NEW YORK STATE | Workers' Compensation Board

Helping New Yorkers get back to work

Navigating a path back to work while recovering from an on-the-job injury or occupational disease can be challenging. The vocational rehabilitation counselors at the NYS Workers' Compensation Board (Board) help injured workers develop action plans to find or maintain employment. These services, always free of charge, can help you return to the workforce.

Board vocational rehabilitation counselors are skilled in supporting workers who experience job-related stress or other employment challenges. They can also assist with:

- **Career counseling**
- **Resume development**
- **Vocational skill building**
- **Employment searches**
- **Training**
- **Language accessibility**

Sometimes, workers can't simply return to a former job after injury. The Board's vocational rehabilitation counselors help injured workers identify interests and explore ways to obtain marketable skills. We're excited to share that injured workers may now be able to attend college for free under New York's SUNY and CUNY Reconnect initiatives.

SUNY and CUNY Reconnect: College at no cost for New Yorkers

The Board has a new partnership with the State University of New York (SUNY) and the City University of New York (CUNY) to help injured employees return to work. SUNY/CUNY Reconnect programs are now open to all eligible New Yorkers (including injured workers) who wish to pursue a college education and learn new skills. The qualified degree programs focus on in-demand occupations such as health care, cybersecurity, and advanced manufacturing, among many others.

SUNY/CUNY Reconnect offers free associate degrees (two-year programs) to New Yorkers aged 25-55 who do not already possess a degree.* It covers the costs of tuition, books, and supplies for any of the eligible programs. There are options for both on-campus and online learning, with full or part-time attendance. To learn more about the Reconnect programs, scan the QR code on the right with your phone or tablet, or visit **wcb.ny.gov/reconnect**. You can review the list of eligible degree programs, learn how to apply, and/or get information about attending a SUNY/CUNY Reconnect informational session.

Additional resources

Vocational training and education can be a great tool for a new career. Beyond the SUNY/CUNY Reconnect programs, Board vocational rehabilitation counselors can help an injured worker connect to other training opportunities in their community such as certificate programs, micro-credential trainings, and apprenticeship options. To learn more, please email **VocRehab@wcb.ny.gov** or call **(877) 632-4996** and ask to speak with a vocational rehabilitation counselor. Language assistance is provided if needed.

If you are represented by counsel, we recommend you bring these options to the attention of your legal representative.

Whether you wish to learn more about SUNY and CUNY Reconnect, or work with Board vocational rehabilitation counselors on another path back to employment, you do have options. We can help you.

We wish you a successful path forward into the workforce!

**Starting in January 2027, New Yorkers aged 25 to 55 can enroll in a SUNY or CUNY associate degree program in a high-demand field for free, even if they have already completed a college degree in a different area.*

The New York State Workers' Compensation Board protects the rights of employees and employers by ensuring the proper delivery of benefits and by promoting compliance with the law. To learn more about the Board, visit **wcb.ny.gov**. Sign up for Board notifications at **wcb.ny.gov/Notify**.

WCB-SUNY-CUNY-reconnect-fs-v2 10-26