



STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
**GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY**

**GOV. MALLOY ANNOUNCES \$2.1 MILLION FEDERAL GRANT TO  
IMPROVE LABOR FORCE SERVICES RETURNING TO WORK AFTER AN  
ILLNESS OR INJURY**

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Dannel P. Malloy today announced that the Connecticut Department of Labor (CTDOL) has been awarded a \$2.1 million federal grant as part of the Retaining Employment and Talent After Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN) initiative, designed to improve the retention of workers after an illness or injury. The grant, which has a focus on providing more proactive stay-at-work/return-to-work (SAW/RTW) services, will test the impact of early intervention on SAW/RTW outcomes.

“Connecticut is at its strongest when the diverse talents of our workforce are making meaningful contributions in the workplace and to our economy,” **Governor Malloy said**. “The time is right for this initiative in Connecticut, where there is a significant need for earlier return-to-work communication and services to prevent long-term disability. This grant will help us enhance those efforts.”

The grant was awarded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy, the Employment and Training Administration, and the Social Security Administration. CTDOL’s Office of Workforce Competitiveness will lead the RETAIN-CT partnership in an 18-month pilot project with UConn Health Center, The Hartford, and Capital Workforce Partners. State partners also include the Department of Rehabilitation Services, the Department of Public Health, the Connecticut Employment and Training Commission, the State of Connecticut Workers’ Compensation Commission, and the Connecticut Business Leadership Network.

“Injury or illness shouldn’t mean unemployment, and this major federal grant will ensure that Connecticut workers have the support and resources they need to stay on the job safely, enabling them to support their family and continue to contribute to our economy,” **Senator Richard Blumenthal, Senator Chris Murphy, and Congressman John Larson said in a joint statement**. “Connecticut is once again serving as a model for the nation – building unique partnerships and collaborations that can be replicated nationwide. We look forward to working with the state to ensure Connecticut receives additional funding in future years for this important effort.”

“The RETAIN-CT project represents a new, coordinated effort among several state agencies working in collaboration with healthcare providers and insurers to improve long-term return-to-work and job retention outcomes for workers in the greater Hartford region that have emerging musculoskeletal concerns,” **Governor Malloy added**. “This state-level intervention program will build a strong partnership between trained healthcare providers, insurance case managers, and return-to-work coordinators.”

Health care providers will ensure best medical practices and will be more involved and supported in RTW planning efforts. Insurance case managers will act as health service coordinators and provide proactive lost time tracking and employer coordination in the first few weeks of a claim. RTW coordinators will be providing more individualized planning and resource coordination and assistance to employers in regard to job accommodations or necessary modifications.

“UConn Health Center, which already works in partnership with our CONN-OSHA unit as a contracted occupational health clinic, will now become the RETAIN-CT training and consultation center under this pilot,” **CTDOL Commissioner Kurt Westby said**. “UConn will provide specialized training to health care providers and others with the project, and coordination with The Hartford as the insurer will allow for incentive payments to providers that provide early return to work planning.”

“When a workplace injury or illness takes someone out of the workforce, it can have devastating effects for both the individual worker and their family,” **DPH Commissioner Dr. Raul Pino said**. “Proactive measures that keep these individuals at work, or return them to regular work as quickly as possible, is of vital importance in restoring their full physical and financial health.”

For participants who are out of work more than 30 days, RTW coordinators from Capital Workforce Partners will bring the necessary programs, partners and resources together to provide participants with more detailed planning and problem solving around return-to-work barriers as well as consultation and support for employers.

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