



GUIDELINES under the *Disability Management and Accommodating Employees with Disabilities Framework*

Section of Framework Document:	3.0. Disability Management and Accommodation
	3.1 Disability Case Management
	3.1.4 Case Evaluation and Planning
Name of Guideline:	COMPLEX CASES

Definitions

- Definitions from *Policy 3.59, Accommodating Employees with Disabilities* and the *Disability Management and Accommodating Employees with Disabilities Policy Framework* apply to this Guideline as appropriate.

Preamble

Yukon Government (YG) departments and unions have worked in partnership to develop and implement a corporate disability management, Early Intervention, Early Referral Services, return to work and accommodation program for YG employees. The program provides a consistent approach that considers the needs of individual employees.

Purpose of Guideline

Some disability management cases are “complex” in nature requiring extra attention, effort and management. Some cases will be identified as a “complex” case from the outset, whereas other cases may become progressively more complex over time as issues are identified or as the case develops.

Similar to all cases requiring some level of disability case management, early intervention is key. The goal in managing a complex case is to ensure that the necessary expertise is brought to bear to address all of the issues involved in the case in a timely and coordinated way in order to facilitate its effective management and resolution. The key to developing an effective accommodation in these cases is to be open and direct about identifying and addressing the issues.

Criteria for Considering When a Case is a “Complex” Case

Circumstances or situations where a case may be considered complex, include:

- The case involves an employee who is away from work due to an illness or injury for more than 30 days in duration;

- Permanent restrictions or limitations are identified early in the employee’s absence which indicate that an out-of-occupation accommodation will likely be required;
- There is lack of clarity and/or understanding about the restrictions and limitations imposed by the employee’s disability, and the nature of any required accommodation, impeding progress on the case;
- There are known specific workplace safety risk issues associated with the employee’s illness or injury as disclosed by the employee or identified by the supervisor (i.e., medication affecting ability to operate machinery);
- The case involves substance abuse or addictions;
- The case involves a mental health or psychiatric illness; or
- An illness or injury or disability accommodation issue is concurrent with a staff relation issue (e.g. performance management issue, discipline issue), poor or non-existent communication or relations between the supervisor and the employee, or other workplace issue (interpersonal conflict, work environment).

Complex Case Process [to support “Complex Cases” section 3.1.4 - Case Evaluation and Planning]

Managing Complex Cases:

- The disability case management and stay at work or return to work process for complex cases is generally the same as for other disability cases requiring some degree of case management. Complex cases may, however, depending on the specific circumstances, require the involvement of additional expertise, and a greater level of attention, information and management.
- Once a case is identified as complex, whether by the supervisor, Department Human Resources Branch staff, or on the advice of the Disability Management Consultant, and possibly the Respectful Workplace Services Office staff, the required resources need to be quickly marshaled. Given the nature of the case, the necessary members of the team are identified, an initial meeting of the team held. The Disability Management Consultant will lead the team.
- The Disability Management Consultant will be the “lead” on complex cases. The “lead” is responsible for coordinating and overseeing all aspects of case planning and management and that assigned tasks or responsibilities are carried out, following up with other members of the team as required, and ensuring ongoing communication with the employee. The case “lead” will be supported by active involvement and advice of identified team members who may, in turn, have lead responsibility for certain components, or required tasks or actions related to the management of the case.

- At the initial meeting, the case management team will review the circumstances of the case, identify all relevant information and resources required to address the issues, and develop a plan for managing the case (including the roles and responsibilities of the various parties).
- Information on the employee’s functional abilities is essential and the employee may be requested to obtain a Functional Abilities Form from his or her health care provider (see the *Guideline -Functional Abilities Guideline* and *Functional Abilities Form*).
- Where the case involves a severe injury or illness or disability, a psychiatric or mental health, or a substance abuse or addiction issue, further information, investigation and evaluation may be required and specialized resources and expertise needed as determined by the team. This may include the need to obtain further medical information, including potential early intervention and/or access to the Early Referral Service or an Independent Medical Examination (see the *Guideline - Independent Medical Examination*).

Addressing Concurrent Issues:

- The first step and priority in all complex cases is to initiate action respecting the illness or injury and disability management issue. Along with action on the disability management issue, complex cases involving “concurrent” or complicating non-disability factors (a staff relations or workplace environment and/or conflict issue) will require that these issues be addressed as well in order to ensure a successful return to work and/or accommodation placement.
- The supervisor and/or the Department Human Resource Branch staff are responsible for ensuring that concurrent staff relations or workplace environment issues are addressed. Staff Relations Branch staff and Respectful Workplace Services Office staff may play a key role in providing advice and helping to define strategies and approaches to address and resolve the issue(s).
- It is critical in undertaking disability case management for a case involving a concurrent issue that the team share information that is essential to the effective management of the case. This includes other members of the case management team, informing the Disability Management Unit of any action being taken to address the concurrent issue that may impact the disability management planning and process. Conversely, the Disability Management Unit needs to ensure that other members of the case management team are kept apprised of any action being taken in the disability management planning and process that may impact action on addressing the concurrent issue.

Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisor / Human Resources Branch

- The supervisor and Department Human Resources branch staff are involved in planning and managing of a complex case, as determined by the case management team, and complying with agreed actions as outlined in the case management plan.

Employee

- The employee is responsible for actively participating in the case planning and case management process, and for complying with agreed actions as outlined in the case management plan.
- The employee may request that a union representative be involved in any aspect of the case management process.

Disability Management Unit

- The Disability Management Unit will conduct early case analysis for complex cases; will act as case lead; will provide advice to the case management team, including the supervisor and employee, in planning and managing of complex cases, and will provide information and interpretation on an employee's functional abilities as needed.

All Case Management Team Members

- All members of the case management team will be actively involved in planning and managing the complex case and may be responsible for specific tasks depending on the circumstances of the individual case.

Union

- The employee's union representative is available to provide advice and assistance to the employee and be involved in any aspect of the case management process, including attending case management meetings with the employee, at the employee's request.