

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: MEDICAL RESTRICTIONS AND MODIFIED WORK**

### **What are medical restrictions?**

Medical restrictions are physical and/or mental tasks the employee is not capable of performing as a result of her/his medical condition. Medical restrictions can be expressed as limitations (such as no heavy lifting). A physician, nurse practitioner or other medical provider determines the medical restrictions for an employee with a disability as a result of injury or illness.

### **Why are medical restrictions put in place?**

Medical restrictions are put in place to safeguard the employee's health and safety while at work. The employer must provide modified work that is safe and productive for an employee who is unable to perform her/his normal duties due to the injury/illness. The employer must provide accommodation up to the point of undue hardship.

### **What are temporary and permanent medical restrictions?**

Temporary medical restrictions are restrictions that are in effect for a specific period of time. These should change as an injured employee receives medical treatment and her/his condition improves.

Permanent medical restrictions are restrictions in effect for the duration of a person's working life or as long as the employee remains permanently disabled. The medical provider assesses these restrictions after the employee has reached maximum medical improvement. Maximum medical improvement is the point at which the medical provider believes the employee's condition is not going to improve any further.

### **What is modified work?**

Modified work is changes made to the job and/or to the workplace to facilitate the return to work of an employee with medical restrictions. It is the provision of modified work that satisfies the employer's duty to accommodate in accordance with the [Ontario Human Rights Code](#).

### **What is undue hardship?**

Undue hardship is used to assess whether an employer is required to accommodate an employee. An employer may claim undue hardship if the injured worker's accommodation threatens the employer's financial sustainability or poses a safety risk to others.