


Policy Title:		Return to Work	
	OFFICE OF THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER	Category	Return to Work
		Administrative Policy #	
		Revision #	
		Review Frequency	As Needed – no less frequently than triennially
Administrative Division	Human Resources	Reviewed By	Chief Administrative Officer, General Counsel, Human Resources Director
BOWC Approval		Last Reviewed/Update Date	
Implementation Date			

1. OBJECTIVE

- 1.1. The policies and procedures in this document establish the guidelines for Detroit Water and Sewerage Department (DWSD) employees to return to work after a leave of absence, sick leave, suspension or any separation of employment.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy is to define guidelines and assist employees when returning to DWSD for work. This policy does not cover re-hire from layoff, returning from worker's compensation, or disability retirement.

3. DEFINITIONS

“Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)” means either a paid or an unpaid absence from work for an extended period of time due to illness or injury that is a FMLA qualifying event.

“Interactive Process” refers to the informal, collaborative effort involving DWSD and the employee to determine if an employee can return to work with reasonable accommodations following an occupational or non-occupational injury, disease or disorder.

“Leave of Absence” means an unpaid absence from work for an extended period of time.

“Medical Leave” means either a paid or an unpaid absence from work for an extended period of time due to illness or injury that does not qualify as FMLA, or when the FMLA allotment for the fiscal year has been exhausted.

“Sick Leave” means a paid absence from work for an extended period of time due to illness or injury that is generally covered by paid time off.

“Suspension” means the temporary removal of an employee from their job assignment as a result of discipline and usually without pay.

“Transitional Work” means temporary, modified work assignments within the employee's physical abilities, knowledge, and skills.

4. SCOPE

- 4.1. This policy applies to all DWSD employees and other persons whom are employed by DWSD and have participated in any form of leave of absence or separation from service.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1. Human Resources Director

- 5.1.1. The Human Resources Director publishes this policy; communicates this policy to all employees; reviews, approves and publishes divisional standard operating procedures; and updates this policy as necessary.
- 5.1.2. Human Resources completes the Clinic Authorization Form and directs the employee to the DWSD clinic of choice, when necessary.
- 5.1.3. Human Resources completes, signs and provides the Return to Work Form to the employee for submission to the employee's manager or supervisor prior to performing any work functions.

5.2. Management

- 5.2.1. Management should be familiar with, understand, and act in full compliance with this policy.

5.3. Manager or Supervisor

- 5.3.1. The manager or supervisor obtains, reviews and files a copy of the employee's Return to Work Form prior to allowing the employee to perform any work functions.
- 5.3.2. The manager or supervisor will not permit the employee to perform any work functions, until they receive notification from Human Resources and must immediately direct the employee to Human Resources to complete the Return to Work process if the employee returns for work before doing so.

5.4. Employee

- 5.4.1. Employees should be familiar with, understand, and act in full compliance with this policy.
- 5.4.2. Employees provides Human Resources with the appropriate medical documentation on or before the return to work date.
- 5.4.3. The employee must visit Human Resources on the return to work date, prior to performing any work functions, clocking in, or reporting to the worksite.
- 5.4.4. If the employee has remained absent more than thirty (30) days, or undergone a medical procedure, the employee must visit the clinic of DWSD's choice for an employment physical and drug screen.
- 5.4.5. If transitional work is determined to be appropriate for an employee returning to work with restrictions, employee must provide his/her attending physician with the appropriate transitional work documentation for review and approval.

6. POLICY

- 6.1. DWSD shall assist all employees in an interactive process during the return to work procedures.
- 6.2. Employees returning to work may be subject to a medical evaluation, depending upon the reason for absence and/or duration of absence.
 - 6.2.1. Employees returning to work from an extended sick leave, over thirty (30) days, are required to provide evidence of clearance to work from their personal doctor.
 - 6.2.2. Employees returning to work from an extended sick leave, over thirty (30) days, shall be referred to DWSD's clinic of choice for a medical evaluation. Upon a successful medical evaluation, the employee may return to work.
- 6.3. Failure to return to work at the end of an approved leave of absence or failure to submit medical documentation extending the leave absence is subject to discharge.
- 6.4. **Reasonable and Necessary Accommodations**
 - 6.4.1. Management may take reasonable and necessary actions to accomplish the intent of this policy.

7. PROCEDURE

7.1. Returning to Work

- 7.1.1. Employees notify Human Resources of their anticipated return to work date and provide appropriate medical documents to return to work.
 - 7.1.1.1. Acceptable medical documentation must include the beginning and ending dates of the leave and clearance to return to work with a date. Any restrictions, if applicable, must be stated on the medical certification including how long the restriction will remain in effect.
- 7.1.2. Human Resources processes the Return to Work Form prior to the employee being allowed to return to the worksite. If the employee is eligible to return to work, the Return to Work Form will be completed and returned to the employee.
- 7.1.3. Management will determine if the employee is able to return to work with or without restrictions.
 - 7.1.3.1. If an employee is deemed able to perform the essential functions of a job, they will be authorized to return to work without restrictions.
 - 7.1.3.2. If the employee is released to work on modified duty or with restrictions, Human Resources will work with management and the employee in an interactive process to determine transitional work that is appropriate and falls within business needs.
- 7.1.4. The employee must immediately report to the job site and present the Return to Work Form to their manager or supervisor. The manager shall not permit an employee to return to work without this authorization.

7.2. Additional Documentation

7.2.1. If a leave of absence extends beyond thirty (30) days, the employee should request evidence of medical clearance from their personal doctor and provide evidence to Human Resources.

7.2.1.1. If an employee was hospitalized at any point during his/her leave of absence, discharge paperwork must be submitted with medical documentation to Human Resources.

7.2.2. A clinic evaluation at the clinic of choice is required for a leave of absence extending beyond thirty (30) days. The employee will be given a Clinic Authorization Form with the employee's current job description and medical documents attached. The employee is to immediately return to Human Resources at the conclusion of the examination to submit the results.