



Guidance for Supervisors on Gradual Vocational Reintegration

General Information

(Legal basis: § 74 SGB V; § 28 SGB IX; guidelines on incapacity for work – Arbeitsunfähigkeitsrichtlinien)

- **What is gradual vocational reintegration?**

Gradual vocational reintegration is a way of gradually reacclimating employees to their workplace and the demands of their job after a long period of illness. The employee is still officially on sick leave. Their position can still be substituted for the duration of the vocational reintegration. The costs are covered by the health insurance provider or the pension insurance institution.

- **Objectives**

- earlier return to work for progressively longer periods of time
→ no abrupt return to normal working hours is required
- unsuccessful attempts to return to work after a severe or prolonged inability to work are largely avoided
- the employee keeps their job, their know-how can still be utilized
- the fear of returning to work is mitigated

- **The supervisor's consent is required**

Gradual vocational reintegration is only possible if you, as the supervisor, agree to the measure. Often, a prompt response is required.

- **How is a vocational reintegration agreement made?**

The attending physician submits a proposal for gradual vocational reintegration using the form "Maßnahmen zur stufenweisen Wiedereingliederung in das Erwerbsleben (Wiedereingliederungsplan)" (measures for gradual vocational reintegration (vocational reintegration plan)).

Sometimes, this form is sent straight to you, as the supervisor. In this case, the form must be sent to human resources with an accompanying statement as to whether you agree with the measure in question.

If the form is submitted directly to human resources, then they will obtain approval from you, as the responsible supervisor.

- **Duration of gradual vocational reintegration**

Gradual vocational reintegration generally lasts between six weeks and six months.

- **Interruption of the measure**

Gradual vocational reintegration may be interrupted for up to seven days for health or business-related reasons. In the event of a longer interruption, it is usually no longer

possible to achieve the goal of reintegration and the vocational reintegration process can be terminated. This requires notifying human resources accordingly.

- **End / termination of the measure**

The measure ends once the employee is able to resume their normal work activities, in consultation with their physician.

Gradual vocational reintegration can be terminated early by you, as the employee's supervisor, if the employee is unable to meet the demands of the job. The employee can also terminate the measure at any time.

After the termination, sick leave continues.

- **Vacation**

Because the employee is continuously on sick leave throughout the vocational reintegration phase, taking vacation days during this time is not possible.

- **Vocational reintegration meeting**

At the beginning of the vocational reintegration process and at the end of each step, you as the supervisor should have a meeting with the employee to ensure that the vocational reintegration process can begin and progress as smoothly as possible. *(see guidelines for meetings)*

- **Contact person for supervisor during the vocational reintegration phase**

Responsible human resources officer