

Title	<b>ACCOMMODATION PROCEDURE – TEACHING STAFF RETURNING TO WORK</b>	Independent Procedure No.	<b>9039</b>
Department	<b>ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES - HUMAN RESOURCES</b>		
Resources	Ontario Human Rights Code Ontario Regulation 298	Effective Date	2002 Mar. 26

The Thames Valley District School Board recognizes the valuable work contributions made by its teachers and is committed to assisting them in returning to work following an illness or injury, and to providing ongoing support and assistance.

Teachers with an occupational or non-occupational illness or injury who require accommodation to return to work will be supported through fair and consistent Return to Work Procedure programs that enable the early return to meaningful, productive and suitable employment. The objective of this program is to return teachers to their pre-illness/injury status as soon as possible, consistent with their medical condition.

This procedure has been developed with reference to the Ontario Human Rights Commission Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate. (See Appendix A)

Each Return to Work Procedure program will involve the following parties: Teacher, Teacher representative, Principal, Disability Management Officer, Staffing Personnel and Supervisory Officer when applicable from the beginning of the process.

These proceedings are conducted in strict confidence. All written and verbal communications are treated as highly confidential information.

**1.0 Responsibilities**

1.1 Program Co-ordinator - Disability Management Officer

The Disability Management Officer will:

- co-ordinate the return to work process;
- obtain appropriate medical information to assist teachers to return to work in a timely manner within physical/mental capabilities. Clarify physical/mental limitations and precautions;

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#### Accommodation Procedure – Teaching Staff Returning to Work Cont'd

- meet with teachers to develop specific goals and objectives of return to work compatible with medical restrictions.
- identify supports/resources needed for the teacher's successful reintegration to the workplace. Ensure the supports/resources are available and inform the teacher of the availability;
- advise and involve the principal/superintendent and union representatives in the teacher's return to work plan. (See Appendix B);
- meet with the teacher, principal, superintendent and union representative (unless the member wishes otherwise) to review the return to work plan and goals. Receive input from the Principal and identify outcomes and implement the return to work plan;
- monitor the progress of teachers placed in modified positions through regular contact. Obtain ongoing medical information as required. Planned progression should occur;
- maintain regular communication with the teacher, rehabilitation caseworker (OTIP or WSIB) and principal;
- work with staffing personnel, safety specialists, principals, superintendents and union representatives to develop modified or alternate work opportunities;
- educate senior administration, union representatives and school administrators about accommodation and return to work issues and legal obligations;
- ensure that confidentiality of all medical information is strictly maintained. Information is shared with supervisory officer, principal and union representative only with the teacher's signed consent for release of this information, and only to the extent necessary to enable the proper return to work;
- communicate the written return to work plan to appropriate personnel (see Appendix A: Modified Work Plan).

#### 1.2 Teacher Staffing Officer

The Staffing Officer will:

- consult with the Disability Management Officer regarding individual(s) requiring an alternative location and/or assignment, including unique and individual requests (i.e. location, logistics including physical capabilities, etc.);
- compile relevant information to be used in the staffing process (i.e. entitlement, qualifications, etc.);

#### Accommodation Procedure – Teaching Staff Returning to Work Cont'd

- ensure that any regulatory requirements are adhered to (i.e. qualifications, Reg. 298, etc.);
- provide a listing of available assignments (inclusive of occasional teacher vacancies) and assist in determining an appropriate placement proposal;
- consult the Disability Management Officer and principal and supervisory officer with staffing responsibilities, if necessary about appropriateness of potential assignments;
- contact the teacher to discuss proposed placement. Arrange for principal and teacher, and union representative (unless the teacher declines) to address the appropriateness of the assignment;
- receive confirmation of the placement from the principal;
- confirm placement with the Disability Management Officer who will continue to monitor the progress of the Teacher placement and its appropriateness.

### 1.3 Union

The Union will:

- advise the teacher regarding relevant articles in the Collective Agreement, such as use of sick days, in conjunction with Human Resources;
- advise the teacher regarding Long Term Disability options and assist with completion of application if appropriate;
- advise the teacher regarding other financial implications, such as Wage Loss Replacement plan, Employment Insurance, in conjunction with Human Resources;
- counsel and advise the teacher as appropriate and refer to the Disability Management Officer and/or Employee Assistance Program if appropriate;
- maintain contact with the Disability Management Officer;
- maintain contact with the LTD carrier as necessary;
- meet with the teacher and Disability Management Officer (and LTD personnel, if appropriate) to plan re-entry to work;
- assist in developing a mutually agreeable return to work plan;
- discuss selection of appropriate work site (former school or new school);
- consult with principal, superintendent, teacher and others as required to establish common understanding of the return to work plan and goals;

Accommodation Procedure – Teaching Staff Returning to Work Cont'd

- maintain contact with the teacher, administrator(s), Disability Management Officer and others to monitor the success of the return to work plan;
- assist in revising a return to work plan as necessary;
- educate and inform teachers of the legal requirements to participate and co-operate in the return to work process.

1.4 Teacher

The Teacher who requires the accommodation will:

- notify his/her principal/immediate supervisor of an injury/illness absence and maintain regular contact;
- seek early treatment from an appropriate health care provider and follow medical direction so that a return to regular work can be achieved as soon as medically possible;
- after obtaining the initial treatment, contact his/her principal/immediate supervisor or the Disability Management Officer concerning the need for workplace accommodations;
- provide and/or authorize the release of appropriate medical information to the Disability Management Officer regarding fitness to work;
- co-operate and participate in the return to work program including the performance of modified work within the medical restrictions;
- communicate any concerns to his/her principal/immediate supervisor, Disability Management Officer or the union so that potential problems may be resolved early.

1.5 Principal

The Principal will:

- co-operate with and support the teacher's return to work plan through personal encouragement and recognition of past successes;
- contact the Disability Management Officer and the Supervisory Officer when a teacher returning to work requires accommodation;
- assist the teacher in recognizing accommodation needs and advise her/him to involve the Disability Management Officer;
- identify suitable modified work options in co-operation with the Disability Management Officer;
- support and monitor the teacher during the modified work program, assisting to solve problems and enabling a successful transition;

- ensure co-workers are aware of the Board's accommodation obligations and enlist their support for the teacher's modified work program;
- provide appropriately timed feedback to the teacher and the Disability Management Officer concerning the teacher's return to work plan.
- participate in consultation meetings as required;
- review and document efforts to assist the teacher;
- preserve a positive and supportive environment throughout the return to work program.

1.6 Supervisory Officer

The Supervisory Officer will:

- work with the school to facilitate the return to work process;
- assist with the location transition as specified by the administrative transfer process;
- discuss, as necessary, the legal and policy obligations to co-operate with and participate in the return to work program.

Appendix A: Policy and Guidelines - Ontario Human Rights Commission web page

Appendix B: Modified Work Plan