



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
	3.1.1 Case Evaluation and Planning
Name of Guideline:	<i>MEDICAL INFORMATION – FUNCTIONAL ABILITIES</i>

Definitions

- “Functional abilities” means an employee’s abilities, including any physical restrictions and limitations on the employee’s ability and capacity to undertake his or her work activities because of an illness or injury.
- Definitions from *Policy 3.59 – Accommodating Employees with Disabilities* and *Disability Management and Accommodating Employees with Disabilities 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, access to Early Referral Service, 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

Accurate and timely information about what an employee can and cannot do at work is critical in evaluating and planning for an employee with an injury, illness or disability.

In many cases, the employee’s functional abilities are straightforward and agreed upon. The steps to accommodate the employee are clear and can easily be taken in the employee’s workplace. In other cases, the employee’s functional abilities may be unknown or unclear, requiring information or clarification in order to explore and design reasonable, flexible and creative accommodations to enable the employee to stay at work or to return to work early and safely.

This guideline outlines the process and roles and responsibilities associated with requesting and obtaining medical information about an employee’s functional abilities through completion of a *Functional Abilities Form (FAF)* by the employee’s health care provider.

Process [to support “Obtaining Medical Information – Medical Form – Functional Abilities” section 3.1.4 - Case Evaluation and Planning]

- If information on an employee’s functional abilities is required, the employee will be requested by his or her department Human Resources Branch or supervisor to attend his or her health care provider¹ in order to have a FAF completed. (See attached *Employee Information Sheet – Request for Completion of Functional Abilities Form* and *Functional Abilities Form*.)
- Typically a FAF is requested after an employee is absent from work for five consecutive days or if a pattern of absence is noticed. Individual employee circumstances are taken into account in the decision to request a FAF (e.g. employee has the flu for more than five days). If it is clear that an illness or injury exists and the restrictions and limitations are obvious to both parties or if the employee requires a short-term accommodation to stay at work or return to work, a FAF may not be required.
- For the purpose of having the FAF completed, the employee is expected to attend his or her health care provider within fourteen (14) calendar days of the request, or other negotiated reasonable timeline.
- The health care provider will send the completed FAF directly to the Public Service Commission’s Disability Management Unit and provide a copy to the employee². The employee is expected to provide a copy of the form directly to their supervisor or Human Resource Branch in order to facilitate appropriate workplace accommodations and return to work.
- All FAFs received by the Disability Management Unit will be reviewed by the branch and a copy forwarded to the Human Resources Branch within two business days (any information included on the FAF that is not related to the employee’s functional abilities or the estimated duration of any restrictions and limitations, will be deleted from the FAF before it is shared).
- At times HR may receive a FAF directly. Within four (4) business days of the date of receipt of the FAF, HR will advise DMU of the details around the employee’s absence/return to work.

¹ While generally an employee’s family physician is responsible for the ongoing care of the worker, other health care providers who treat or assess the worker may also be called upon to complete the form and provide functional abilities information.

² The health care provider will be reimbursed by the Public Service Commission for completing and sending in the FAF.

- Information about the employee’s functional abilities and the estimated duration of any restrictions and limitations obtained through the FAF will be used by the supervisor, Human Resources staff and other members of the case management team for the purpose of stay at work or return to work evaluation and planning.
- If the information about the employee’s functional abilities obtained through the FAF is insufficient or unclear, with the signed consent of the employee (copy of employee consent to release of information attached), the supervisor or Human Resources staff will contact the Disability Management Unit for assistance in obtaining clarification and further information from the Health Care Provider.
 - In these cases, the Disability Management Unit will communicate with the employee’s health care provider to obtain clarity on the employee’s functional abilities or may determine that the employee is a candidate for Early Referral Service (ERS).
 - All information obtained from the health care provider by the Disability Management Unit will be shared with the employee;
 - Only information on the employee’s functional abilities and the estimated duration of any restrictions and limitations will be shared by the Disability Management Unit with the employee’s supervisor, Human Resource staff and other members of the case management team.
- If the medical information provided on the FAF continues to be unclear and/or insufficient for planning for the employee, including after follow up with the health care provider, the employee may be considered for an Independent Medical Evaluation (see *Independent Medical Evaluation Guideline*) or Early Referral Service.

Roles and Responsibilities

Supervisor and/or Human Resources Branch

- For the purpose of disability case management planning, if the employee has unclear or unknown limitations in their functional abilities that have resulted in absence from work or are requesting accommodation, the supervisor/ HR may request that an employee attend his or her health care provider to obtain a FAF.
- Upon receipt of the completed FAF, the supervisor/HR is responsible for discussing with the employee his or her functional abilities and working with employee to explore and design reasonable, flexible and creative accommodations to enable the employee to stay at work or return to work in an early and safe manner.
- Communicate FAF details with DMU within four (4) business days of receipt.
- Obtain employee’s consent if clarification for FAF is required by DMU.

Employee

- The employee is responsible for actively participating in the process to obtain accurate information about his or her functional abilities in order to explore and design reasonable, flexible and creative accommodations to enable the employee to stay at work or return to work in an early and safe manner.
- Where the employee is requested to attend his or her health care provider for the purpose of having a FAF completed, the employee will do so within fourteen (14) calendar days of the request, or other negotiated reasonable timeline.

Disability Management Unit

- On receipt of a completed FAF, the Disability Management Unit is responsible for reviewing the form, extracting any information not related to the employee's functional abilities and expected duration, and sending a copy to the employee's Human Resources Branch within two business days.
- Where the information is determined to be unclear or insufficient, the Disability Management Consultant will send a letter to the health care provider, with a copy to the employee's file, detailing the additional information needed, as discussed with and consented to by the employee (see attached *Consent to Release of Information Form* and letter template). Alternatively the DMU may facilitate direct access to the Early Referral Service if the employee meets the criteria.

Union

- The employee's union representative, on request of the employee, is available to provide advice and assistance to the employee about the purpose and process for obtaining information on the employee's functional abilities, a FAF and further information from the employee's health care provider.

Health Care Providers

- Health care providers are responsible, subject to reimbursement by the Public Service Commission and on the request of an employee, for completing the FAF and providing objective information on restrictions and limitations and for sending the completed Form to the Disability Management Unit.

Accompanying Materials

- Employee Information Sheet – Request for Completion of Functional Abilities Form
- Functional Abilities Form
- Consent to Release of Information Form