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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 to commence 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 and/or assistance 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 to six (6) consultations with a doctor (GP and/or specialist, combined)
- requires up to six (6) 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 must also 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. Injury Management review the request and respond to the employee

- The Injury Management team will receive a copy of the completed ServiceNow form via a designated ESS email inbox (early-support@unimelb.edu.au).

- Injury Management will review the employee’s application for ESS and provide a response regarding the outcome of the application to the employee and supervisor within 48 hours. If further information is required, this timeframe may be delayed.

If the application is accepted, Injury Management 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
- seeking medical information regarding treatment and any short-term role modifications needed.

A proposed Return to Work Plan (RTWP) may be developed during this discussion. Injury Management may also consult the manager/supervisor about suitable duties.

- In this case: 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. The employee regularly updates Injury Management 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 may be had to review treatment plans and options if recovery is not progressing as anticipated.

4.7. Completion of Early Support Services

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

- 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.
- Ceases to be an employee of The University of Melbourne.
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.

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 Injury Management 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 Injury Management 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;
  - requires up to six (6) consultations with a doctor (GP and/or specialist, combined);
  - require up to six (6) 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.
- if total medical costs are likely to exceed $1,500.00, the employee may consider claiming expenses through a workers’ compensation claim.
- the program may exclude support services for the following:
  - common illnesses such as colds, gastro 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 will not cover time off from work. Employees will need to apply for leave through the usual process and discuss this further with their supervisor and/or Injury Management.
• 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

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<th>Role</th>
<th>Responsibility</th>
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| Employee            | • Provide all medical certificates/medical reports/treatment plans to Injury Management.  
• Communicate with Injury Management 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  | • Provide support to the employee to assist them to remain at or return to work as early as possible.  
• Seek advice from the Injury Management team as needed |
| Injury Management   | • 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 injury management advice and guidance as needed.  
• Communicate with treating health practitioners, as necessary. |

7. Associated Documentation

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.

Step 1 - Injured employee submits an incident report via ERMS.

Step 2 - The Health & Safety Business Partner (or equivalent) contacts the employee (and manager / supervisor) once an incident report notification is received that fits the criteria to advise the employee of the Early Support Services and where to find further information.
  - Link to Injury Management Early Support Services webpage
  - Link to ServiceNow form to request Early Support Services

Step 3 - The Injury Management – Early Support Services webpage provides the following:
  - Early Support Services information and factsheet.
  - Contact details for Injury Management team and Health & Safety Business Partner.

Step 4 - The injured employee reviews information on Early Support Services and submits ServiceNow/request form if they wish to access these services.
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.

**When injured employee has already paid the invoice**

1. Injured employee seeks medical attention.
2. Injured employee pays for the medical service.
3. Injured employee requests an itemised receipt.
4. Injured employee submits receipt to Early Support Services (ESS) inbox for reimbursement.
5. Injury Management team reviews the submitted receipt and determines whether payable under ESS.
6. Injury Management processes the reimbursement within 7* days of the received date.

*If the injured employee is required to be set up as a “vendor” in the case management system, this process may take longer (for the first payment only).

**When UoM pays service provider directly**

1. Injured employee seeks medical attention.
2. Injured employee asks that the service provider bills UoM directly for the service and provides UoM’s billing details (see billing information on next page).
3. Provider invoices UoM directly.
4. Injury Management team reviews the submitted invoice and determines whether payable under ESS.
5. Injury Management processes the reimbursement within 7* days of the received date.

*If the service provider is required to be set up as a “vendor” in the case management system, this process may take longer (for the first payment only).

**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 Injury Management team will contact the injured employee or service provider to advise of the process for vendor set up.
Timeframe for ongoing payments/reimbursements

Injury Management processes the reimbursement within 7 days of the received date. When a valid invoice or receipt is received by Injury Management 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:

Injury Management – Business Services
The University of Melbourne
Level 1
11 Barry Street
CARLTON VIC 3053

Submit all invoices/receipts via email or fax:

   Email: early-support@unimelb.edu.au
   Fax: 03 8344 3057

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