



## Top 10 Benefits of Returning to Work

1. **What are the benefits of returning to work?** A quick return to an active life may help you get better faster. Returning to work also may increase your income and benefits over time. A job also provides friendships on and off the job. But, your workers' compensation payments will never reach the amount of your full pay. You may not get pay raises or promotions while you are out of work.
2. **What will happen to my workers' compensation payments if I return to work?** That depends on a few things, such as how much you earned before your injury. If your new pay rate is lower because of your disability, you could get part of your benefit to make up for your decreased wages. This is called a "reduced earnings" benefit.
3. **Can I still get medical treatment for my work-related injury after I return to work?** Yes. You can also ask to be paid for your travel costs to and from treatment. You can be repaid for the cost of medications and some other items prescribed by your doctor as well.
4. **Does my employer have to keep my job open for me while I am out due to my workplace injury?** The Workers' Compensation Law does not require your employer to keep your job open for you. But, most employers do take injured workers back. Keep in contact with your employer about your job status. The federal Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires some employers to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a twelve-month period to an employee who cannot work because of a serious health condition. Contact the U.S. Department of Labor or your employer for more information.
5. **Now that I am able to work, can I collect Unemployment Insurance?** If you are ready, willing, and able to work, but your job is no longer open with your employer, you may be able to collect Unemployment Insurance. Contact the New York State Department of Labor to find out more about Unemployment Insurance benefits at 1-888-209-8124.
6. **What happens if I return to work and find I cannot do the work?** If you go back to work but are unable to continue working due to your prior workplace injury, you may be able to reopen your case and collect benefits again. You may want to ask your employer for a short-term job that you can do. You can request changes to your job so you can do your work, as well. The Workers' Compensation Board's rehabilitation staff can help you find work you can do or retraining programs. Call them at 1-800-580-6665.
7. **I was told that I have a partial disability. What does that mean?** There are two main levels of disability in workers' compensation. One is total disability, when a worker cannot earn any wages and his or her daily activities are limited. The other is a partial disability. A worker with a partial disability has lost some ability to earn wages and do normal, daily activities. He or she may still be able to do some work, such as part-time work or lighter work than his or her former job.
8. **What should I do if I have a partial disability?** If you have a partial disability, you must still look for and accept work you can do. Contact your employer to see if you can return to your job. Ask if you can be offered some other work to ease your return to work. If your wages are reduced as a result of your disability, you may be eligible for a "reduced earnings" benefit. You could lose your benefits if you fail to make a good faith effort to return to work. This is called "Voluntary Withdrawal from the Labor Market."
9. **If I am unable to do my usual type of work because of my injury, does the Workers' Compensation Board offer help in finding work or training for persons with disabilities?** Yes. Contact the local Board district office near you and ask to speak with our vocational rehabilitation counselors or social workers.
10. **Will my benefits be reduced or ended if I take part in rehabilitation?** No. Taking part in a rehabilitation program will not hurt your case.

State of New York  
Workers Compensation Board  
20 Park Street  
Albany, NY 12207  
877-632-4996