

Returning Employees Back to Work Pays

In California, small employers, who incur expenses in providing workplace modifications in order to bring employees back to work, may be reimbursed up to \$2,500.

Specifically, if your employee was injured on or after July 1, 2004 and you employed 50 or fewer full-time employees on the date of injury, you may qualify for reimbursement of up to:

- (1) \$1,250 in expenses you incur that allow a temporarily disabled employee to perform modified or alternative work within physician-imposed temporary work restrictions while recovering
- (2) \$2,500 in expenses you incur to bring a permanently disabled employee back to sustained modified or alternative work within physician-imposed permanent work restrictions.

Reimbursement can be for any of the following expenses, provided they are specifically prescribed by a physician or are reasonably required by restrictions laid out in a medical report:

- (1) Modification to worksite
- (2) Equipment
- (3) Furniture
- (4) Tools
- (5) Any other necessary costs reasonably required to accommodate the employee's restrictions.

Of course, there are some restrictions. For example, if your employee was under both temporary and permanent restrictions and you made modifications to accommodate both, the maximum possible reimbursement is \$2,500. You should also be aware that **“sustained modified or alternative work” means work anticipated to last at least 12 months**. All the specifics are spelled out in the Division of Workers' Compensation's (DWC) [return to work regulations](#).

If you'd like to seek reimbursement for modifications, you must submit the [“Request for Reimbursement of Accommodation Expenses”](#) form posted on the DWC Web site **within 90 calendar days of the date of the expenditure** (the filing date may be extended if you show good cause). Don't forget to attach copies of all pertinent medical reports that contain the work restrictions being accommodated, any other documentation supporting the request, and all receipts for accommodation expenses. Send the form and your attachments to:

**Return to work reimbursements
Division of Workers' Compensation
1515 Clay Street, 17th floor
Oakland CA 94612**

Questions? Call (510) 286-7100 and Speak To A Return To Work Program Representative.