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**COSTLY MISTAKE #5
of North Carolina Workers' Compensation Claims**

NOT KNOWING WHEN TO RETURN TO WORK

Most employers at the request of the workers' compensation insurance company will provide light duty to injured workers. Either the employer or the insurance adjuster may then require the injured worker to return to work.

But what type of light-duty is being offered? Prior to returning to work it is necessary to know what you will be doing for the employer. Some employers simply say, "we will find you something". Unfortunately this actually may breed a hostile environment which may have not only poor ramifications on your recovery but also your employment with the employer.

If you return to work without an established job position then the employer will be forced to come up with tasks over and over again. Other employees often resent having to do this and the immediate supervisor often begins to demean the injured employee without even realizing it simply due to this resentment. Also in this situation the injured employee is asked to do specific tasks without regard to their restrictions.

In order to avoid this predicament, request, in advance, a specific job description and ask that it be submitted for approval to the treating physician. If the treating physician is confident that you will be capable of performing this position then you may return to work.

Remember, however, perform only those tasks within your restrictions. If an employer asks that you perform duties outside of your restrictions show them the note. If the doctor fails to approve the job description or the employer asks you to work outside of your restrictions then you do not have to return to work.

If the doctor fails to approve the job description and the insurance company or employer refuses to provide weekly benefits contact an attorney.