

Connecticut Return to Work Resources

*Please note that many of these resources are CT-specific but in some cases there are also federal and national resources listed as well. These listings were compiled in the first quarter of 2022.

Workers with Injury, Illness or Disability

This guide was created by the Retaining Employment and Talent after Injury/Illness Network (RETAIN-CT) Team to help people in Connecticut return-to-work (RTW) and stay-at-work (SAW) by offering resources and strategies that can help with the process. There are many different programs and agencies listed in this guide that can be used by **workers, employers and providers**.

When Injured, Who to Contact

Supervisors and Human Resources Departments

Workers should contact their supervisors and/or human resource department to report illness or disability. Likely documentation is needed from the doctor who treated or is treating their condition.

State of Connecticut (CT) Workers' Compensation Commission

The Workers' Compensation Act of the Connecticut General Statutes provides medical treatment, "wage replacement" benefits, and other benefits for employees who, unfortunately, have been injured at work or who have become ill from their jobs.

1-800-223-9675

<https://wcc.state.ct.us/>

Information on how to file a claim:

<https://www.wcc.state.ct.us/gen-info/if-injured/todo.htm>

Community Health Centers

For medical, dental, behavioral health, specialty and urgent care, call (860) 347-6971 to make an in-person, video or phone appointment.

<https://www.healthcare.gov/community-health-centers/>

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP)s

Some employers have a voluntary, work-based program that offers free and confidential assessments, short-term counseling, referrals, and follow-up services to employees who have personal and/or work-related problems. Human Resource Departments often have information on their web pages or can direct workers to an EAP, if the company has one.

Unions

Some jobs are unionized. Unions establish collective bargaining agreements or "labor contracts" which outline the employment rights that members will receive. In a collective bargaining agreement, unions

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will often specify the workers' compensation benefits their members will receive if they are injured on the job.

Workers Seeking Accommodations

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

The leading source of free, expert, and confidential guidance on job accommodations and disability employment issues

<https://askjan.org/>

Department of Labor (DOL) Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Federal Law, ADA Title I states that a reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a job, the work environment, or the way things are usually done during the hiring process.

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/program-areas/employers/accommodations>

Requesting and Negotiating Reasonable Accommodations under the ADA Law

Job Accommodation Network's (JAN) Guide

<https://askjan.org/publications/individuals/employee-guide.cfm>

ADA Coalition of CT

Promotes compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act. It is the only organization in the state singularly devoted to educating individuals with disabilities, businesses, and governmental entities about the ADA.

<https://www.adacc.net/>

Connecticut Tech Act Project (CTTAP)

CTTAP operates out of the State of CT, Depart of Aging and Disability Services (ADS). Their goal is to help individuals with disabilities of all ages and all disabilities, as well as family members, employers, educators and other professionals have access to Assistive Technology (AT) devices and services.

<http://cttechact.com>

Job Search Exploration

Self Service

CTHires

Connecticut Department of Labor's new comprehensive workforce development system designed to provide integrated services via the Internet to individuals and employers 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

<https://www.cthires.com/vosnet/Default.aspx>

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Career One Stop

Career exploration, training and jobs:

<https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp/AmericanJobCenters/american-job-centers.aspx>

Employment and training helpline:

1-877-US2-JOBS

(1-877-872-5627)

TTY: 1-877-889-5627

O*NET OnLine

A tool for career exploration and job analysis! O*NET OnLine has detailed descriptions of the world of work for use by job seekers, workforce development and HR professionals, students, researchers, and more.

<https://www.onetonline.org/>

Employment and Training Assistance

American Job Centers (AJC)s

If illness or injury prevents a worker from returning to their original position, AJCs offer employment and training assistance. Services are free to all individuals of working age.

<https://portal.ct.gov/aic>

Injured and/or Disabled Workers

Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS) Workers' Rehabilitation Program (WRS)

Workers' Rehabilitation Services (WRS) is dedicated to assisting the eligible injured worker in returning to gainful employment by providing quality Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) services.

<https://portal.ct.gov/AgingandDisability/Content-Pages/Programs/Workers-Rehabilitation-Program>

ADS Bureau of Rehabilitation Services (BRS) Vocational Rehabilitation (VR)

Designed to help individuals with permanent documented disabilities prepare for, obtain, maintain or advance in employment.

<https://portal.ct.gov/AgingandDisability/Content-Pages/Programs/Vocational-Rehabilitation---Bureau-of-Rehabilitation-Services>

Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) - Supported Employment

Employment Services are integral to the DMHAS' goal of offering a recovery-oriented system of care for persons in recovery who experience behavioral health conditions.

<https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Initiatives/Evidence-Based/Supported-Employment-Services>

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Transportation for Workers with Injury/Illness

First, check with employers or employees to see if they have a carpool program.

If not, employers may be interested in setting up a carpool program – reach out to CTRides.com for assistance <https://ctrides.com/>.

Check Rideshare for existing carpools based on location – <https://www.rideshare.com/>

ADA Paratransit Bus Services

Mandated by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), statewide paratransit services are provided in multiple areas with local fixed route bus services for people who can't use the local bus system due to their disability, <https://portal.ct.gov/DOT/Publictrans/Bureau-of-Public-Transportation/Paratransit-service>

These vans run on the bus schedule and require advance notice for pickups; therefore, it may not be the best option for some towns or work schedules.

Greater Hartford Transit District Freedom Ride

Available to ADA eligible passengers who need transportation beyond the traditional ADA paratransit service area and hours or for same-day service. This program allows paratransit users to receive a half-price taxi voucher through the M7 Cab Company. They have accessible cabs for people who use a wheelchair too.

<https://www.hartfordtransit.org/freedom-ride/> or call 860-247-5329 extension 3086

Assistance Navigating Accessible Transportation

2-1-1 CT

For transportation and other resources, call 211 or visit their website at www.211ct.org

CT Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS) Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) program

Helps individuals with disabilities to prepare for, find and keep a job. Those receiving vocational rehabilitation services, *may* be eligible for driver training/financial assistance for modified vehicles.

<https://portal.ct.gov/AgingandDisability/Content-Pages/Programs/Driver-Training-Program>

Help with Finances

Connecticut Association for Human Services (CAHS)

Financial coaching and more.

<https://cahs.org/>

860-951-2211

Practical Money Skills

Offers interactive tools and educational resources to help individuals and communities build stronger financial futures.

www.practicalmoneyskills.com

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Additional Tips

Create a budget. Consider where assistance is needed and where spending cuts can be made. When thinking of personal budgeting some ideas include:

- Help getting connected to social service assistance in CT: call 2-1-1 or visit <https://www.211ct.org/>
- Operation Fuel for year-round energy and utility assistance across CT: <https://operationfuel.org/>
- Mediation or help with landlords or mortgage companies

Remember that each city and town likely has assistance for their residents, especially for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Check city or town websites for:

- Utility and or heating assistance
- Tax breaks or credits
- Affordable housing - Senior/disability housing
- Locations and times for local food pantries

Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA)

Free tax help

<https://uwc.211ct.org/taxhelp/>

COVID-19 Specific Resources

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention- Workplaces and businesses

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/workplaces-businesses/index.html>

Survivor Corps

Post COVID Care Centers (PCCC) in CT

<https://www.survivorcorps.com/pccc-ct>

Mount Sinai

Guidance on, Returning to work after Covid-19 infection and Post-Acute COVID-19 Syndrome (PACS)

<https://www.mountsinai.org/files/MSHealth/Assets/HS/Locations/Abilities-Research-Center/Returning-to-work-after-COVID-19.pdf>

Connecticut Tech Act Project (CTTAP)

CTTAP operates out of the State of CT, Department of Aging and Disability Services (ADS). Their goal is to help individuals with disabilities of all ages and all disabilities, as well as family members, employers, educators and other professionals have access to Assistive Technology (AT) devices and services.

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CTTAP Resources for workers with “Long COVID” under the AT Act Program can provide access to AT for fatigue and mobility and AT for Work. Examples include workstation adaptations, training on setting reminders on devices and loans on AT equipment.

<https://cttechact.com/how-assistive-technology-can-support-those-experiencing-long-covid/>

U.S. Department of Labor: Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP)

Coronavirus Resources: COVID-19 and Long COVID-19

The U.S. Department of Labor is committed to protecting the health and safety of America's workers and providing resources to help them respond to and recover from the Coronavirus pandemic. Find resources for Workers, Employers, Youth and Policymakers.

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/topics/coronavirus-covid-19-long-covid>

Job Accommodation Network (JAN)

Coronavirus (COVID-19) related workplace issues vary widely. JAN does not provide public health, safety, or legal advice, but does offer Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance assistance and practical job accommodation strategies for returning individuals with disabilities to work during the COVID-19 pandemic. These strategies can enable workers with disabilities to return to the work environment, work at home, or access leave when other accommodations are not reasonable.

<https://askjan.org/topics/COVID-19.cfm>

Occupational and Environmental Health Network (OEHN)

Provides occupational health solutions, offering consultation, clinical services and disability management to employers across all industries.

<https://www.oehn.net/>

Mental Health Resources

Speak to a Doctor

For those recovering from an injury or illness, who need emotional support, should talk to their doctor about how they are feeling. Medication, counseling or other resources may be appropriate to help.

For immediate help, please call 9-1-1

An emergency is any situation that requires immediate assistance from the police, fire department or ambulance. Examples include a medical emergency, especially for symptoms that require immediate medical attention.

Employee Assistance Programs

Encourage workers to explore or ask human resources at their company if they have an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with counselors who can help with emotional support and return to work decision-making.

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The Connecticut Mental Health Association

Dedicated to the promotion of mental health, prevention of mental illness, and improved care and treatment of persons with mental illness.

800-842-1501 or 860-529-1970

<https://www.mhconn.org/>

The National Alliance for the Mentally Ill - Connecticut (NAMI of CT)

NAMI of CT is a statewide organization for the families and friends of persons who have a psychiatric disability. Its activities include support, education and information, and advocacy.

800-215-3021 <https://namict.org/>

CT Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS)

DMHAS includes 24-hour crisis numbers, advocacy and support groups, and regional directories of their many state-operated and funded programs.

860-418-7000

<https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Programs-and-Services/Finding-Services/Programs-and-Services>

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

800-273-8255

Crisis Text Line 741741

Hours: Available 24 hours/ 7 days a week. Languages: English & Spanish.

Nationwide Mental Health Crisis and Suicide Prevention Number

The National Suicide Designation Act of 2020 establishes that by July 2022, 9-8-8 will be a universal number for mental health crises and suicide prevention.

9-8-8

<https://www.nami.org/About-NAMI/NAMI-News/2020/By-July-2022-9-8-8-will-be-the-Nationwide-Mental-Health-Crisis-and-Suicide-Prevention-Number>

CT Adult Crisis Telephone Intervention and Options Network - A.C.T.I.O.N. Line

For adults in distress who are 18 years of age or older. Mobile Crisis Teams (MCTs) provide mobile emergency crisis services that are mobile, readily accessible, rapid response, short-term services for individuals and families experiencing mental health or substance use crises.

Available 24/7, 365 days a year

1-800-HOPE-135 (1-800.467.3135) or 2-1-1

*For children under 18, please call 2-1-1 for help

<https://portal.ct.gov/CrisisServices>

CT Access Line

For 24/7 access to substance use treatment, including detox and transportation

1-800-563-4086

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CT Infoline Crisis Services

Caseworkers can help make it easier for workers to find information, discover options or deal with a crisis. Infoline is certified by the American Association of Suicidology. This line can also be used for Crisis Services for Youth, to help children under age 18
Dial **2-1-1** from anywhere in Connecticut

Prevent Suicide CT

For suicide resources

1-800-273-8255

<https://www.preventsuicidect.org/>

Further Information

RETAIN-CT

A federally-funded quality improvement project designed to improve return-to-work (RTW) outcomes for workers in Connecticut with musculoskeletal (MSK) pain and injuries. The project provided a unique opportunity for the collaboration of providers, insurers, injured workers, employers and state return-to-work resources. The RETAIN-CT approach includes provider training, improved employer communication and outreach, the use of very early RTW coordination and planning, and access to medical peer physician advice on best occupational health practices.

<http://retainct.com/>

U.S. Department of Labor RETAIN Initiative

<https://www.dol.gov/agencies/odep/initiatives/saw-rtw/retain>

UConn Health (UCH) Occupational and Environmental Medicine (OEM) - Clinical Services

UCH OEM offers a comprehensive occupational medicine resource for workers and their employers. With a focus on prevention as well as prompt treatment, we work with employers, organized labor and other medical providers to promote and maintain a healthy workforce. Our professional staff includes experienced physicians who are board certified in occupational medicine and primary care, advanced practice nurses, industrial hygienists, ergonomists and behavioral health specialists. Our clinical services range from treating minor work injuries to evaluating complex occupationally related medical conditions.

860-679-2893

<https://health.uconn.edu/occupational-environmental/clinical-services/>

The Healthy Work Campaign (HWC)

A public health campaign focused on raising awareness in the U.S. about the health impacts of work stress on working people. Learn about (un)healthy work and solutions to it, access the level of work stressors in your workplace, and equip yourself or your organization with healthy work tools for individuals, employers and unions. healthywork.org

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