

JOB READY SERVICES



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2300 Westinghouse Blvd, # 107

Raleigh, NC 27604

www.jobreadyservices.net

919-256-1400—Debra Lord, President

Work Conditioning vs. Work Hardening

The terms Work Conditioning and Work Hardening are often used interchangeably, but although they have some components which overlap, they are 2 very different programs.

Work Conditioning:

- Daily program—2-4 hours
- Includes strengthening & exercise
- Individual instruction on how to safely perform job duties
- Job Task Simulation to increase confidence
- Instruction on self-treatment & modification of activities to manage flare-ups on the job
- Return to work goals are specifically identified and individualized for the participant

Work Conditioning is **NOT**:

- Expanded Physical Therapy (e.g., 30 minutes more on the bike, etc)
- Done at the work site

Work Hardening*:

- Comprehensive, multidisciplinary (may include Psychologist, Vocational Rehab Counselor, Physician, P.T. or other healthcare providers) approach to return to work
- Real or simulated work activities that may incorporate 8 hr/day, 5 days/week participation from the attendees.
- Can be done at the workplace to establish a graduated return to work schedule, incorporating specific job tasks on a structured basis to allow a progression to full duty or permanently modified work.

***NOTE:** Job Ready does onsite Work Hardening only.



Job Simulation tasks can be completed in both work hardening and work conditioning programs. A detailed job description listing physical demands is essential for this process.

When to Refer for Work Conditioning or Work Hardening:

- When goals for P.T. may or may not have been met, but patient is still not ready to return to work
- When there is a dispute between the injured worker and employer as to whether the patient can return to work safely within restrictions
- When patient's FCE is invalid and more information is needed to determine physical abilities and potential for returning to work
- When patient is returning from an extended leave (STD, LTD or FMLA)
- When there is any gap between the patient's recovery and return to work