

# Phase 1: Disclosure

✓ Show empathy and understanding of the situation.

✓ Discuss with the worker his/her wishes regarding disclosure.

✓ Discuss with the worker his/her wishes regarding communication (to the colleagues / between employer and worker).

✓ Discuss the legal rights and duties of both the employer and worker regarding sick leave.

✓ Discuss whether the worker could possibly stay active at work and to what extent, in terms of workload, tasks and assistance.

✓ If the worker cannot stay active, discuss the timing of the required substitute.

Find out more about EU-OSHA's project on Rehabilitation and return to work



The **European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)** contributes to making Europe a safer, healthier and more productive place to work. The Agency researches, develops, and distributes reliable, balanced, and impartial safety and health information and organises pan-European awareness raising campaigns. Set up by the European Union in 1994 and based in Bilbao, Spain, the Agency brings together representatives from the European Commission, Member State governments, employers' and workers' organisations, as well as leading experts in each of the EU Member States and beyond.



**Advice  
for employers  
regarding return  
to work for workers  
diagnosed with cancer**

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Safety and health at work is everyone's concern. It's good for you. It's good for business.

## Phase 2: Treatment period

- ✓ Stay in contact with the worker and assess his/her needs, expectations, possibilities to work and interests.
- ✓ Discuss the possibility of the worker keeping in touch with his/her department and colleagues according to his/her wishes (Phase 1, point 3).
- ✓ Discuss the possibility of physical activity programmes aimed at cancer patients during treatment.
- ✓ Provide knowledge on cancer and work and return-to-work issues to the worker's colleagues and supervisors in accordance with phase 1, point 2 and 3.

## Phase 3: Planning and designing return to work

- ✓ Involve the occupational health physician in exploring suitable return-to-work options.
- ✓ Discuss the legal rights and duties of both employer and worker.
- ✓ Inform the worker of the company's own return-to-work programme. Tailor this programme to the worker's needs and preferences.
- ✓ A programme with a combination of physical training, psychological support and work adjustments can be of added value to improve return to work.
- ✓ Develop a return-to-work plan together with the supervisor, worker and occupational physician.
- ✓ Discuss with the worker his/her wishes regarding interventions, rehabilitation programmes, job-coaching and external return-to-work agencies.

## Phase 4: Actual return

- ✓ The actual return to work of the worker should be performed in phases in close consultation with the worker.
- ✓ In case of a serious reduction in work ability, alternative or external reintegration options should be carefully considered with other parties, including the occupational health physician, social workers and HR management.
- ✓ Monitor and adjust the return-to-work plan if needed.

### ADVICE FOR EMPLOYERS IN SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED ENTERPRISES

- ✓ Provide information to the worker on possible (external) programmes for return to work.
- ✓ Provide support and education to the worker's colleagues and supervisors in accordance with phase 1, point 2 and 3.
- ✓ Make work requirements more flexible.
- ✓ Align with other companies that have more flexible jobs.