

Table of Contents

1. Purpose	1
2. Scope	1
3. Definitions	2
4. Process	2
5. Considerations, expectations and limitations.....	4
6. Roles and Responsibilities	5
7. Associated Documentation	5

1. Purpose

The University is mindful of, and acknowledges that, an employee has a right to submit a workers' compensation claim for a work-related injury. The purpose of this framework is to provide information on how to seek assistance/support following a minor work-related injury through The University of Melbourne's Early Support Services (ESS).

This framework outlines the process for Early Support Services commenced from 1 September 2022.

2. Scope

This framework applies to all employees who have sustained a minor work-related injury and wish to seek reimbursement of their medical costs associated with the injury. This framework also provides guidance with remaining at or returning to work following the injury.

3. Definitions

3.1. Itemised invoice/receipt

Itemised invoice/receipt refers to a tax invoice or receipt provided for medical services which contains the following information:

- Name of business/clinic
- Name of service provider (i.e., doctor, physiotherapist)
- Clinic/provider contact details (address, phone number, fax, email)
- Clinic/provider's ABN
- Injured employee details (name, address, date of birth)
- Invoice/receipt number
- Date of service
- Item number
- Service fee charged
- GST charged (if applicable).

Note: Early Support Services can only reimburse for medical services provided in Australia.

3.2. Minor work-related injury

A minor work-related injury is defined as an injury that:

- occurs whilst engaged in employment activities
- is expected to resolve within a discrete period
- has little expectation of ongoing symptoms, treatment, or expenses
- requires up limited number of consultations with a doctor (GP and/or specialist, combined)
- requires short term allied health treatments (such as physiotherapy, osteopathy, psychologist etc.)
- requires diagnostic imaging/testing, up to one (1) of the following: x-ray, MRI scan, nerve conductivity test, ultrasound scan or CT scan
- does not exceed a total cost of \$1,500.00.

3.3. Return to Work Plan

A Return-to-Work Plan (RTWP) is a document which outlines any medically recommended modifications to an employee's substantive role on a short-term basis to assist them in their recovery and gradual return to their normal work duties and hours. RTWPs are reviewed and updated on a regular basis in line with medical advice.

3.4. Treating Health Practitioner

A treating health practitioner (THP) is a registered healthcare professional who provides medical and/or treatment services. THPs may include General Practitioners, specialists/surgeons, physiotherapists, psychologists, osteopaths etc.

4. Process

4.1. Employee sustains a minor work-related injury

- An employee sustains a minor work-related injury.
- The employee should seek first aid/medical attention if needed and must report the injury to their supervisor.
- The employee is encouraged to submit an incident report as soon as practicable following a work-related injury in accordance with the University's Health & Safety procedures.

4.2. Local Health and Safety Business Partner makes contacts

- The Health & Safety Business Partner (or equivalent) contacts the employee (and manager/supervisor) once an incident report notification is received that meets the criteria, to advise the employee of the Early Support Services and where to find further information (incident response flowchart is outlined in appendix 1).

4.3. The employee submits an Early Support Services application

- The employee reviews information relating to Early Support Services and submits a ServiceNow form if they wish to access the service.

4.4. Workplace Accessibility and Injury Support (WAIS) team review the request and respond to the employee

- The WAIS team will receive a copy of the completed ServiceNow form via the IM team's email (early-support@unimelb.edu.au)
- WAIS will review the employee's application for ESS and provide a response regarding the outcome of the application to the employee within 48 hours. If further information is required, this timeframe may be delayed. The WAIS team will contact the manager/supervisor if required.

If the application is accepted, WAIS will contact the employee to advise them and discuss:

- their injury/symptoms and plan for accessing treatment.
- any challenges in managing the injury in the workplace, and if required, we will seek medical information regarding treatment and any short-term role modifications needed.
- WAIS may also consult the manager/supervisor about suitable duties and in some cases, the manager/supervisor will send a letter to the treating health practitioner (THP) and a medical questionnaire should be provided to the employee to take to their next appointment for review and completion alongside the Return-to-Work Plan.

Note: Should the application not meet the criteria for acceptance, the employee will be provided with reasons for the decision and notified of other options available to them (see 5.3 limitations).

4.5. Employee seeks treatment and claims reimbursement

- The employee seeks treatment within the scope of ESS and obtains itemised receipts/invoices.
- The University reimburses the employee or pays the treatment provider directly in accordance with Appendix 2: *Early Support Services – Payment/reimbursement process*.

4.6. Ongoing review and update

- The employee continues to attend treatment appointments and seeks reimbursements under ESS
- The employee regularly updates WAIS and their manager/supervisor about any changes to their treatment plan (e.g., referrals to diagnostic scans/tests).
- If applicable, the employee works within the scope of their RTWP. RTWPs are reviewed and updated regularly in line with medical advice.
- Discussions with the THP and the employee will be required to review treatment plans and other options if recovery is not progressing as anticipated or if treatment requirement is beyond 13 weeks from the start of the ESS.

4.7. Completion of Early Support Services

The Early Support Service is concluded when one of the following is met:

- 13 weeks have elapsed since the approval of their ESS case. If the employee requires ongoing treatment post 13 weeks, they may need to consider submitting a worker's compensation claim. Discussion with WAIS is recommended.
- the employee decides to withdraw from the service.
- the employee has no ongoing treatment needs.
- the limitations of funding under the service are met. If funding has been exhausted and the employee has ongoing treatment needs, the employee may consider submitting a workers' compensation claim. Discussion with WAIS is recommended.
- Injury Management may require a questionnaire to be completed by the THP and if the requested information has not been received from either the employee or THP, the ESS case may be impacted and closed.

5. Considerations, Expectations and Limitations

5.1. Considerations

- The employee may choose to seek medical treatment prior to a decision is issued regarding provision of funding under ESS. The employee accepts that these treatment costs may not be funded under ESS if they do not meet the criteria, or if the application does not meet the criteria for acceptance.
- An employee's participation in ESS is voluntary and they may withdraw from the service at any time.
- Employees can choose to nominate a preferred treating health practitioner.
- Employees should notify the WAIS team if they have been incapacitated to work due to the injury.

5.2. Expectations

It is an expectation that:

- The employee will assist their supervisor and Health & Safety Business Partner in investigating the incident to allow for corrective actions to be implemented in a timely manner.
- The employee, supervisor and WAIS will work together to develop, implement, and monitor Return to Work Plans if the employee is unable to undertake their normal work duties.
- Medical information will be requested as needed to help guide the development and review of Return- to-Work Plans.
- Medical appointments will be scheduled outside of working hours. Special arrangements may be made on a case-by-case basis.
- Supervisors will seek advice if needed from the WAIS team.
- Any personal and/or health information will be managed in accordance with the University's Privacy Policy.

5.3. Limitations

Employees who access ESS should be aware that:

- ESS covers reasonable costs relating to a minor work-related injury, defined as an injury that:
 - occurs whilst engaged in employment activities;
 - is expected to resolve within a discrete period;

- has little expectation of ongoing symptoms, treatment, or expenses;
- require a limited number of consultations with a doctor (GP and/or specialist, combined);
- require short-term allied health treatments (such as physiotherapy, osteopathy, psychologist etc.);
- requires diagnostic imaging/testing, up to one (1) of the following: x-ray, MRI scan, nerve conductivity test, ultrasound scan or CT scan;
- does not exceed a total cost of \$1,500.00 for medical and like expenses. This includes medical practitioners' consultations, allied health services, pharmacological expenses, aids and appliances and minor medical procedures (limited to injections) etc. Please consult with WAIS to confirm if treatment outside of this list will be covered;
- if total medical costs are likely to exceed \$1,500.00, the employee may consider claiming expenses through a workers' compensation claim;
- employees are not able to access ESS and Workcover concurrently;
- the program may exclude support services for the following:
 - treatment requirements for general well-being
 - common illnesses such as colds, gastro, Covid-19 etc.
 - conditions for which the employee is already receiving treatment (e.g., post-surgery recovery)
 - injuries that are severe in nature and require emergency assistance or hospitalisation.
- funding under ESS is for treatment only. If an employee is unfit for work due to the injury, the employee will need to discuss their support options with their supervisor and/or WAIS;
- the University is not obligated to pay for medical expenses under ESS. ESS exists to provide support to injured employees.
- the reimbursement of expenses under this guideline does not imply that the University has accepted liability for the injury/condition under workers' compensation legislation.
- the University reimburses monies related to reasonable medical, treatment and diagnostic expenses.
- personal items (e.g., spectacles, watches, and clothing) that are damaged in connection with a minor work-related injury may be reimbursed in exceptional circumstances.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Employee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide all medical certificates/medical reports/treatment plans to Injury Management. • Communicate with WAIS about medical updates, treatment outcomes. • Responsible for payment of any work-related injury invoices up front to service providers (if required) and can seek reimbursement from the University.
Manager/Supervisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to the employees to assist them to remain at or return to work as early as possible. • Seek advice from the WAIS team as needed.
Injury Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make an assessment on the injured employee's eligibility for ESS and notify the employee. • Action reimbursements upon receipt of a valid itemised invoice/receipt. • Support the employee and supervisor in navigating the ESS process. • Provide specialist WAIS advice and guidance as needed. • Communicate with treating health practitioners, as necessary.

7. Associated Documentations

Forms

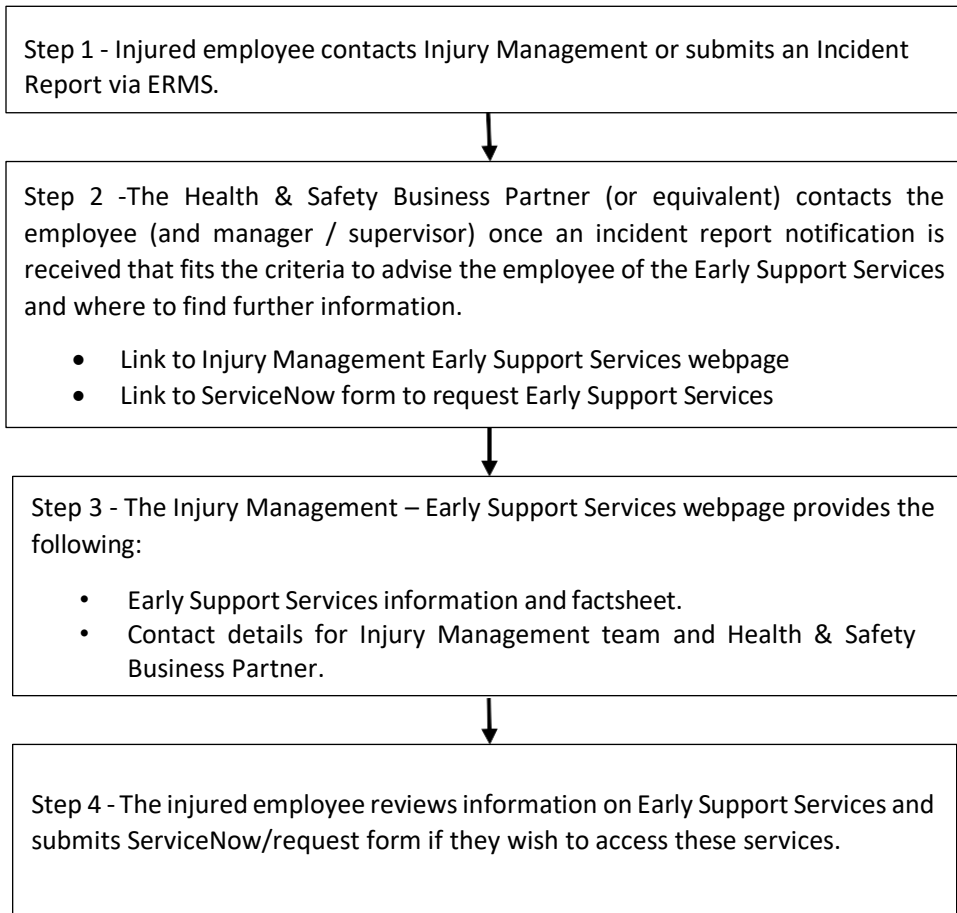
- Early Support Services - ServiceNow form
- Manual request form

Guidance

- Early Support Services - Incident response process – Appendix 1
- Early Support Services - Payment/reimbursement process – Appendix 2

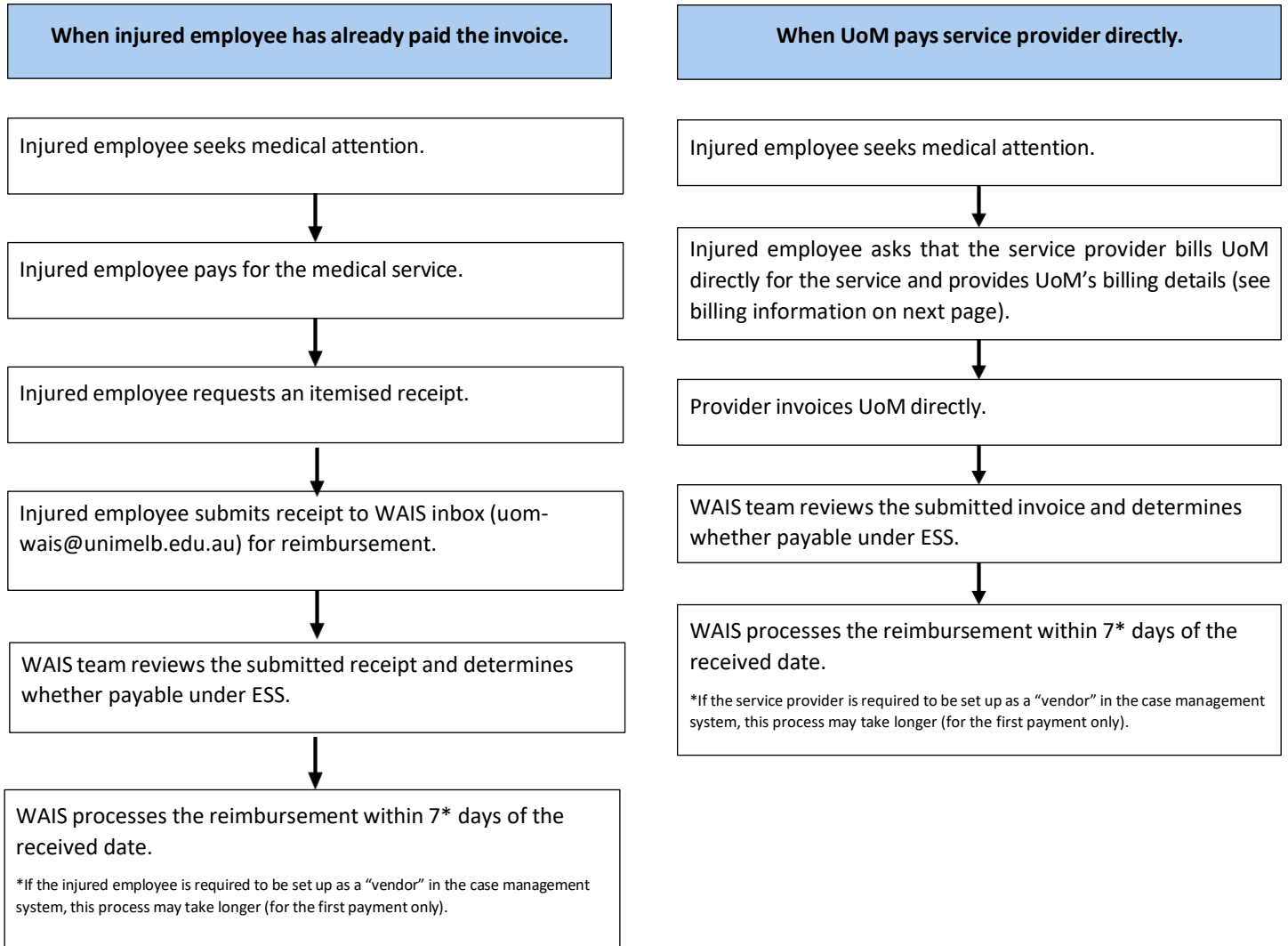
Appendix 1 – Early Support Services Incident Response Process

The below flowchart outlines the process for injured workers to access information about Early Support Services for work-related injuries.



Appendix 2 - Early Support Services – Payment/reimbursement process

The below flowcharts outline the processes for reimbursement of medical expenses to injured employees and payment of medical expenses directly to services providers in relation to Early Support Services for work-related injuries.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Invoice/receipt requirements

A valid invoice/receipt must contain the following information:

- Name of business/clinic
- Name of service provider (i.e., doctor)
- Clinic/provider contact details (address, phone number, fax, email)
- Clinic/provider's ABN
- Injured employee details (name, address, date of birth)
- Invoice/receipt number
- Date of service
- Item number
- Service fee charged
- GST charged (if applicable)

Note: Early Support Services can only reimburse for medical services provided in Australia.

Timeframe for first payment/reimbursement

If the injured employee or service provider is required to be set up as a "vendor" in the case management system, payment of the invoice may take longer than usual. The WAIS team will contact the injured employee or service provider to advise of the process for vendor set up.

Timeframe for ongoing payments/reimbursements

WAIS processes the reimbursement within 7 days of the received date. When a valid invoice or receipt is received by WAIS before 12pm on a Tuesday, the injured employee or service provider should receive payment/reimbursement by Friday afternoon (dependent on banking institution).

If the invoice/receipt is received after 12pm on a Tuesday, the payment or reimbursement should be received by the next Friday afternoon.

Billing information

Service providers/clinics should be provided the following billing information:

Workplace Accessibility and Injury Support – Business Services
The University of Melbourne
Level 1
11 Barry Street
CARLTON VIC 3053

Submit all invoices/receipts via email or fax:

Email: uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au

Fax: 03 8344 3057

All invoice-related enquiries should be submitted in writing to uom-wais@unimelb.edu.au