

Post-offer prework screening programs

Hiring the right people is one of the most important—and toughest—decisions an employer makes.

A post-offer prework screening (POPWS) program helps you confidently hire employees who can safely meet the physical demands of the job. EMC is here with the support to help you build a program that can help protect your people and your business.

What is a POPWS?

A POPWS is a tool that can help assess a job candidate's ability to safely assume work duties. It includes a series of objective, job-specific tasks performed after a conditional job offer. It evaluates whether a candidate can safely handle the physical requirements of the role. During the screening, providers can also flag any limitations that may raise injury risk. And of course, all POPWS processes must follow the Americans with Disabilities Act, EEOC regulations, and all applicable laws.

Why it matters

A POPWS isn't just a box to check—it can make a real difference in safety and claims costs. Employees whose abilities are matched to the physical demands of the job may have lower risk of injury—and less severe injuries if one does occur.

Research shows unscreened employees:

- Had **4x higher claims costs**
- Were **2x more likely** to experience an overexertion injury*

And newer employees tend to get hurt more:

- Workers with **under 1 year of service** make up **31%** of days away from work†
- Workers with **1–5 years of service** account for another **35%††**

A thoughtful screening process helps you reduce these risks right from the start.



Benefits of implementing POPWS

A POPWS can help your organization:

- Improve safety by matching the right person to the job
- Reduce workers' compensation costs by preventing injuries
- Keep hiring decisions focused on ability — not assumptions

Who can administer a POPWS?

A POPWS can be designed by a:

- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist
- Occupational physician

When choosing a provider, look for someone who:

- Is trained in POPWS design and legal requirements
- Is located near your job site(s) or offers onsite screenings

To build an accurate POPWS, the provider uses the job information you share—usually through a detailed job description (more on that next).

What makes a good job description?

Think of a job description as the foundation of your POPWS.

A strong one includes:

- Essential job functions
- Required skills and knowledge
- Physical exertion levels and frequency
- Any other measurable demands tied to job tasks

When job demands and worker abilities match, injuries tend to be fewer—and less severe.

When should a POPWS be performed?

A POPWS takes place after a conditional offer has been made.

Which jobs to screen first

Prioritize roles that:

- Have high rates or severity of overexertion injuries
- Require significant physical activity
- Involve frequent, strenuous motions

We're here to help

Our Workers' Comp Programs Team can provide support and resources to help you navigate the process and find qualified physical therapists and occupational medicine clinics in your area.

To get started, contact your independent insurance agent or email WorkInjuryCareSolutions@emcins.com.



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*http://costreductiontech.com/documents/rsrch_wor00541.pdf

†http://stats.bls.gov/news.release/archives/osh2_11082012.pdf

‡United States, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Lost-Worktime Injuries and Illnesses: Characteristics and Resulting Time Away From Work, 1998, April 20, 2000.

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