

# Early Intervention Policies.

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The SRC Podcast

Episode 1: How an Early Intervention Policy Can Be the Key to Employee Recovery

20 April, 2021

## What are early intervention policies?

An early intervention program or policy is a systemic and departmental approved process for the handling of new and emerging symptoms of ill health, injury, and illness. It aims to mitigate the effect of those conditions on employees to either support them to remain in the workplace or to support them to return to work as soon as practical. An early intervention policy does not and cannot supersede or abrogate and employees entitlements under the SRC Act.

## What are the benefits?

Effective early intervention policies are a proven way to support workers to return to work earlier and to reduce the incidence of workers' compensation claims being made. This is because:

- Early intervention policies can reduce the period of time between an injury or the emergence of symptoms and treatment;
- Staff who are injured at work feel supported by their employer this reduces the barriers for a safe and early return to work.

## What should my policy include?

There is no one size fits all approach. An early intervention policy should be designed to suit the majority of situations that arise in your workplace, rather than trying to also cater for outliers. McInnes Wilson recommends that early intervention policies include:

- Reimbursement for out of pocket medical expenses (limited to GP, physiotherapy, psychology – although other health professionals could also be considered);
- A period of miscellaneous leave with pay for injuries that are reasonably likely to be accepted if a workers' compensation claim was made (no more than two weeks);
- A library of ergonomic equipment to reduce delays in the provision of reasonable adjustments;
- Timely workstation assessments;
- EAP whose performance is monitored;
- Temporary placements in other supervision lines or work areas (this may not be appropriate for employees with complex needs).

Decision making under an early intervention policy should be documented and consistent. The delegate should be someone of sufficient seniority in the Department and of course also hold the relevant delegation to approve miscellaneous leave with pay.

## Want to know more?

Listen to the full podcast at <https://anchor.fm/thesrcreport> or get in touch with presenters, Athena Cains and Abraham Ghaleb.

## Key Contacts



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