



# RETURNING TO WORK

The right time to return to work will be different for everyone. Factors like the type of job you do and how you are managing your concussion symptoms may influence when you can safely go back. It is important to work with your health-care providers and employer to determine what timeline will be best for you.

Before returning to work, consider the 4P's.



## PLAN

## PRIORITIZE

## POSITION

## PACE

### PLAN



- Have a plan for how to talk to your co-workers before you return. Stop by before your first day for a quick visit to get any catch-up conversations out of the way. Send emails or call instead of having in-person conversations if that works better.
- Volunteer positions, work study programs, and research assistantships are also types of jobs even if you do not get paid. Communicate with your instructors or coordinators to set a plan for your return.
- Seek out access to financial and counseling resources like Employee Assistance Programs (EAP). Ask your health-care providers if Vocational Rehabilitation services are offered.
- Depending on your work setting, some of the school strategies that you are using may be helpful at work too. Use your strategies for organization, attention, memory, energy conservation, and managing mood and stress while on the job.
- Reach out to your employer and health-care providers if you are struggling. Don't wait until it starts to impact your job performance. Don't forget that everyone is working together to help you succeed.

### PRIORITIZE



- Consider how other responsibilities may influence your job performance. Balancing academic assignments, job duties, and a social obligations can be challenging.
- Take extra breaks. Add time in your schedule to decompress before you get tired or your symptoms worsen. Set reminders to take breaks for short periods throughout your day or add them to your schedule. Shut the door to your office or find a quiet area to relax.

### POSITION



- Talk with your health-care providers about what strategies that you can use on your own to help manage your symptoms at work.
- Sometimes people can also benefit from temporary work-place accommodations, like having extra breaks or modifying how long your work, to best manage symptoms at the onset of returning to your job. Your Human Resources department can work with you and your health-care providers to determine what accommodations may be helpful.
- Manage environmental factors that can influence symptoms. Make sure your computer and workstation are set up best for you. Ask your employer about having an ergonomic assessment of your workstation.

### PACE



- To get ready to return to work, gradually get back into your routine. Get up at your normal time, get dressed and slowly start to do more job-related activities like responding to emails or reading. Start with short periods and slowly increase the amount of activity if it does not worsen your symptoms.
- Gradually return to work. This helps to build tolerance to the physical and cognitive demands of your job. You, your health-care providers, and your employer should work together to plan for your return.
- Pace yourself. Allow more time than you think to complete work duties and assignments



## TECHNOLOGY

Productivity Apps like Be Focused. This is a focus timer that reminds you to stay focused and take breaks.

▶ [Be Focused](#)

Plug-Ins like Mindful Browsing. These can help if you are distracted during computer work.

▶ [Mindful Browsing](#)

Noise cancelling headphones can allow you to tune out background noise if you work in a shared work space. Consider your budget and needs before purchasing.

