

How WISE can help your business grow

October 2022



If you need new employees for your business, the WorkSafe Incentive Scheme for Employers (WISE) can help. WISE gives employers up to \$26,000 when they offer at least 8 hours per week of ongoing employment to someone who can't return to their previous employer after a work-related injury or illness.

WISE offers:

- a financial boost of up to **\$26,000** to help meet your costs
- tailored support to make sure you get the best person for your business
- WorkSafe injury insurance premium protection for your new employee
- the opportunity to employ someone who is keen to get back to work.

Eligibility for WISE

Most employers are eligible for WISE. However, labour hire companies, employment agencies or group training organisations that place a person into a workplace of another employer, are not eligible. WISE can't be used for traineeships and apprenticeships.

How WISE works



Initial contact

A person who is ready to return to work may contact you about a job, or their occupational rehabilitation provider may contact you on their behalf.



Recruitment

You consider the person the same way you would any other job applicant. You interview them about their skills, qualifications and experience, and decide if they are the right fit for your workplace.



Workplace visit

If you offer them a job, the occupational rehabilitation provider will visit you to offer you free advice and support, so you know the person can safely perform the role. They will check your WISE eligibility and help you complete the WISE payment form.



Employment

You employ the person under the same employment arrangements as any other person performing that role. The occupational rehabilitation provider keeps in touch with you and your new employee for the first 13 weeks. After that, you communicate directly with the person's WorkSafe agent about the final payments.

How WISE helped Brad's business

Brad is the General Manager at Unison Property Corporation in Kensington. Unison manages residential and commercial property maintenance and cleaning needs.

Brad was struggling to find suitable employees when he heard about the WISE program. It was almost a chance conversation with an agency who said, 'have you considered the WISE program'.

One of the candidates was Mikey, who had been injured in a previous job, and was keen and ready to start something new. Brad couldn't believe that no one had given Mikey a go, and he was hired using WISE.

Brad and Mikey were assisted by an occupational rehabilitation provider who answered every possible question, helped complete a worksite assessment, and advised Unison on Mikey's capabilities.

Brad says that through WISE, they have secured a dedicated and reliable employee who goes above and beyond. Brad says if you ignore WISE, you really are missing an opportunity to hire some talented people who want to engage in the workforce.

How WISE is paid

WISE is paid directly to employers, in 3 instalments over a 6-month period.



- 1.** Week 1 payment: fixed amount of \$2,000.
- 2.** Week 13 payment: 45% of the person's gross earnings for weeks 1-13, capped at \$12,000.
- 3.** Week 26 payment: 45% of the person's gross earnings for weeks 14-26, capped at \$12,000.

The occupational rehabilitation provider will help you claim the first WISE payment and give you advice on how to submit WISE payment forms for the second and third payments. Forms are emailed to the employee's WorkSafe agent.

You can download WISE payment forms from worksafe.vic.gov.au/WISE

The week 1 payment can be paid from the first date the person completes 8 hours' work in a week. You can only claim the week 13 payment after week 13, and the week 26 payment after week 26.

What happens if a WISE employee is injured at work?

If a WISE employee is injured at your workplace, you should contact the person's WorkSafe agent. The agent will decide whether the injury is related to the original claim, or they may ask for a new WorkSafe claim to be lodged.

Your WorkCover insurance premium won't change if the person sustains a new or recurring injury in the first 2 years after the WISE employment start date.

If the person's injury is related to the original claim, their previous employer is responsible for any costs.

If the person's injury is new and sustained as part of their new employment, it still won't affect your premium. However, you will need to pay the employer excess for the new claim, which is the first 10 days of weekly payments, and the first \$763 of medical and like expenses (indexed annually), unless you selected the excess buyout option on their WorkCover insurance premium.

Notes

Self-insurers or interstate or Commonwealth employers are not eligible for WorkSafe's injury insurance premium protection.

More information

For general information about WISE:

- call WorkSafe Advisory on 1800 136 086
- or visit worksafe.vic.gov.au/WISE



Do you have a vacant role?

If you would like to participate in WISE, email WISE@worksafe.vic.gov.au and someone from WorkSafe will contact you.