

FOR YOU WHO HAVE OR HAVE HAD CANCER  
AND ARE RETURNING TO WORK



BACK TO WORK

## Returning to work during and after cancer can be challenging. This leaflet provides advice on what you can do when you return to work.

# When you return to work

It is important that you engage in a thorough dialogue with your manager and job centre to create a concrete plan for your return to work. Together, you should address the following aspects:

### Working time

Agree on the number of hours and days, such as three hours a day for three days a week. Additionally, decide on the specific times of day you will work.

### Tasks

Clarify which tasks you will handle upon your return. It is important that these tasks are clearly defined and manageable. Start with something you are confident you can do.

### Breaks

Plan for regular breaks during the day and between working days.

### Other considerations

Upon your return, discuss whether any physical adjustments, such as creating a quieter environment, are needed at your workplace.

### Follow-up

Schedule frequent follow-up meetings every three weeks to evaluate and adjust the plan as needed. Also, schedule follow-up meetings after you have fully returned to work, such as one year later.

## DIALOGUE WITH YOUR WORKPLACE



- Agree with your manager on maintaining contact with your workplace during your sick leave and upon your return to work.
- Decide with your manager what should be communicated to colleagues and partners and who will be responsible.
- Inform your manager about any late effects from the cancer treatment that may affect your work situation, such as fatigue, sensitivity, memory issues, or difficulty concentrating. This can help your manager understand and support you when you return to work.

## THE JOB CENTRE

- Consider the job centre as your partner. Its role is to support you during your sick leave and when you return to work.
- The job centre has the authority to make decisions regarding extending sickness benefits/reimbursements, flexible jobs, and early retirement pensions.
- The job centre is required to arrange follow-up interviews with you every four weeks, even if you receive your regular salary during sick leave.

# Important words and concepts



## **Sickness benefits/reimbursement**

Most individuals receive pay during illness. If you do not receive a salary during illness, you can apply to the municipality for sickness benefits. If your employer provides wages, they can apply for sickness benefit reimbursement from the municipality. Sickness benefits/reimbursement can be granted for up to 22 weeks, with the option of extension if you are still deemed unfit to work and meet the general conditions for sickness benefits.

## **Sick leave interview**

Your employer is required to schedule a sickness absence interview with you no later than four weeks after your first day of sickness. The purpose of this interview is to plan your return to work. The interview can be postponed, for example, due to hospitalization, and can be conducted via telephone or email. You have the right to have your union representative or an advisor present with you.

## **Follow-up interviews at the job centre**

These interviews aim to clarify whether you need support in returning to work. They must occur every four weeks and typically occur at the job centre, although they can be conducted over the phone if you are working part-time or unable to attend due to illness.

## **Standby arrangement**

When illness occurs, contact with the job centre is a prerequisite for receiving sickness benefits. However, this requirement may be temporarily suspended if you have a severe life-threatening illness. This means you are not obligated to participate in follow-up interviews at the job centre. The standby arrangement ends when treatment ends or when you return to work.

## **Holiday**

When you receive sickness benefits/reimbursement, you are generally only entitled to take holidays if you have an explicit agreement with the job centre. Therefore, always contact the job centre before planning any holidays. Sickness benefits cannot be received during holidays.

## **Disability compensatory measures**

If your illness or treatment has resulted in physical and/or mental disability, the job centre can provide help such as workplace accommodations and personal support.

## **§ 56 Agreement**

Once you have recovered, if there is an expectation of increased sickness absence related to your cancer in the future, you and your employer can apply for a §56 agreement through the job centre. In this scenario, your employer receives sickness benefit reimbursement from the first day of sickness.

## **Flexible job (Danish: Flexjob)**

If the job centre assesses that you have a significantly permanently reduced ability to work, they can clarify the option of a flexible job.

## **Early retirement pension (Danish: Førtidspension)**

If your ability to work is significantly and permanently reduced in relation to any occupation, the job centre can decide whether you are eligible for an early retirement pension.

## **Senior pension**

For individuals who have at most six years until retirement, have a permanently reduced working capacity (15 hours per week or less), and have had long-term attachment to the labor market. ATP makes the decision regarding senior pension.

The above text is a reformulated version of legislation intended to enhance accessibility. Therefore, these texts cannot be used as a legal basis.

# Six tips when you return to work

- 1 Start gradually rather than waiting too long to begin.
- 2 When you start working, consider how you manage your energy and time in your personal life.
- 3 Be patient and accept that there may be fluctuations in your progress.
- 4 Be realistic about your expectations for yourself regarding work. You may want to discuss this with your employer or healthcare professional.
- 5 Expect that you may need to make some compromises, such as adjusting your work tasks.
- 6 Remember that every illness trajectory is unique, so avoid comparing yourself to others.

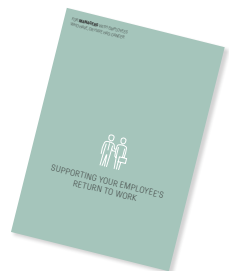
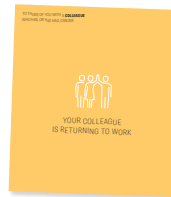
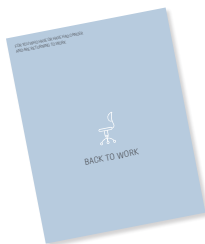
Want to know more or need help?

- The job centre
- Your union
- Your municipal health centre
- Your general practitioner
- ATP
- Your pension company

**REHPA**

Videncenter for  
Rehabilitering og Palliation

CENTER FOR  
KRÆFT & SUNDHED  
KØBENHAVN



This leaflet is part of a series that includes two others: one for your colleagues and one for your manager. The material can be downloaded from [www.kraeft.kk.dk/viden-og-vaerktoejr/materialer/pjecer-om-stoette-til-at-vende-tilbage-paa-arbejde](http://www.kraeft.kk.dk/viden-og-vaerktoejr/materialer/pjecer-om-stoette-til-at-vende-tilbage-paa-arbejde)