

Valparaiso University

WORKER'S COMPENSATION POLICY

Worker's Compensation provides limited benefits to injured workers in the form of medical treatment, compensation for lost wages, and compensation for the loss, or loss of use, of parts of the body.

Worker's Compensation claims are handled by the Office of Human Resource Services. When an employee is injured on the job, the injury must be reported to the supervisor immediately, and an injury report must be filled out and submitted. A report should be filled out whether or not medical attention is deemed necessary by the supervisor or employee. Failure to report an injury within 24 hours of occurrence may result in loss of benefits.

When an employee is injured during the course of employment, he/she must seek medical treatment at the facility identified by the University. Currently, the identified treatment facility is Porter Memorial Hospital's Occupational Health in the case of a non-emergency and Porter Memorial Hospital's emergency room in the case of an emergency. Failure to seek treatment through the University's treatment provider may result in loss of benefits. When treatment is required and time permits, a Medical Treatment Authorization form, filled out by the supervisor, should accompany the employee to the treatment site.

If an employee is injured away from the job site and requires emergency treatment, the employee should then be taken to the nearest treatment facility. However, if follow-up treatment is required, Valparaiso University has the right to choose the treatment provider.

Wages on the day of injury will be paid by Valparaiso University. If an employee is unable to work because of an injury, he or she may receive limited wage replacement compensation through the worker's compensation insurance carrier until they are able to return to work. Note: Reimbursed wages through Worker's Compensation are not taxable per Internal Revenue Service Code 104. If unable to work, an employee is entitled to compensation for lost wages paid at the rate of two thirds of the employee's pre-injury average weekly gross wage, subject to a maximum period of 500 weeks. Initial compensation for lost wages begins on the eighth calendar day from the date of injury and is paid in weekly installments. Compensation for the first 7 calendar days of lost work will not be reimbursed by Worker's Compensation until the employee has lost work time in excess of 21 calendar days. An employee has the option of utilizing benefit time in the order of sick time, personal time then vacation time to cover working days 1-7, or taking the lost time unpaid. If benefit time is used, it will not be reinstated if the employee is subsequently off work for 21 days or more.

If a University-scheduled holiday falls within the first seven calendar days of lost time due to a work injury, the employee will receive holiday pay. If a holiday occurs on the

eighth day of lost time or beyond, the employee will be reimbursed for the holiday by Worker's Compensation at the calculated worker's compensation wage.

The employee may also be placed on restricted work or on a reduced schedule at the treatment provider's orders. In this case, the employee will receive payment of wages from Valparaiso University for those hours worked and payment of wages from worker's compensation for those hours deemed covered under worker's compensation. If follow up treatment must occur outside of the county of employment, Worker's Compensation will reimburse for mileage at a rate per mile assigned by the State of Indiana for those miles traveled to and from treatment. Dates, odometer readings, miles traveled and the destination must be adequately documented in order to receive reimbursement. (Contact the Office of Human Resource Services for further information.)

FMLA leave will run concurrently with any time off as the result of any injury or medical condition that prevents the employee from working. Employees who are unable to work because of a Worker's Compensation eligible injury that are not eligible for FMLA (for reasons other than having exhausted their FMLA leave) will receive up to twenty-five unpaid days off on an annual basis to be used one per day for each day or partial day they are unable to work as the result of the injury.

If a worker is placed on restricted or light duty, and the supervising department has work for the employee that meets these restrictions, the employee must report to work. Failure to do so will result in loss of wages. An employee may also be required to attend follow-up treatment for an injury such as physical or occupational therapy. It is the employee's responsibility to schedule these follow-up treatments on the employee's off time, or, if this is not possible, with a minimum of disruption to work hours. If an employee must leave work to attend follow-up treatment, the employee must inform his/her supervisor as to the appointment time. An employee will be paid by the University for time actually spent for the follow-up appointment if the appointment is scheduled during the employee's shift. Failure to comply with prescribed follow-up treatment can result in loss of benefits.

If an employee has lost work time, and is subsequently released back to full or restricted work by a treatment provider, the employee must notify his or her supervisor immediately. The employee will report directly back to work, or upon the start of the next shift if the current day's work has ended.

Please contact the Human Resource Services Department with any questions regarding this policy.