

Employee fact sheet:

Returning to work



Returning to work after leave, illness, injury, caring responsibilities or a difficult period can bring mixed emotions. You may feel ready to reconnect and regain routine, but you may also feel uncertain, tired, anxious or unsure about how you will manage.

A return to work does not need to be perfect from the first day. Planning the transition, communicating your needs and seeking support early can help you rebuild confidence and settle back into work at a manageable pace.

What returning to work can feel like

Change can affect people in different ways. You may notice:

- feeling anxious, overwhelmed or unsettled
- difficulty concentrating or making decisions
- frustration, irritability or reduced patience
- feeling tired, flat or less motivated
- worrying about what might happen next
- wanting to avoid decisions or delay action
- feeling disconnected from work or others
- changes in sleep, appetite or energy

These responses are common during periods of uncertainty. Noticing how change is affecting you can help you respond earlier and more intentionally.



Reaching out early makes a real difference. Contact **PeopleSense** to book a confidential appointment with a qualified psychologist.

AU: 1300 307 912

NZ: 0800 425 526

Strategies that may help

[PeopleSense EAP](#) can help you at every step, and these strategies can help you prepare and look after your wellbeing during the process.

1. Plan before you return

If possible, clarify important details like your start date, hours, duties, key priorities and any changes that may affect you.

2. Ask what has changed

Check whether there have been changes to your team, systems, processes or expectations while you were away.

3. Clarify priorities

Where possible, determine what needs attention first and what can wait. This can help reduce pressure to catch up on everything at once.

4. Communicate your needs

Let your manager or appropriate workplace contact know what support may help you return safely and sustainably.

5. Set realistic expectations

It may take time to rebuild energy, confidence and routine. Try to be patient with yourself as you transition back to work.

6. Protect recovery time

Pay attention to rest, sleep, movement, meals and downtime outside work, especially during the transition period.

7. Seek support early

If returning to work is affecting you, confidential support is available through [PeopleSense by Altius](#), your EAP.