

ADOPTED: October 3, 2024

FILE: GBGE-R

**RSU 54/MSAD 54
RETURN TO WORK AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS - PROCEDURE**

A. Purpose

It is in the best interest of both RSU 54/MSAD 54 and employees who have suffered workplace injuries or illnesses to return to work as soon as feasible. RSU 54/MSAD 54 also has an obligation to comply with federal and state disability laws by providing reasonable accommodations when necessary for qualified employees with disabilities (as defined by applicable law), provided that (1) the employee is otherwise qualified to safely perform the essential functions of the job, and (2) such accommodations do not impose undue hardship on the school unit. The following procedure is intended to guide administrators in assessing possible reasonable accommodation requests made by employees as well as for employees receiving workers' compensation benefits in order to facilitate employees' ability to work (when feasible), and to effectively manage workers' compensation costs for the school unit.

B. Procedure

When accommodations are requested by an employee, or in cases where RSU 54/MSAD 54 determines that a discussion about alternatives to leave from work is appropriate, the following procedure will be utilized.

1. The Superintendent or their designee will request and obtain sufficient and current medical documentation to substantiate that the employee has a disability and needs an accommodation(s) to perform the essential functions of their job.
2. A designated administrator(s) will meet with the employee to discuss their job responsibilities, their current medical situation, any recommendations from their medical provider(s), as well as potential workplace accommodations that may be effective.
 - a. Accommodations that may be considered include making existing facilities used by employees readily accessible to and useable by individuals with disabilities; job restructuring (adjusting how or when essential functions are to be performed); part-time or modified work schedules; reassignment to a vacant position; acquiring or modifying equipment or devices; adjustment or modifications of exams, training materials, or policies; providing qualified readers or interpreters; and other similar accommodations.
RSU 54/MSAD54 reserves the right to select the accommodation.

- b. Documentation will be maintained concerning any accommodations that RSU 54/MSAD 54 determines will be provided, and the duration of accommodations, if known.
 - c. Accommodations will be reviewed periodically by the responsible administrator to ensure that the accommodation(s) continue to be necessary and effective. RSU 54/MSAD 54 reserves the discretion to request updated medical information as necessary to inform decision making.
- 3. RSU 54/MSAD 54 is not legally required to adjust or reallocate the essential functions of a job and/or to create “light duty” assignments. However, there may be instances when the school unit may exercise its discretion to adjust essential job functions or create / approve a “light duty” assignment in situations where (1) an employee has short-term medical restrictions (usually no longer than 60 work days), and (2) the adjustment is feasible considering the school unit’s needs, operations, and staffing levels. In no circumstances does any such temporary modification in job functions or a “light duty” assignment establish a new position or assignment or displace other employees. Although “light duty” assignments will generally not be approved in situations extending beyond 60 work days, the Superintendent may approve a longer assignment where the arrangement continues to meet the needs of the school unit.