

Workers' Compensation Frequently Asked Questions

What information do I need to bring to my doctor appointments?

Have Penser's name/address/claim number at every treatment appointment:
Penser North America, Inc., 1802 Terminal Drive, Richland, WA 99354
509-420-7290 Phone 509-420-7289 Fax

What do I need to do if I receive a bill from the providers/hospitals/facilities/labs, etc.?

You must contact biller and inform them that the bill should be billed under their workers' compensation claim and give them Penser's address and your claim number. Remember if you are getting the bill, Penser is not, so the bill is not going to be paid until Penser receives it.

Can I change health-care providers once my claim is filed?

Yes. You may change health-care providers or ask for a consulting opinion from another provider if you feel you are not making progress with your current provider. However, to ensure proper payment of medical bills, you must get approval from your case manager at Penser before changing providers or seeking another opinion a Transfer of Attending Provider Form (F207-114-000) must be submitted to Penser. Your company's workers' compensation representative can help you obtain this form.

Note: Before you transfer care to a new provider or seek a consulting opinion, confirm with the provider that they are a part of the L&I Medical Provider Network.

What do I need to understand from the doctor before leaving each appointment?

You need to understand your diagnosis, treatment plan, and return to work status before you leave each appointment. Ask questions if you do not understand!

Ask doctor what your work status is before leaving doctor's office: return to work full duty, return to work with restrictions, or total removal from work?

Released to full duty – worker return to work

Released with restriction – worker must report to HPMC and go through the return to work process as of the date released. Restrictions may be able to be accommodated. Accommodations are reviewed by worker, human resources, management, and Safety. Each case is reviewed on a case-by-case basis in making an accommodation decision.

Total removal from work – contact your company's workers' compensation representative.

Note: If you are away from work, more than 180 days contact your company's workers' compensation representative.

How long am I going to be out of work after surgery or during treatment, can I still work during treatment?

Talk to the doctor; let them know that your employer may be willing to accommodate restrictions to help workers get back to work faster.

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What if I am removed from work by my physician?

Get it in writing! Have the doctor provide an explanation and any further recommendations. You will need to give your doctor's note to your company's workers' compensation representative as soon as possible.

Stay in contact with your company's workers' compensation representative and Penser on a regular basis following your doctor's appointments. Provide updates on your progress and future follow-up visits.

Do I need to make follow-up appointments?

Yes, you should make the appointment before you leave the office if possible, notify your company's workers' compensation representative and Penser of any future appointments as soon as possible.

Physical Therapy, chiropractic, or other treatment, how do I get it started?

Get the referral from your doctor, and make an appointment with the doctor/facility of your choice that accepts L&I insurance. Once the appointment is made, the doctor/facility will confirm with Penser that your treatment/appointment is authorized. Just remember that all health care services must accept L&I insurance. Notify Penser that treatment authorization is needed, and let them know where that authorization request is coming from so they will be looking for the request. If possible, get the referral to Penser and your company's workers' compensation representative.

What do I need to do to return to work (RTW)?

About a month prior or as soon as possible to your return, please follow these steps:

- Contact your company's workers' compensation representative with RTW information.
- Contact your Human Resources with RTW information.
- Your physician will need to provide a return to work note prior to you returning to work. Take your doctor's note to HPMC on the date of release. It is your responsibility to provide HPMC with your doctor's note if you are returning.
- If returning after day 180, Human Resources will need to request a work suitability/work capacity/fitness for duty exam. An appointment will be scheduled with HPMC, and you will be notified of the date and time. HPMC will need a concurrence form signed by your physician before the work capacity exam can be scheduled. Please work with the doctor's office to get this completed so the exam and your RTW will not be delayed.
Note: If your injury/illness resulted from a head injury, illness, or other psychological conditions, you will need to be screened by Behavioral Health Services (BHS) before you are returned to work.
- If your absence exceeded 90 days, your security clearance was placed in an inactive status. Be sure to contact Security on (509) 376-1849, several weeks prior to the date of your return to reactivate your clearance status.
- After you have cleared through HPMC, proceed to your company's Human Resource Department.

Return to work checklist

_____ Get a return to work note from your doctor indicating that you may return to work with or without restrictions.

_____ Work Suitability Exam concurrence letter from doctor if you have been absent longer than 180 days*. Contact Scott Dickinson at HPMC 509-376-9122 for copy of the letter the doctor will need to sign off on before your return to work. Arrange to pick up or receive in the mail a copy of the concurrence letter required before a Work Capacity exam can be scheduled. Getting this signed by your doctor will help expedite the scheduling process.

*Note: Depending on your job title and why you were out, regardless of the number of days away, your company may require you to have a Work Capacity Exam, Work Suitability Exam or a Fitness for Duty Exam done at HPMC. Your medical provider may need to sign a concurrence form prior to you being able to perform the exams.

_____ Report to HPMC at 1979 Snyder, Richland, with the documentation that releases you back to work on the date that you are released.

_____ Follow the Benefits Return to Work Route Slip provided by HPMC on checkout.