

Fitness for Duty Testing (FFD)

Description

Fitness for Duty Testing is performed on individuals who have been off work secondary to long-term, non-work related injuries or illness. The purpose of the FFD is to determine whether or not the individual can safely perform the physical demands of job tasks.

Workers typically request a release by their private physician to return to work. Often these decisions are made without any review or consideration of the job demands. In some instances, the employee may not demonstrate the functional ability to meet job demands. This may create a mismatch between the employee and job task, which could result in aggravation of the pre-existing injury. Under worker's compensation laws the employer then assumes responsibility for that injury, thus creating a new worker's compensation claim.

Process

The typical length of the evaluation is one to two hours and measures the effects of the injury or illness on an employee's work performance. The number of physical demands related to the job and the complexity of the impairment determine the actual length of the FFD. The number of physical tasks tested is greater than the Post-Offer/Pre-Placement Evaluation because of the employee's impairment and deconditioning issues.

Benefits

Fitness for Duty testing offers several benefits for all referral sources:

- The FFD allows the employer to utilize information as a guide to help determine if the employee is safe to return to work.
- Testing reduces the risk of new worker's compensation claims.
- FFD helps clarify employer and employee expectations of fitness for duty and return to work.
- Testing can reduce costs related to health and worker's compensation insurance.
- Complements work site processes to improve employee efficiency.