

Guidelines for approving rehabilitation allocations

All regions are provided with a nominal FTE budget to support school-based employees returning to work following an injury or illness. Funding to support non-school based employees is provided by individual work units.

It is the responsibility of Regional Human Resource Managers (or their delegated officer) to approve the use of rehabilitation allocations for school-based employees within their region. These guidelines have been developed to provide Regional Human Resource Managers with assistance in approving requests for rehabilitation allocations, whilst ensuring consistency in rehabilitation allocation decision-making across the department.

Definition

Rehabilitation allocations at schools are the provision of an additional staff member to assist an employee to safely return to work following an injury/illness, whilst ensuring continuity in teaching to achieve student learning outcomes in a safe and supportive work environment.

When should rehabilitation allocations be provided?

The department may provide reasonable rehabilitation allocation funding to assist employees to undertake a graduated return to work under the following circumstances:

- The employee is able to return to their substantive duties at their base school, but medical advice indicates that the employee requires **temporary** additional staffing support to safely perform these duties
- The employee is able to return to their base school, but medical advice indicates that the employee is **temporarily** unable to perform their full substantive duties. A rehabilitation allocation may therefore be used to allow the employee to commence the return to work performing alternative duties and then gradually pick up the full duties of their substantive position as part of the rehabilitation program.
- Medical advice indicates that the employee is temporarily unable to return to their base school. A rehabilitation allocation may therefore be used to commence the return to work at a host location where there are no current vacancies. This enables employees to re-establish a work routine and apply their skills, while issues at the base school are resolved and until the employee recovers sufficiently to return to their base school.

Rehabilitation allocations are only used to support an approved return to work program. This means that a return to work plan is developed for all employees requiring rehabilitation allocation assistance and the requirement for additional staffing is documented in the return to work plan. This plan is then signed by the employee, the Rehabilitation and Return to Work Coordinator, the principal/manager and the treating doctor.

Documentation

It is recommended that a Rehabilitation Allocation Checklist is used by regions to assist with managing rehabilitation allocation approvals.

Duration of rehabilitation allocations

Most injured employees who initially require some rehabilitation allocation support are able to return to their full time work duties after one term. Therefore, the department may support an employee participating in a graduated return to work with **up to one term** of rehabilitation allocation support, with the potential to extend this for up to one further term based on the specific circumstances of each case.



Employees with a work related injury may be able to access further rehabilitation allocation support beyond two terms, where supported by WorkCover Queensland and written medical advice.

When should rehabilitation allocations not be approved?

The region should not approve rehabilitation allocation funding under the following circumstances:

- The employee does not need any medically required additional support to return to work following an injury or illness. Remember that there is no need for a rehabilitation allocation for staff back filling arrangements.
- There is no documented and approved return to work plan.
- The employee has been accessing rehabilitation allocation funding for more than two terms and the injury is not the subject of a current WorkCover claim.
- The reason the rehabilitation allocation is required is not to support a rehabilitation program, but rather to address a human resource issue, such as locating an alternative placement for the employee who has been medically cleared for work.
- The number of rehabilitation allocation hours requested is greater than the hours being worked by the employee.
- The employee is not school-based (funding for these employees will need to be covered by the work unit).

Medical deployment

Additional allocation funding may also be used to fund a host placement for employees that have been officially registered by central office as a medical deployee or redeployee. In these cases, no return to work plan is required to be developed for these employees, however documentation must have been received that confirms that the employee has been officially registered by central office for a specific period of time.

Monitoring and reporting of rehabilitation allocations

Regions

It is the responsibility of regions to approve and monitor the use of rehabilitation allocations within their region. It is also the responsibility of regions to maintain an Additional Allocation Spreadsheet as provided by Finance Branch.

Finance Branch monitor the department's use of rehabilitation allocations. This is done through the FTE Reconciliation return which regions provide on a monthly basis.

Organisational Health Unit, Central Office

The Organisational Health Unit will assist with monitoring the use of rehabilitation allocations as part of their schedule of file reviews and audits. The Organisational Health Unit may also be involved in an audit of an individual region's rehabilitation allocation usage, for example, if requested by Finance Branch.

Further assistance

For further support and assistance with rehabilitation allocations please contact your regional Senior Injury Management Consultant at <https://education.qld.gov.au/initiatives-and-strategies/health-and-wellbeing/workplaces/contacts>.

Rehabilitation allocation checklist

This checklist has been developed to assist Regional Human Resource Managers (or delegated officers) to ensure they are appropriately approving rehabilitation allocations. Only rehabilitation allocations that meet all the following criteria should be approved.

- The rehabilitation allocation is being used to support an approved and documented return to work plan.
- The rehabilitation allocation is being used for one of the following two reasons:
 - The employee is undertaking their return to work plan at a host location, or
 - The employee requires an additional staff member while the employee is at work on modified duties, or needs to be directly supported by another employee, to ensure that the full duties of their substantive position are being safely performed.
- The rehabilitation allocation is not being used for back filling purposes.
- The rehabilitation allocation is not being used to address human resource issues, such as locating an alternative placement for an employee who has been medically cleared for work.
- The number of rehabilitation allocation hours requested is the same or less than the number of hours the employee on rehabilitation will be working.
- The employee is school-based.
- The duration of the rehabilitation allocation is less than two terms (unless the employee has a work-related injury that has been accepted by WorkCover).
- The rehabilitation allocation is being used to temporarily fund additional staffing hours to support a goal directed and time limited return to work.