



*Occu-Med Employment Medical Evaluation Service
for ACWA-JPIA Workers' Compensation Member Districts
Step-by-Step Guide*

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for ACWA-JPIA Workers' Compensation Member Districts***

Executive Summary

ACWA-JPIA is proud to continue offering Occu-Med pre-placement medical evaluation and return-to-work / fitness-for-duty evaluation services to all Workers' Compensation Member Districts. Occu-Med has provided its service to public and private sector agencies, including water districts, for more than 30 years. Occu-Med's program significantly reduces worker injuries by evaluating pre-existing medical conditions or physical limitations that may pre-dispose the applicant or employee to injury when performing the essential duties of the job.

The following are Occu-Med services available to ACWA-JPIA Workers' Compensation Member Districts.

Introduction

Occu-Med's QA^2 medical evaluation service (pronounced "Q-A-Too") and the Company's various ancillary services were developed in response to client need for effective post-offer/pre-placement and fitness-for-duty/return-to-work medical examination processes.

I. Summary of Services & Fees

The fee for ACWA-JPIA Workers' Compensation Member Districts is included in your premium. This fee covers: a) Job analysis for all selected job classes; b) Data analysis and the preparation of Job Profiles and Medical Examination Component Profiles for all jobs classes studied; c) Location and/or training of a medical clinic to provide exams (including providing the clinic with a copy of the "*Physician's Guide to the Occu-Med System*"); and d) Client Orientation.

The scope of Occu-Med service covers all work required for our medical examination reviews and reports and for our on-going consultation as listed:

- Review and evaluation of completed medical examinations with results sent to you on the same day that the exam is received
- Written reports for each review undertaken for each applicant
- Employment Agreements for any employees placed with accommodations
- Additional review for applicants with medical or physical conditions requiring further testing or submission of additional information
- Explanation (by telephone and by letter) to prospective employees of additional medical information necessary for job clearance
- Submission of legally defensible hiring recommendations
- Assistance with reasonable accommodation recommendations
- Fitness-for-Duty & Return-to-Work evaluations utilizing Occu-Med Network Physicians
- RDQA services
- Consultation relative to pre-placement, return-to-work and fitness-for-duty issues
- Assistance with clinic performance issues, as needed
- Periodic reports documenting the results of Occu-Med's work, as requested
- Periodic reports documenting efficiency and timeliness of services provided by your selected medical provider, as requested

II. Medical Examination Scheduling

Simply submit an Exam Requisition Form via e-mail to: Scheduling@occu-med.com or via fax at (559) 435-7200 and the medical exam will be scheduled within two (2) business hours of the referral. If you are unable to e-mail or fax your information or have any other scheduling questions, please contact Occu-Med’s Exam Scheduling Hotline at (559) 435-2800, extension 103. Your District will immediately receive an email or telephone confirmation of the appointment time and date. Normally, the exam will be scheduled with your preferred medical provider; however, with your permission, exams can be scheduled at an alternative clinic nearby if the preferred clinic is booked out beyond acceptable time periods or if the alternative clinic offers significantly better pricing for the particular exam in question.

III. Medical Examination Harvesting

Having scheduled the medical exam, and with knowledge of the length of time required to obtain results for the medical testing included in the exam (i.e., PPD test for tuberculosis takes 48 to 72 hours for results), Occu-Med contacts the medical provider to request, or “harvest,” the exam at the absolute earliest time that it should be ready for review. This service is currently saving Occu-Med clients approximately 50% in terms of turnaround time for exam results.

IV. EXAMQA

For all exams received complete by 4:00 PM, Occu-Med will provide a written recommendation and report to the potential employee’s District by close of business of the same day. For applicants who are deemed to be CQ (Conditionally Qualified, see Table below), an Employment Agreement accompanies each such report. For RDQ (again, see Table below), RDQA is initiated with the applicant, and the District is simply notified that the process has begun. This reduces the risk of disclosure of protected personal medical information that may, upon the submission of the additional medical information requested, be determined to be non-job-related and undesirable for the District to have received. For each DQ, an appropriate medical-legal report is submitted documenting the specific justifications for the disqualification and informing the District of the requirement of a consideration of Reasonable Accommodation (a process in which we encourage the District to involve Occu-Med) to determine whether there are any reasonable restrictions or accommodations that would permit the applicant to be placed. Periodic performance reports, addressing both clinic turnaround statistics and EXAMQA results, are available upon request. [Please see the Table below regarding specific recommendations.]

Details regarding Occu-Med’s qualification recommendations are as follows:

Occu-Med’s Qualification Recommendations

Please note that these are only recommendations and that the final placement decision remains with the District.

Medically Qualified (“MQ”) – Applicant is a safe placement.

Conditionally Qualified (“CQ”) – Applicant will be placed but has work restrictions as outlined on the medical restrictions and/or reasonable accommodations page of the report. The specific restrictions or accommodations are always to be included as part of the Conditionally Qualified Medical Exam Summary Report.

Recommendation Delayed for Qualification (“RDQ”) – Applicant will be required to gather further information regarding one or more medical conditions or physical limitations. This process is facilitated by Occu-Med via RDQA. The applicant is contacted on the day that issue is identified and informed that he/she has 10 business days to complete the request for additional medical information (extensions of the time-frame can be granted at the District’s discretion).

Medically Disqualified (“DQ”) – Applicant has been deemed medically unsuited for this job class. Occu-Med’s report outlining relevant issues will be attached.

V. Clinic Invoice Review

Occu-Med began its Clinic Bill Review service in 2006 as part of its service to ITT, a company charged with deploying civilian contractors to Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar and Afghanistan for various major federal projects in that region. We have evaluated more than 3,000 clinic invoices for pre-placement exams over this span of time and have been absolutely appalled at our findings: a) more than 92% of invoices were initially submitted with inaccuracies (charges for tests not performed, wrong charges for testing performed, duplicate billings); and b) worse, nearly all of the incorrect invoices were inaccurate in favor of the clinic. Occu-Med requires the submission of an accurate invoice for payment—at which point we make payment within our normal billing terms. Clients have informed us that this service alone has literally saved days of staff time. Another client, upon learning of this billing trend, audited the previous year’s invoices and was able to obtain a refund of more than \$3,000 for exams incorrectly billed during that period. For Members who elect to have Occu-Med schedule the examination with a clinic in our Preferred Network of over 1200 clinics, Occu-Med will submit to the District a monthly invoice for each medical examination scheduled pursuant to a negotiated fee schedule that will show one cost for each exam. This invoicing is usually substantially discounted due to our National contract pricing and is a major improvement to the typical clinic invoice that shows an array of pricing for the array of medical components that comprise the medical exam for a particular job class. Occu-Med’s service fees are free of charge to your District if Occu-Med performs the scheduling through our Provider Network.

VI. Additional Occu-Med Services

Fitness-for-Duty & Return-to-Work Evaluations

Fitness-for-Duty evaluations of current employees returning to work following injury or with declining health brought on by injury or by aging have become a significant aspect of Occu-Med’s service to ACWA/JPIA member districts. We evaluate the employee’s specific situation to allow for a correct and legally defensible determination of his/her ability to continue performing the job or to return to the job – either at full or modified duty.

The fitness-for-duty evaluation usually begins with an assessment of the factors that have resulted in the need for the evaluation. In most cases, a Job Profile for the job in question has been developed previously, so there is a thorough understanding of the specific essential duties of the job in questions. Occu-Med then prepares a document, to be made available to the appropriate physician or physicians, requesting the specific, appropriate medical information that will be necessary to determine whether the employee continues to be an appropriate placement in the job, with or without restrictions. If the District chooses, Occu-Med will locate an independent physician or specialist to perform an Independent Medical Evaluation on the District’s behalf.

Please note that the medical review performed by Occu-Med physicians is covered by our contract with ACWA/JPIA. The cost for any necessary independent evaluation by outside specialists or sub-specialists is billed as a pass-through cost to the District. When such medical information is submitted, Occu-Med's physicians evaluate it in conjunction with the requirements of the job to make a recommendation to the client.

If the recommendation is that the employee be retained or returned to the job with work accommodations or restrictions, Occu-Med will prepare an employment agreement to be signed by the employee setting forth specific job restrictions to which the employee will be held. Thousands of such fitness-for-duty recommendations have been made to our clients, allowing for the efficient and appropriate transition of employees back into the workplace and resulting in a significant savings in workers' compensation and lost time costs for those clients.

To initiate a Fitness-for Duty evaluation simply submit an Evaluation Request Form to ffd@occu-med.com or via fax at (559) 435-7200. If you would like call to discuss the particulars of a potential evaluation, please call our Fresno office at (559) 435-2800.

Reasonable Accommodation Assistance

In Accordance with the Americans with Disabilities act of 1990 and comparable state regulations, any employee who is found to be unable to continue working in his or her present position after undergoing a Fitness-for-Duty or Return-to-Work evaluation must be provided with reasonable accommodation assistance from their employer. If after completion of a Fitness-for-Duty or Return-to-Work evaluation it is determined that the employee cannot safely return to his or her current job, Occu-Med can assist the District in analyzing possible alternative placement opportunities in a different job position. Occu-Med will work with the District to determine: a) essential job requirements; b) environmental factors of the job; c) effectiveness of possible accommodations; d) feasibility and reasonableness of possible effective accommodations; and e) if desired, participation in Interactive Conferences with the employee.

Out of Area Testing

More and more Districts are looking at recruitment opportunities outside of their immediate area in order to expand their potential job pool of employees. In the past this meant that if a prospective employee was to be screened as part of the post offer, pre-employment physical evaluation process, they would either have to use a relatively unknown physician in their local area or make an appointment with the District's preferred medical provider. Now, thanks to Occu-Med's Network of Medical Providers, this is no longer the only option your District has. Upon notification of an out-of-area applicant, Occu-Med will obtain approval for the exam cost from the District and advise the selected Medical Provider of the exam protocols and guidelines to ensure that the exam is conducted appropriately and efficiently. Upon receipt of the out of area medical exam, EXAMQA evaluation is conducted.

Contact Information

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