Returning to work after a loss

There is no need to solve everything at once. Use this checklist for a short, practical conversation.

Before the return: employee and manager

- [ ] Discuss a possible return date and what feels manageable. Agree how to raise concerns if the date needs to change.
- [ ] Choose a few initial priorities. Identify what can wait, who will provide cover and any difficult or safety-sensitive tasks.
- [ ] Discuss temporary hours, workload, breaks or location changes. Confirm what is possible and any effect on pay.
- [ ] Agree what colleagues may be told, a named contact and the first check-in date.

Before the return: HR or the policy owner

- [ ] Confirm applicable leave, pay, benefits and return arrangements against local rules, the contract and any collective agreement.
- [ ] Explain any required evidence and a secure way to provide it. Keep records limited to what is necessary.
- [ ] Confirm agreed changes and available support. Involve occupational health or other relevant professionals where needed.

After the return: review together

- [ ] Ask whether the workload and contact arrangements are helping. Adjust the plan together as needs change.
- [ ] Revisit support around appointments, family responsibilities or significant dates. Agree the next review.

A simple shared plan

Complete together. Keep only the work arrangements you need, and store this plan securely.

Employee / manager / date of conversation

Agreed return date, hours and work location

First priorities / tasks to pause or reassign

Temporary changes / who will arrange them / pay implications

What may be shared with colleagues / who will share it

Named support contact / next check-in date

Keep the plan open to change. Confirm arrangements with HR where needed; this form does not replace any required local process or medical advice. Avoid recording the cause of death, diagnoses or other unnecessary personal details.