

Communicating with an employer

Claims administration

✓ Authority and consent on claims

✓ Communication with stakeholders

Quality assurance

✓ File and diary maintenance

✓ Receiving and actioning requests for claim file

✓ Suspensions, ceases and refusal to deal

✓ Compliance and fraud

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Introduction

Regular communication is critical to building positive stakeholder relationships with our employers and enabling effective and proactive claims management.

Our [Claims Communication Principles](#) are key to supporting effective communication with our employers.

A Claims Manager can communicate with an employer in a range of circumstances, including but not limited to:

- [initial discussion with a rehabilitation case manager on receipt of a new claim](#)
- [shared service arrangements](#) when services such as payroll are outsourced to another agency
- [when an employee changes employment and moves to a new employer](#)
- [when an agency becomes an off-budget or exit agency.](#)

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New claim discussion with a rehabilitation case manager

When a new claim for workers compensation is received, you are required to contact the employer's rehabilitation case manager (RCM) to discuss the employee's claim and their return to work.

The initial conversation with the RCM can help you with gathering information to assist in the consideration of the claim, and:

- identify any return-to-work barriers
- assess the employee's current work capacity
- ascertain the current status of the employee's condition, and
- set expectations about the claims process, including the claim determination process.

The following subheadings are discussion points and questions you can ask a RCM to enable you to:

- find out what has happened to date with the employee up till now
- identify the employee's support needs for returning to work
- set agreed actions with the employer about rehabilitation, and
- explain the claim determination process.

For help with planning and having an initial conversation with an employer, please refer to the [Initial contact with employer guidance document](#).

The information captured during this discussion can also be valuable when creating the [Claim Plan](#).

Status of the condition

Discuss:

- the employee's diagnosis
- treatment currently recommended and undertaken
- what other barriers exist, besides medical capacity, to the employee achieving a successful return to work (RTW) or commencing a graduated RTW
- what the latest medical certificate indicated
- check that a copy of this certificate is on the file and if not, request a copy, and note:
 - what, if any, is the current capacity?
 - when is next review date with doctor?
 - what treatments/referrals have been recommended?
- where appropriate, the need for the employee to attend an independent medical examination under [section 57](#).

Current capacity to work

Advise the Rehabilitation Case Manager of your review of documents and your conversation with the employee about their current work capacity and find out the current work status of the employee and their current duties.

Return to work (RTW)

Discuss rehabilitation actions the employer has undertaken, specifically:

- if a rehabilitation provider has been engaged
- if a Return to Work (RTW) Program is in place
- details of any [section 36 rehabilitation assessments](#)
- any other rehabilitation needs.

Important: If no actions have been taken to date, note the reasons why. Following your conversation, discuss the matter with the Assistant Director and Injury Manager for support.

Identify RTW expectations by discussing:

- what RTW expectations the employee expressed to you as the Claims Manager
- what is the employer's opinion of how the employee's RTW will progress:
 - have interactions with the employee been positive?
 - has the employee expressed motivation to RTW?
- prospects for RTW to pre-injury duties and/or modified duties with same employer, including:
 - medical indications (compensable and non-compensable)
 - organisational availability of role/s
 - any interpersonal factors
 - any performance issues, and if so, has the employee been approached regarding these issues?
- discuss Comcare's role in promoting early and sustainable return to work.

Part 2 of the claim form and employer statement (where required)

Explain to the RCM that you need them to complete Part 2 of the claim form and that you require a statement and documentation.

Discuss timeframes and that a response will be needed within 14 days.

Due date: It is important that clear expectations are set with the employer regarding the due date of their response. For further guidance, refer to the [Requesting information from employers](#) page.

Closing the call

Summarise the conversation and any agreed actions, in particular:

- reports you will be requesting
- arrangement of a medical examination under [section 57](#) (if appropriate), and
- requests for statements and/or documents under [section 71](#) of the SRC Act.

Discuss what the next steps are in the claims process.

Reiterate what the employee's/employer's responsibilities are in respect of following up or providing information and the impact it will have if the information is not received by the due dates.

Discuss the time it takes to determine liability on a claim, i.e., 20 or 60 days for injury and disease claims respectively, but that we try and determine claims as quickly as possible.

Prescribed timeframes and stop clock provisions

Explain about the prescribed timeframes for determining a claim under [section 61](#)(1A) and the 'stop clock' provisions in which timeframes are paused while Comcare awaits requested information. See the information in [Decision making under the SRC Act](#) for more details.

Claims Managers must record details of all telephone conversations with employers.

A comment must be recorded including the date and time the phone call took place, details of the query and response or advice provided, any actions that the Claims Manager has committed to doing with agreed timeframes and any other relevant information. For all initial calls with employers, please use the [Pracsys initial call record template](#) to document your conversation.

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Shared service arrangements

Some employers have negotiated shared services arrangements that outsource certain functions, such as payroll and claims management. In these scenarios, the contact person for queries about these functions may be different to the key employer contact recorded in Pracsys, so it is important to consider this when contacting the employer.

Payroll functions usually include but are not limited to:

- completion of Claim for Time Off Work (CTOW) forms
- completion of Normal Weekly Earnings (NWE) forms
- leave processing
- compensation payments related to work and leave.

Please refer to the list below outlining those employers who have shared service arrangements:

Agency	Supporting Agency	Service
Asbestos Safety and Eradication Agency (ASEA)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of Finance	Payroll
Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care	Department of Health	Payroll
Australian Digital Health Agency	Department of Health	Payroll
Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of Finance	Payroll
Australian Institute of Family Studies	Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources	Payroll
Australian Public Service Commission (APSC)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of	Payroll

	Finance	
Australian Signals Directorate	Department of Defence	Payroll & Case Management
Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of Finance	Payroll
Clean Energy Regulator	Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources	Payroll
Climate Change Authority	Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources	Payroll
Commonwealth Department of Public Prosecutions	Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources	Payroll
Commonwealth Ombudsman	Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources	Payroll
Department of Education (EDU)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of Finance	Payroll
Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of Finance	Payroll
Department of Finance (DoF)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of Finance	Payroll
Department of Veterans Affairs	Services Australia	Payroll
Digital Transformation Agency (DTA)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of Finance	Payroll
Geoscience Australia	Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources	Payroll

Independent Parliamentary Expenses Authority (IPEA)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of Finance	Payroll
Murray Darling Basin Authority	Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources	Payroll
National Disability Insurance Agency	Services Australia	Payroll
National Health Funding Body	Department of Health	Payroll
National Indigenous Australians Agency	Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet	Payroll
National Emergency Management Agency	Department of Home Affairs	Payroll
Office of the Australian Information Commissioner (OAIC)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of Finance	Payroll
Office of National Assessments	Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources	Payroll
Office of the Official Secretary to the Governor-General	Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources	Payroll
Office of Parliamentary Counsel	Department of Industry, Science, Energy & Resources	Payroll
Safe Work Australia (SWA)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of Finance	Payroll
Sport Integrity Australia	Department of Health	Payroll (Note: if employee is casual, payroll is managed by Sport Integrity Australia)
Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA)	Service Delivery Office (SDO) - an organisational unit within the Department of	Payroll

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When an employee changes employment and moves to a new employer

How Comcare communicates with a new employer will depend on several factors.

Disclosing information to new employer

Comcare is authorised to disclose to the employer that they are the employee's rehabilitation authority. Please check the employee's claim file to ensure that they have provided their signed consent before disclosing any information.

If a claim is active, and if an employer makes a request to confirm whether they are the rehabilitation authority for a particular employee, Comcare must confirm the employment status of the employee before disclosing information to the employer. After confirming the employment status of the employee, Comcare is authorised to disclose to the employer information relevant to the rehabilitation of the employee.

The employer may request a copy of information on an employee's claim file under [section 59](#) of the SRC Act. Normally, when an employee changes employment from one Australian Government agency and moves to another Australian Government agency, the liable employer will request authority from the employee to contact the new employer, as they have become the new rehabilitation authority. This is so that there can be an appropriate handover of rehabilitation activities and case management support to the employee.

Open Rehabilitation Programs

If there is an open Rehabilitation Program, it is the responsibility of the new rehabilitation authority to take over the rehabilitation management, and it is important that both employers work in collaboration to minimise any adverse impact on the employee's recovery.

Where Comcare has the employee's authority to contact the new employer, Comcare will support the appropriate handover of such information to assist with rehabilitation.

Leaving Commonwealth employment

When an employee changes employment and moves to a non-Australian Government or private employer, or is separated from employment and is not working, the liable agency remains the rehabilitation authority.

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Procedure to update an employee's rehabilitation authority

This procedure explains what to do when an employee or employer advises you that the employee has changed employers.

Step 1: Employee advises Comcare that they are changing employers

Follow this step if an employee contacts you about changing employers. If an employer contacts you, begin this procedure at Step 2.

If an employee contacts you to advise they are changing employers, give them the following information:

- If the new employer is a Commonwealth agency, it is most likely that they will become the employee's new rehabilitation authority. If the new employer is not a Commonwealth agency, the former employer will remain the employee's rehabilitation authority.
- Comcare requires written notification directly from the new employer's payroll team, including appropriate cost centres, to update the rehabilitation authority in the employee's claim file.
- Once the new rehabilitation authority has been updated in Pracsys, following the receipt of written payroll information from the new employer, Comcare is authorised to provide the new rehabilitation authority information about the

employee's claim. If requested, the new rehabilitation authority will receive a copy of the original determination and relevant documents from the claim file.

- The employee's former and new employers will usually work together to organise the handover of case management and the former employer will contact the employee for authority to share information about their claim.

Continue to Step 3.

Step 2: Employer contacts Comcare and advises that they are the new rehabilitation authority for an employee/new employer for an employee

If an employer advises you they are the new rehabilitation authority, inform them that Comcare cannot give out any information without written confirmation from the employee's new employer payroll team. Do not provide any information to the caller by phone or email without first receiving written confirmation and updating the rehabilitation authority details in Pracsys (Step 3).

If the employer advises you they are an employee's new employer, and they are not a Commonwealth agency, do not provide any information by phone or email unless there is written authority on the claim file to share information with the new employer. You may contact the employee and send an [Authority and Consent for the Collection and Release of Medical Information Pertaining to my Claim form](#) for them to complete if they wish to authorise Comcare to share information with their new employer.

Step 3: Update Pracsys with the new rehabilitation authority details

Do not complete this step until you have received written confirmation from the new employer's payroll team.

Once written confirmation has been received from a new rehabilitation authority's payroll team, we are required to update Pracsys to show the correct Payroll Cost Centre and ensure compensation for time off work is directed to the correct business unit's payroll team:

- Go to 'Amend Claim Cost Centre' (ACCC).
- Go to Payroll tab.
- Select New.
 - Select reason for new entry.

- Enter date of effect.
- Select Customer and Cost Centre numbers.
- Select OK.
- Amend to save.

If you become aware that an employee has moved to a new Commonwealth employer, but you are unsure of the Cost Centre details for the new employer, please contact the [Practice Support and Account Management](#) team for assistance.

Step 4: Update Rehabilitation Case Manager (RCM) details

When you are notified of a change to the employer and/or RCM and the required documentation has been provided:

- Go to ACLM.
 - Go to Agency tab.
 - Click binoculars.
 - Find relevant Case Manager and select.
 - Amend to save.

If you become aware that an employee has moved to a new Commonwealth employer, but you are unsure who the relevant Rehabilitation Case Manager is, please contact the [Practice Support and Account Management](#) team for assistance.

Step 5: Contact the employee

If you have not already spoken to the employee in **Step 1**, telephone the employee to advise of the information listed in **Step 1**. This is to ensure that the employee understands what information will be shared with their new rehabilitation authority.

This is the end of the procedure.

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When an agency becomes an off-budget or exit agency

Please see [Agency information](#) for details on off-budget and exit agencies.

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