



Options for Implementing Recommendations to Support the RTW Supplement Program

Response to Directive by
The Commission on Health and Safety and Workers' Compensation

June 7, 2018

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Efforts in progress to increase RTWSP benefit awareness

- Improve online visibility of RTWSP application and information on homepage
 - Translate program webpage into Spanish
- Clarify RTWSP availability and eligibility on SJDB voucher form
 - Consider translating SJDB voucher into additional languages
- Conduct survey of eligible workers to better understand barriers to participation
- Explore collaboration with claims administrators on ways to inform eligible workers about the program

www.dir.ca.gov/RTWSP/RTWSP.html

Department of Industrial Relations

Return-to-Work Supplement Program (RTWSP)

The Return-to-Work Supplement Program is one of the components of Senate Bill 653. Labor Code section 139.45 requires the Director to administer a \$122 million fund for the purpose of making supplemental payments to workers whose permanent disability benefits are disproportionately low in comparison to their earnings losses. The program is based on studies conducted by RAND regarding permanent disability, specifically "Identifying Permanently Disabled Workers with Disproportionate Earnings Losses for Supplemental Payments." (February 2014)

Eligibility for RTWSP:
An applicant must have a date of injury (DOI) on or after Jan. 1, 2013 and have received a Supplemental Job Displacement Benefit (SJDB) voucher for said injury.

What is the deadline for applying:
The application for the Return-to-Work Supplement benefit must be received by the RTWSP within one year from the date the Supplemental Job Displacement Benefit (SJDB) voucher (DWC-AD Form 10733-32 Rev. 10/1/15, or later version) was served on the applicant or one year from the effective date of the amended § 6214.1726(a) (March 20, 2017) for SJDB vouchers issued prior to December 1, 2015.

How to apply:
The application for this one-time supplemental payment is available online and can be completed from any computer which has access to the internet. If you do not have access to a computer, every DWIC district office has a kiosk near the Information and Assistance office equipped with a computer, scanner, and printer for your use.

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Increase program monitoring

- Anticipate trends in program eligibility shifts
- Observe potential benefit access issues or patterns of abuse
- Understand allocation and timeframe of SJDB service delivery
- Data that could be reported:
 - Date of RTW offer decision
 - Date of SJDB voucher issuance
 - Dates and types of SJDB services provided and paid
- Need to identify mechanism to notify DIR of above data elements

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Increase distribution to all eligible workers

- RAND report evaluating RTWSP program found the administrative function to be efficient and effective
- RAND identified a gap in participation between represented and unrepresented workers who are eligible for the benefit
- To address the gap:
 - Building on existing system, DIR could auto-process payment of the RTWSP directly to workers
 - Trigger for payment could be the notification of the SJDB voucher issuance, potentially reported via WCIS
 - After verifying the recipient's address, the benefit payment could be automatically issued
- Requires regulations to amend program structure

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