

# Hire A Preferred Worker. Help Your Bottom Line.



## Preferred Worker Program

*New financial incentives available to both State Fund and self-insured employers.*



Washington State Department of  
**Labor & Industries**

*Return to Work Partnerships*

# Add value at work with a preferred worker.

Some workers are not able to go back to their old jobs because of permanent medical restrictions caused by a workplace injury or illness. They've healed but are limited from doing certain tasks.

L&I certifies these workers through the Preferred Worker Program and provides financial incentives and premium relief to eligible employers who create medically-appropriate, long-term jobs for preferred workers.

Contact the worker's vocational provider, claim manager or the Preferred Worker Program staff with questions or for help.





*“For an injured worker, returning to a job means financial stability and a more meaningful life.”*

– Aimee Jolie, MA, CDMS  
Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, Seattle

## Hire a preferred worker. Help your bottom line.

When you create a medically-approved job for a preferred worker, you will:

- Retain or add a valuable worker.
- Improve productivity and staff morale.
- Reduce workers’ compensation costs.
- Reduce training costs.
- Improve your branding as an employer.

### What does your business get?

If you create a safe, long-term, medically-appropriate job for a preferred worker, reimbursements include:

- 50% of the base wages you pay the preferred worker, for up to 66 days or up to \$10,000, within a consecutive 24-month period.
- Up to \$2,500 for tools and equipment.
- Up to \$400 for worker clothing.

Plus, an incentive payment of 10% of the worker’s wages or \$10,000 (whichever is less) is paid to eligible employers after 12 months of continuous employment of the preferred worker.

Benefits apply only to preferred workers certified after Jan. 1, 2016, and injured under a State Fund\* claim.

\*State Fund means employers that purchase coverage through L&I.

### Applying is easy.

If you think your worker may qualify for preferred worker certification, go to **[www.Lni.wa.gov/PreferredWorker](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/PreferredWorker)** for a Preferred Worker Request form and then carefully follow the instructions.

We want to pay you! Make sure you:

- Read all eligibility requirements.
- Fill all forms out completely.\*
- Provide all required documentation.

\*Incomplete forms will cause delays.

### Claim protection and premium relief

L&I also will pay the cost of a new claim during the certification period with no penalty to your business. Plus:

- No charges for Accident Fund or Medical Aid Fund premiums or a new claim for the preferred worker during the 3-year certification period if you’re a State Fund employer.
- Reimbursement for the costs of any future claim during the 3-year certification period for self-insured employers.

Preferred workers may fall under the state and federal definitions for a person living with disabilities.

*“Employees who come with benefits like these are good for business.”*

– Mike O’Dea, DVM  
Pet Emergency Clinic, Spokane

## **To learn more**

Go to **[www.Lni.wa.gov/PreferredWorker](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/PreferredWorker)**, or contact us at the Preferred Worker Program to ask how to apply for preferred worker benefits.

## **General questions:**

Preferred Worker Program  
Department of Labor & Industries  
PO Box 44324  
Olympia, WA 98504-4324  
Phone: 1-800-845-2634 (toll free)  
Email: [PrefWorkerProg@Lni.wa.gov](mailto:PrefWorkerProg@Lni.wa.gov)

## **Send Preferred Worker Request forms to:**

Department of Labor & Industries  
PO Box 44291  
Olympia, WA 98504-4291  
Fax: 360-902-4567

Grant money is available to help employers develop return-to-work policies and programs. For more information, go to **[www.Lni.wa.gov/SafetyGrants](http://www.Lni.wa.gov/SafetyGrants)**.

*Upon request, foreign language support and formats for persons with disabilities are available. Call 1-800-547-8367. TDD users, call 711. L&I is an equal opportunity employer.*