



Washington State Department of  
**Labor & Industries**  
*Workers' Compensation Services*

# **Carrying Out Your Vocational Plan: Your Rights and Responsibilities during Plan Implementation**

*Vocational Rehabilitation Services*





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# Plan Implementation Rights & Responsibilities

## It's time for a decision

You and your counselor have worked together to develop a vocational plan that will give you new skills for returning to the workforce. Now it's time for you to decide whether you want to proceed with your plan in the next phase of vocational services, called plan implementation.

The letter approving your plan includes a Retraining Plan Option Form that you must complete and return.

## Weigh your options carefully

Choosing between the following options is an important decision. You may want to consider talking to family members or professional consultants before making your final selection.

### Vocational Option 1

You will move ahead with your vocational plan. Under Option 1, you will continue to receive time-loss and medical benefits for your injury or occupational disease during your training, as long as you participate and meet all the requirements in your accountability agreement.

### Vocational Option 2

Your claim will close and you will receive an amount equal to six months of temporary total disability, or time-loss compensation, less any overpayments or Division of Child Support\* liens you owe. This benefit is paid bi-weekly, or, on request and at L&I's discretion, in a lump-sum payment. (If approved, L&I will send your payment once 60 days or more have passed from the mailing date on your Vocational Award *Payment Order*.)

Under Option 2, you can still seek training even though your claim will be closed. Vocational funds will be available to you, with some limits, for up to five years. Generally, these funds can be used for tuition or training and certain related costs if you pursue training or education at an accredited, licensed, or L&I-approved institution or program. The retraining goal or program you choose does not have to be the same as the one that L&I approved.

## Return your form on time

You must return your completed Retraining Plan Option Form to L&I within 15 days of the date on the letter approving your plan. If L&I does not receive the form within 15 days, you must begin your vocational plan.

\* Washington State Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Child Support

## What L&I expects of you

Under Option 1, you must actively participate in the vocational plan you developed with your counselor. You must meet your responsibilities in the accountability agreement that you signed.

### During training

- Contact your vocational rehabilitation counselor at least twice a month and tell them about your progress or problems with your plan.
- Meet the school's attendance requirements.
- Meet the school's requirements for academic performance.
- Work with your instructor if you are absent or need help in class.
- Respond to contacts from your counselor promptly, usually within 24 hours.
- Give your counselor all plan-related records, expenses, and correspondence for review and approval. This will include:
  - Class registration and schedules
  - Attendance reports
  - Grade reports
  - Mileage vouchers
  - Receipts for clothing, supplies, tools and equipment required for your training program

### During absences

- Cooperate with attendance and performance standards established by the school you are attending.
- If you miss any scheduled activities related to your plan, contact your counselor within 24 hours to explain your absences.

### During any job placement portion of your plan

- Participate fully in placement activities, including contacting employers, preparing employment applications and a resume.
- Make contact with at least five employers per week.

## Plan Implementation Rights & Responsibilities

### What happens if your vocational plan is interrupted?

If your vocational plan is interrupted — in other words, if you stop participating in your plan — what happens next depends on the reason for the interruption.

<b>Interruptions beyond your control</b>	<b>Interruptions due to your own actions</b>
<p>If you stop participating for the reasons below, then L&amp;I considers the interruption to be beyond your control:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Closure of your school or program</li><li>■ Death in your immediate family</li><li>■ Changes in your medical condition related to your injury or occupational illness. These changes must be documented by your medical provider.</li></ul>	<p>If you stop participating for the reasons below, then L&amp;I considers the interruption to be a result of your own actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Medical conditions unrelated to your original injury or occupational illness</li><li>■ Failure to meet your accountability agreement</li></ul>

#### When circumstances beyond your control interrupt your plan

- L&I may return you to the plan development phase of vocational services so that you can work with your counselor, when appropriate.

#### When your own actions interrupt your plan

- L&I may stop paying your benefits and you may no longer be eligible for vocational services.

### What you can expect from your counselor

Your counselor is required to:

- Regularly contact you and your training institution to monitor your progress.
- Provide monthly progress reports to L&I.
- Work with you and your school to arrange tutors or other support if you are struggling in your vocational plan.
- Provide a closing report when you have finished your plan.

## What you can expect from L&I or your self-insured employer

If you select Option 1, your claim manager will monitor your monthly progress toward successfully completing your vocational plan.

### Need more information or help?

**If your employer is insured by L&I**, contact us at the number printed in your correspondence or by calling 1-800-547-8367.

- You can also review your information at L&I's online Claim and Account Center at: [www.ClaimInfo.Lni.wa.gov](http://www.ClaimInfo.Lni.wa.gov)
- By mail: Department of Labor & Industries  
Insurance Services  
PO Box 44291  
Olympia, WA 98504-4291

**If your employer is self-insured**, contact your employer's claim manager, or L&I's Self-Insurance Section at 360-902-6901.

*Other formats for persons with disabilities are available on request.*

*Call 1-800-547-8367. TDD users, call 360-902-4685.*

*L&I is an equal opportunity employer.*

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