

## Changes to *Return to Work Act 2014* from 1 December 2024

The Parliament of South Australia recently passed the *Return to Work (Employment and Progressive Injuries) Amendment Act 2024* which amends the *Return to Work Act 2014* (the Act).

Most changes come into effect on 1 December 2024

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## Recovery and return to work plans

Recovery and return to work (RRTW) plans are designed to help injured workers transition back into suitable employment while ensuring collaboration between all relevant parties. Recent changes aim to strengthen these plans by clarifying roles and ensuring the workers' goals are prioritised.

### Key changes to RRTW plans

- Inclusion of host employers, as defined in the Act, and self-insured groups as relevant parties to the RRTW plans.
- When preparing the RRTW Plan, as far as reasonably practicable, input from the worker's health practitioner and any medical notes should be sought to ensure that medical advice is accurately incorporated into the RRTW Plan.
- The RRTW plan must be provided, as far as reasonably practicable, to the worker, employer, host employer, self-insured group employer and health practitioner, as relevant.
- A worker's goal to return to work with their pre-injury employer cannot be changed or abandoned without the worker's explicit agreement.

Employers, including host employers, as defined in the Act, and self-insured groups, are expected to play an active role in the RRTW planning process to facilitate the worker's return to suitable employment.

The goal is to ensure that all involved parties work together to provide a smooth and effective transition back to work for the injured worker.

By involving host employers and self-insured groups, the amendments aim to create a more robust support network for injured workers during their recovery.

The emphasis on securing worker agreement before making significant changes to the plan ensures that the worker remains at the centre of the return-to-work process.