

# The Modified Duty Work Program

**Your doctor believes that a good way to help you recover from your injury or illness is for you to go back to work under a program called Modified Duty. This flyer answers some questions you may have about Modified Duty and describes how it can help you.**

## **What is Modified Duty?**

Modified Duty is a program that allows you to return to work while you are recovering from your illness or injury. You will perform a set of tasks or assignments that may or may not be the same type of work you do in your regular job. These tasks can change as your condition improves. You and your employer can decide together what's best for you.

Modified Duty is part of your medical treatment. It can help you recover faster and more completely. It is temporary—once you feel better, you can return to your regular duties.

## **What are the benefits of working under Modified Duty?**

In most cases, it's important to stay active while recovering from an illness or an injury. By doing modified duties at work, you are likely to:

- Lose less income
- Feel less stress
- Get back to your regular job sooner
- Stay in touch with your coworkers and employer
- Maintain a positive attitude



## Why can't I recover at home?

Staying at home may be the best choice for some people who have a serious injury, illness, or contagious condition. However, when you stay moderately active with modified duties, you can keep up your physical strength. You will also be less likely to re-injure yourself once you return to your regular job. A good Modified Duty plan will help protect you by limiting the tasks you do at work. As an added bonus, coming to work and being active will help you stay positive, which also helps you heal.

## What work tasks will I be doing?

You and your employer will work as a team to design your Modified Duty plan. Ask yourself what part of your regular job you feel you can still do, or what types of work need to be done that you feel you could physically handle. Then talk to your employer about your ideas. You'll know you have a workable plan if:

- The tasks are safe for you and are helping you get better.
- You're accomplishing things that are valuable to your employer.

## What if I try Modified Duty and I can't do what's expected of me?

It's important that you're able to do your Modified Duty tasks without getting injured again. Your workslip has information about what kinds of activities you can do. If your Modified Duty plan includes assignments that you feel you can't perform—let your employer or supervisor know.

And talk to your physician right away if any part of your job causes you pain or physical problems. Your physician will talk with you or examine you to find out if your new activities are hurting you.

## How long will my Modified Duty last?

The answer is different for each person. Talk with your physician about your goals for recovery and how long you should expect to do Modified Duty. Talk to your employer about how their Modified Duty program works.

## Does this mean my medical treatment is finished?

No. Modified Duty is actually part of your treatment, but in most cases, it is only one part of your treatment. You might also need physical or occupational therapy, diagnostic testing, visits with a specialist, and follow-up visits with your health care provider.

## What do I do now?

You are the key to your own recovery. Here are some steps you can take to help get you better as quickly as possible:

- Take the workslip to your employer.
- Work with your employer to come up with a good Modified Duty plan.
- Concentrate on staying active and getting better.
- Let your physician know of any problems or changes in your condition.
- Give Modified Duty a chance to work for you.

**If you have more questions about Modified Duty, please talk with your physician or employer.**