

## Information for Injured Workers and their Supervisors

**If Treatment is Needed-** All departments are required to maintain first aid kits which are available to employees. If you use one to treat an injury make sure it is re-stocked.

Seek medical treatment if there is any question whether such treatment is needed beyond first aid. Small injuries can often become complicated. Prompt treatment means a prompt recovery.

Utilize St. Joseph or other hospital emergency rooms, most urgent care facilities, or many family practitioners for treatment for work-related injuries or illnesses. Make sure your health care provider is aware the needed treatment is work-related in case they do not handle Labor and Industries workers' compensation insurance (L&I) cases.

**Do NOT use the Student Health Clinic on campus for work-related injury or illness. They do not handle such cases.**

**Transportation-** Injured workers are responsible for their own transportation to treatment.

Call an aid car in the case of serious injury or if there is any question of safety.

Supervisors may transport their employees to a treatment facility in less serious cases. This can be helpful to insure timely treatment.

**Note-** Simple transport of an injured employee does not expose the driver to liability. This is covered under the [Good Samaritan Law](#) of Washington State.

**University Police are NOT able to transport employees or students off campus.**

**At the Providers Office-** Health care providers must be told if an injury or illness is work related. The provider is then responsible for assisting the worker with the filing of their L&I claim. While at the provider's office, workers should be given the worker's portion of the L&I (State Fund) *Report of Industrial Injury or Occupational Disease* (ROA) to complete as well as a copy to take home. The provider then mails the employer's portion to Environmental Health and Safety (EHS). For the employer's address please use-

WWU Claims Manager  
516 High Street MS 9070  
Bellingham, WA 98225-9070

EHS is the only department authorized to complete the employer's portion of the ROA. It is helpful if the internal WWU *Accidental Injury/Occupational Illness Report* form has already been sent to us when we receive the ROA from the provider. We are then able to process the paperwork and begin assisting with the claim much more rapidly. If the employer's portion is mailed to your department by mistake, please forward it to EHS at the address above.

**Accident Reporting-** Washington State law ([RCW 51.28.010](#)) requires that an employee immediately report any on-the-job injury to his or her employer. Under University policy this report must be made to the worker's supervisor. Also, under this policy, a [WWU Accidental Injury/Occupational Illness Report](#) must be completed and given it to the supervisor within 24 hours. Employees who are unable to do this due to the extent of their injuries should call, e-mail, or otherwise provide their supervisor with the information as soon as possible. The supervisor may then complete the report and send it to EHS at MS 9070. This information is then used to help establish an L&I claim, if needed, and to help prevent future injury or illness.

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**How Soon Must a Claim be Filed?** In order for a claim to be considered for allowance under Washington State workers' compensation laws, the *Report of Industrial Injury or Occupational Disease* must be received by L&I within-

- One year after a work related injury or
- Two years after receiving written notice from a doctor that you have a work related occupational disease and should file a claim. **Note- [RCW 51.28.055](#) has provided a temporary change in filing deadlines for hearing loss claims.**

**Off Work?**- If a health care provider certifies that a worker is unable to return to work or is under restrictions due to his or her work-related injury or illness, the worker must bring or mail a copy of the provider's work restrictions to his or her supervisor. This statement should provide an estimate of how long the worker will be unable to work and what the specific physical restrictions are.

If the claim is allowed, L&I pays a percentage of the worker's wage in time loss compensation so long as he or she is unable to work and the provider certifies the time off. This percentage varies between 60% and 75% of gross wages at the time of injury or manifestation of illness depending upon marital status and number of dependents. Temporary time loss may be paid pending allowance although if the claim is not allowed it must be repaid to L&I.

No time loss is paid for the date of injury. No time loss is paid for the first three days after the injury unless the worker is still unable to return to work on the fourteenth day following the injury. See the **Using Leave** section below for more information.

**Returning to Work-** Numerous studies have shown that the sooner people return to work following an injury the better and faster they recover. The WWU Claims Manager is here to help with that process.

When an employee is off work due to a work-related injury or illness, contact should be maintained between the supervisor and the employee on at least a weekly basis. Because of confidentiality concerns medical issues should be dealt with by the WWU claims manager. Staying in touch about general work issues, however, is essential to the return to work process.

Employees must give their supervisor a written release from their health care provider when returning to work after time off due to a work related injury or illness.

While off work, employees should discuss returning to work each time they see their provider. Employees must give the provider's documentation of physical restrictions to their supervisor as soon as restrictions are determined and at any extension or change of the restrictions. The supervisor forwards this documentation to the WWU Claims Manager at MS 9070. The WWU Claims Manager will then work with the provider, the supervisor, and the employee to develop a return-to-work plan as soon as possible.

A gradual transition from restricted duty to full duty is often necessary. Options for transitioning back to work can include temporarily reduced hours or days, limited or modified duties, and possible temporary placement in a different job. If there are permanent restrictions due to a work-related injury or illness, there may also be assistance provided by LNI under the claim. This may include job modification equipment and/or vocational assistance. Each case is different so if there are questions about a particular situation please contact the WWU Claims Manager.

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**Using Leave-** The type of leave used during an absence caused by a work-related injury or illness is determined by the nature of the worker's employment. As appropriate, employees should refer to their Bargaining Unit Agreement, Professional Staff Handbook, or Faculty Handbook. Contact [Human Resources](#) for additional information on how use of leave may affect other benefits.

**Access to Claim File Information-** Employees who wish to have access to their claim file or would like to provide a representative with access must make this request in writing to LNI. The WWU Claims Manager cannot provide claim file information to employees but can assist with making the request to L&I.

For employee protection, the WWU Claims Manager generally shares specific claim file information with the L&I claims manager or health care providers only. To facilitate return to work efforts, supervisors must be advised of general information such as an anticipated return-to-work date or any work restrictions which impact the essential functions of the job.

In order to better administer essential programs such as the Americans with Disabilities Act or the Family Medical Leave Act some specific claim file information may be shared within the University. This sharing of information is strictly controlled by University policy [U5950.13](#). Internal release of information is authorized only by the Director of Environmental Health and Safety following review and counsel provided by the Assistant Attorney General's Office. All requests for employee claim information that come from outside the University are referred to the Department of Labor and Industries.