



Alternative Work Duties
Conference Call Meeting Notes
August 11, 2009

Participants:

Kim Cecchi – United Heartland
Julie Dahl – Western Technical College
Teresa Ellis – Mid-State Technical College
Tim Greene (discussion leader/recorder) – Districts Mutual Insurance
Stacy Martin – Southwest Wisconsin Technical College
Anne Sheridan – Milwaukee Area Technical College
Steve Stoeger-Moore – Districts Mutual Insurance

Mtg Objectives:

- To develop a list of work duties that can be provided to colleges to be used when they have employees who are off work for work or non-work related illness/injury.
- Restrictions – take into consideration when an employee returns with restrictions, e.g. cannot lift more than 15# for a specific period of time, look at their abilities, look at what work they **can** do in that time period.
- Unions – some of the colleges have voiced concerns because employees cannot perform work within a different labor union. Can we find creative work duties within those union positions; can we work with the union leadership for the benefit of their members?
- Types of work to consider;
 - One handed
 - Sitting
 - No reaching overhead
 - Etc.

Notes:

The purpose of this meeting is to help DMI and United Heartland develop a more comprehensive list for the colleges to use for alternative work assignments to reduce the amount of lost time due to illness/injury. This was a result from the DMI Presents – Workers Comp 101; we (DMI and United Heartland) will be providing future training on Alternative Work Duties.

The group discussed the list of suggested duties that UH had developed and has posted on the DMI website. Working with the employee, the employee's department, and their provider to find work "within their abilities" is essential. A few more ideas for employees with restrictions as listed below:

- Help with inventory of supplies in shops, tool cribs, classrooms, etc.
- Check and supply first aid kits
- Assist with Chemical Inventory updates including updating Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS's), paper format and/or electronically
- Update campus emergency evacuation maps or other postings
- Assist departments with scanning of records

Each college should be encouraged to work with their HR department and the Union Leadership to collaboratively develop a process to assist the employee with an early/alternative return to work. This may

include allowing that employee to temporarily work in another labor union position, understanding the work assignment would only be for the period of time listed in the restrictions and would not take work from an employee with that bargaining unit. Another idea would be to invite a Union representative to participate in the development of the college process. This should be developed in advance so when the time comes to assist an employee with early return to work, the process can be put into place. HR departments may want to consider emailing department managers to see what types of work there may be within their departments when the college anticipates an employee's early return with restrictions. For this type of program to be successful, it is important that each college have "top down" support of the program.

The list that is on the DMI website will be updated and Tim (DMI) and Kim (United Heartland) will continue to work on a training program.

Should you have any further information to share with this group, please send it to me at tim@districtsmutualinsurance.com and I'll be happy to forward it.

On behalf of Districts Mutual Insurance, I'd like to thank all of the participants for taking time out of their busy schedules to participate in this conference call.

Tim