

# Successful Return to Work Outcomes

For Psychological Disability

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Make It Safe  
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## WHO IS TEKSMED?



30 Years in Business



Proudly Canadian



Industry Leader

## AMANDA PECK, TECHNICAL CLAIMS SPECIALIST

- Has worked in disability management since 2006
- Experienced in management of all aspects of WCB and disability claims
- As technical claims specialist with TeksMed, supports complex claims management and appeals



## WHAT IS MENTAL HEALTH?

“ Mental health is a **state of mental well-being** that enables people to **cope** *with the stresses of life*, realize their abilities, **learn well** and **work well**, and *contribute to their community.* ”

- World Health Organization



## WHAT MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS

To qualify for WorkSafeBC benefits a mental disorder must be:

- A reaction to one or more traumatic events arising out of, and in the course of, the worker's employment, **or**
- The disorder must be predominantly caused by one or a cumulative series of significant work-related stressors, also arising out of, and in the course of, the worker's employment.

If WorkSafeBC accepts a claim, the type and duration of benefits a worker receives will depend on the medical and psychological evidence and the nature of the mental health disorder. Benefits may include the following:



Return to Work  
Support



Compensation  
for Lost Wages



Costs of Doctors,  
Psychologists, or  
Psychiatrists



Costs of a Mental  
Health Program



Costs of  
Prescription Drugs

## **WHAT MENTAL HEALTH DISORDERS ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS**

WorkSafeBC's ultimate decision on whether to accept a claim for a mental health disorder is bound by law and related policy.

This means that they must not accept a claim caused by an employer's decision relating to employment, such as the following:

- a change in work or working conditions
- changes to a worker's schedule or hours
- discipline, including termination of employment
- workload and deadlines
- work evaluation and performance management
- a change of the worker's duties
- a transfer, lay-off, demotion, or reorganization

## WHY YOUR BUSINESS SHOULD PRIORITIZE MENTAL HEALTH



Distracting thoughts and feelings may **impact** a person's **performance**, **cooperation**, or even the **safety** of themselves or those around them.



**Fatigue** and **physical exhaustion** are symptoms of many mental illnesses and may lead to **reduced productivity** and **quality of work**.



Many symptoms of mental illness, such as **decreased coordination**, **trouble concentrating**, and **dissociation**, can result in an **increased risk of injury**.



**Low moods** and **mental exhaustion** can lead to **lower motivation**, which reduces work **capacity** and **performance**.



Poor mental health leads to **excessive absenteeism** – and can even **impact talent retention**.

## BENEFITS OF SUPPORTING MENTAL HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE



Companies who have a robust strategy for supporting employees' mental health have:

- Improved recruitment and retention
- Lower absenteeism and disability rates
- Increased health and safety
- Greater productivity



## HOW EMPLOYERS CAN PROACTIVELY PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH

- ◆ Ensure your **benefits package addresses mental health**, and **regularly communicate** what's available to your staff
- ◆ Be **mindful of the language used** throughout your organization; words are powerful and can strongly influence perception
- ◆ **Foster an open, stigma-free environment** by talking openly about mental health in a non-judgemental way
- ◆ Continually **check-in with employees** – even ones you may not think are struggling – while maintaining absolute confidentiality, to **build trust** throughout your organization
- ◆ **Educate yourself and your peers**; if you can, incorporate mental health training sessions, webinars, or other educational resources into standardized training



## THE RETURN TO WORK PROCESS

- ◆ Initiate contact as soon as reasonable following an injury or disability
- ◆ Identify suitable work that accommodates the employee's injury or disability
- ◆ Gather or obtain the worker's limitations or abilities
- ◆ Create a formal return to work plan based on medical recommendations
- ◆ Implement and monitor the return to work plan
- ◆ Make any necessary adjustments as recommended or to address any barriers until fully recovered

**Remember...  
Be Flexible!**

## INFORMATION AN EMPLOYER CAN ENQUIRE ABOUT

- Employers are entitled to reasonable communication and updates from their injured workers about matters pertaining to their injury, illness or disability and ability to work
- Employers are allowed to ask a worker about their abilities and specific medical limitations or restrictions
- Employers may ask a worker for their input regarding duties or tasks they feel they may be able to do or duties that may be appropriate
- Employers are NOT entitled to detailed medical information, diagnosis or information about non-compensable conditions and illnesses.

# THANK YOU

We would be happy to answer any further questions.



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