this in their communication to you. Contact your insurer if you need any clarification.

Get independent advice from your union or legal provider if you've got concerns about the decision.

### **Do I have to be 100% better to return to work?**

No. You can go back to work before you're fully better. Your manager must give you different work based on what your doctor says is safe.

Many people recover better when they go back to work slowly with the right duties. A gradual return to work will actually improve your chance of a full return to work.

If your manager won't give you safe work, call your union or case manager right away.

### **I want to change jobs. Will my future employer know about my workers' compensation claim?**

Your potential future employer cannot ask about your previous workers compensation claims, and you are not legally required to disclose this information. This is protected under anti-discrimination laws.

However, if you have ongoing medical restrictions that would affect your ability to perform the specific duties of a new job, you should disclose these restrictions so appropriate accommodations can be made for your safety.

## GETTING HELP

For support through your workers compensation journey, contact:

- Your workers' compensation case manager
- Your workplace supervisor
- Your workplace Health and Safety Representative
- Your workplace Return To Work Coordinator (if they have one)
- Your workplace HR team
- Your union, if you are a member.

For free and confidential mental health support you can contact:

- Your workplace Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
- Beyond Blue for 24/7 support – 1300 22 46 36
- LifeLine for 24/7 support – 13 11 14

The It Pays To Care website has a list of key contacts for workers who have been injured including workers' compensation authorities, mental health services and financial support services. Visit [www.itpaystocare.org/workers/worker](http://www.itpaystocare.org/workers/worker).

It Pays To Care publishes independent information for everyone involved in work injuries, from workers to employers to insurers and regulators.

**Please note that It Pays To Care not a support service.**