

Student Guide for  
**VOCATIONAL  
RETRAINING**



Returning to an academic environment is difficult for anyone who has been away from school for a significant amount of time. Most likely, things have changed a great deal since you last attended high school or college. This guide can provide you with basic information about procedures, policies, and expectations of your school and Workforce Safety & Insurance (WSI). It can also define some of the more common terms you may hear regarding academics. Much of this same information will be outlined in a student handbook provided by the school; however, the information in this guide is specifically written with you in mind – as a student sponsored by WSI.

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# Getting Started

## Application & Enrollment:

Once approval has been given for retraining, completing and submitting the application form provided by the school will begin the process for enrollment. Schools require a specific number of items for your file which may include:

- 1) Completed Application Form
- 2) High School Diploma or GED verification
- 3) Immunization Records
- 4) Application fee
- 5) Reciprocity Approval - if applicable

## Schedule for Entrance Assessment:

Most schools will schedule a time for you to take an assessment or entrance exam. This helps to determine your skill levels in English, math, comprehension, and writing. Completion of the exam is necessary for a student to be appropriately placed in those areas. Schools will strongly recommend or may require certain classes as the result of the exam. Some programs require specific scores on the exam for enrollment.

## Registration of Classes:

Once all the paperwork is submitted and the application process is complete, students are allowed to register for classes. You may be assigned an advisor who will help you determine a schedule of classes. This individual may also be able to provide you with a copy of your program curriculum, an outline of classes recommended for each semester, along with any lists of appropriate "Technical Electives" or "General Education Electives." (See Curriculum Requirements for more information)

## Curriculum Requirements:

The curriculum for a program is a list of classes each student needs to complete in order to satisfy the requirements for the designated degree. A curriculum usually includes three categories of classes:

- 1) CORE classes - classes that are program specific and required by all students in that program
- 2) TECHNICAL ELECTIVES - classes that enhance the program or provide specialized skills to emphasis different areas of the program

- 3) GENERAL EDUCATION ELECTIVES - classes required to provide a well-rounded education. Typically a specific number of classes are needed in Speech or Communications, Math/Physical Science/Technology, and Social Science/Humanities. Please see your school policies for these requirements.

## Financial Aid:

Even though your tuition, books, and fees are being covered by WSI, it is important for you to apply for any financial assistance through the Financial Aid Office. Any grants that may be awarded can be used for expenses that may not be covered by WSI.

## Expenses & Supplies:

WSI will provide \$30.00 per semester or \$25.00 per term for school supplies such as notebooks, pencils, highlighters, etc. This allowance will automatically be issued to the student approximately two weeks prior to the start of every fall & spring semester.

Supplies or requests for expenses exceeding the \$30.00 require approval by WSI. The policy for considering reimbursement of additional expenses states all students in the class or program must be required to purchase the same supplies, materials, etc. Documentation will be required prior to reimbursement of any additional supplies, materials, etc.

## Consent Forms:

Consent forms are used by schools to ensure that a student approves the release of records to various individuals or agencies. Your school coordinator will request a signed consent form so copies of your schedules or grades can be obtained. The consent form is also needed so your school coordinator can visit with instructors to verify attendance and obtain midterm evaluation forms or assist with coordinating services. All requested information is necessary so the school coordinator can update WSI on your current progress with classes. In some situations, the school policy will not allow instructors to release information to anyone but a student. The school coordinator may request your assistance in these situations.





# For Your Success

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## Attendance:

Being in class is the best possible way to learn. If you are absent, you are missing out on material being covered by the instructor. Appropriate attendance is required and failure to maintain good attendance can be a non-compliance issue. Tutoring services or additional assistance from the school may be denied if excessive absences are noted for any classes. Medical absences require a doctor's written excuse and students are expected to contact all instructors and the school coordinator when absences occur.

## Tutoring Services:

Getting help when you need it is important for success in school. Schools provide a staff of individuals for this specific purpose and it is important to take advantage of the opportunities available if you are struggling in any areas. Most campuses have a student success center or learning center which provides assistance in the form of tutoring, note taking, transcription services, etc. The Disability Services Office can also coordinate similar services in addition to helping with physical accommodations. It is best to contact these offices as soon as possible so the necessary arrangements and documentation can be obtained.

## Advisor Assistance:

Your advisor is usually an instructor in your program who will work with you on a regular basis. They will assist with setting up your schedule of classes each semester and will review curriculum requirements to be sure all classes are being taken at the right times and in the right order. They are one of your best resources available on campus. It will be important for you to schedule a time with your advisor at the middle or toward the end of every semester to review your status in your retraining program.

## Communicating with Your School Coordinator:

It is important to contact your school coordinator on a regular basis to discuss your progress and visit about any concerns or questions. This individual is available to assist and direct you through your retraining program and can contact necessary individuals at your school for assistance in coordinating various services.

## Progress Reports:

At the midterm point of the semester, evaluation forms are submitted to your instructors requesting attendance, grades, and concerns. This information will provide the school coordinator with information on how you are progressing in each of your classes and will help determine if tutoring assistance or other services need to be provided (if they have not been provided already). If necessary, the forms may need to be sent to the student for distribution to the instructors.

## Summer Sessions:

Attendance during the summer session is required. Most students take one or two classes during the summer session in order to stay on track with the program requirements. Summer session classes are faster paced and cover a large amount of material in a shorter amount of time; however, your time is spent on one or two classes instead of four to five classes. Summer sessions are also beneficial to lighten the load for the next semester.





# Things to Keep in Mind

## Pre-requisites:

There are times when curriculums may have a specific order in which classes need to be taken; one class is completed before the next class begins. These classes are called pre-requisites and they are established so a student has the skills and knowledge they need before moving on to the next class in the series. Your advisor can assist with determining which classes need to be taken before other classes. Course descriptions in your college catalog will usually note if any pre-requisites are required. It is extremely important to visit with your advisor regularly to determine which classes should be taken each semester.

## Credits that Count:

There may be classes you need to take but may not count toward the total credit requirements. For example, if your program requires Intermediate Algebra for math but your entrance assessment determined a need for more math skills, you may need to take Introduction to Algebra first. The Introduction to Algebra will better prepare you for the next level of algebra but most likely will not count toward the total program credits because it is a preparation class or skill upgrading class. Careful review of your classes and credits each semester needs to be completed in order to be sure credits that count are calculated appropriately.

## Schedule Requirements:

Most programs will require around 15 credits each semester to stay on track with a two year time frame. By law, WSI is able to provide up to 104 weeks (2 years) to finish the retraining program. At the end of that time period, retraining benefits may end regardless of completion of the program. Some schools can provide an outline or checklist of what classes should be taken each semester of the program. Following the outline closely will keep you on schedule. Outlines may not include summer session options, but by taking a class or two during the summer it can lighten the load for regular semester requirements. If the school is not able to provide a semester outline, please visit with your

advisor and school coordinator to be sure appropriate classes are being taken each semester.

## Grade Requirements:

WSI and your school set standards for how well students must do each semester in order to be in good standing. A 2.0 grade point average (GPA) will usually meet that standard. A 2.0 overall GPA is usually required to graduate in most programs; however, higher GPAs for some programs are not uncommon. Please check with your advisor or the college catalog to determine the correct GPA requirement for your program. Failure to maintain good grades may cause you to be placed on PROBATION or SUSPENSION with the school, as well as jeopardize your benefits with WSI. Please review the school's policies on grading for more specific details.

## Online Classes:

Online programs may be the only option in some situations or online classes may be required for programs offered on campus. These classes require a great deal of motivation and dedication because there is not a scheduled time for class and one-on-one assistance has to be coordinated by special requests. Deadlines are often set each week for assignments, tests, posts, etc. Some classes may require special software to take the class online. Research should be done to ensure the computer used can accommodate those software requirements. Online classes usually have additional fees and need to be approved by the funding agency.



# Things to Keep in Mind (cont.)

## Withdrawal of Classes:

There is a time frame provided by the school when students can withdraw or drop a class if they are not doing well and want to avoid a failing grade. The deadline varies from school to school. Withdrawal of a class must be approved by the funding agency before the request is processed by the school. Schools typically require a form be completed by the student and signed by the instructor before a class is "officially" removed from the student's schedule. If the form is not completed, the class may remain on the schedule and a failing grade is issued for that class.

## Non-compliance Issues:

Non-compliance with WSI means the standards set for your retraining program have not been met. Usually this is the result of failing grades, poor attendance, lack of communication, withdrawing from classes without approval, etc. When non-compliance is established, you may lose the monthly disability benefits received from WSI until you are able to establish compliance again (improve your grades, attendance, communication, etc.) It is important for you to be proactive and seek assistance with the appropriate school personnel and keep your school coordinator informed in order to avoid a non-compliance status.



# Meeting the Goal

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## Graduation Application:

As you approach completion of your program requirements, graduation applications need to be completed so the school can review the curriculum and be sure all requirements are met. Deadlines for submitting a graduation application will vary from school to school; however, it is usually a semester before graduation or right at the start of the semester of graduation.

## Preparing for Graduation:

During your last semester of classes, it is important to start letting people know you will be looking for work. It's never too early to start making contacts with potential employers about your interest in their company and to see if they anticipate any upcoming openings. Contact the Placement Office at your school to get your file ready. Participate in any job fairs advertised at your school, at Job Service, or other employment agencies. Attend a Job Seeking Skills Workshop at Job Service to assist you in fine tuning your resume and preparing for interviews. Check into services offered by employment agencies to find listings. Your school coordinator will visit with you about these options as well as any others as you get close to finishing your program and earning your degree.

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School Coordinator

Workforce Safety & Insurance

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Bismarck, ND 58506-5585

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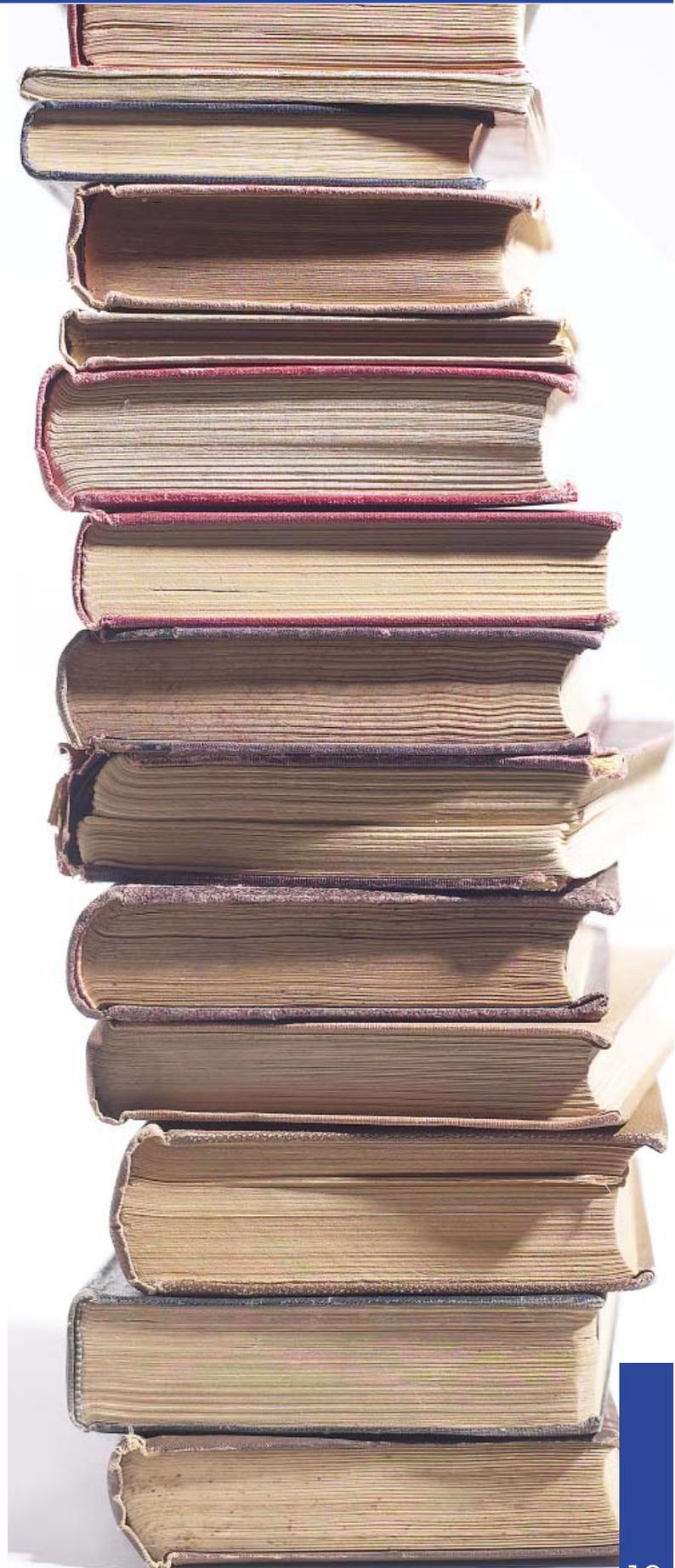


# Study Tips

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The following pages include study tips and suggestions that may be helpful to you. If you are looking for information on specific concerns, the internet has many useful sites that offer advice for studying. I would also encourage you to visit with the learning center at your school to see if they can offer other resources or assistance to you.

The information provided for study tips was obtained from [www.how-to-study.com](http://www.how-to-study.com). Written permission has been obtained to print this information. Please check out their website for more suggestions and tips on taking notes, listening skills, reading ideas, setting goals, and more on how to study.



# Managing Your Study Time

There are only so many hours in a day, a week, and a term. You cannot change the number of hours, but you can decide how to best use them. To be successful in school, you must carefully manage your study time. Here is a strategy for doing this.

At the beginning of a term, prepare a Term Calendar. Update it as the term goes on. Here is what to do to prepare a Term Calendar.

- Record your school assignments with their due dates and your scheduled tests.
- Record your planned school activities.
- Record your known out-of-school activities.

Each Sunday before a school week, prepare a Weekly Schedule. Update it as the week goes on. Here is what to do to prepare a Weekly Schedule.

- Record your daily classes.
- Enter things to be done for the coming week from your Term Calendar.
- Review your class notes from the previous week to see if you need to add any school activities.
- Add any out-of-school activities in which you will be involved during the week.
- Be sure to include times for completing assignments, working on projects, and studying for tests. These times may be during the school day, right after school, evenings, and weekends.

Each evening before a school day, prepare a Daily Organizer for the next day. Place a  $\checkmark$  next to each thing to do as you accomplish it. Here is what to do to prepare a Daily Organizer.

- Enter the things to do for the coming day from your Weekly Schedule.
- Enter the things that still need to be accomplished from your Daily Organizer from the previous day.

- Review your class notes for the day just completed to see if you need to add any school activities.

Add any out-of-school activities in which you will be involved the next day.

Your Weekly Schedule should have more detail than your Term Calendar. Your Daily Organizer should have more detail than your Weekly Schedule. Using a Term Calendar, a Weekly Schedule, and a Daily Organizer will help you make the best use of your time.





# A Strategy for Reading Textbooks

SQRW is a four-step strategy for reading and taking notes from chapters in a textbook. Each letter stands for one step in the strategy. Using SQRW will help you to understand what you read and to prepare a written record of what you learned. The written record will be valuable when you have to participate in a class discussion and again when you study for a test. Read to learn what to do for each step in SQRW.

## Survey:

Surveying brings to mind what you already know about the topic of a chapter and prepares you for learning more. To survey a chapter, read the title, introduction, headings, and the summary or conclusion. Also, examine all visuals such as pictures, tables, maps, and/or graphs and read the caption that goes with each. By surveying a chapter, you will quickly learn what the chapter is about.

## Question:

You need to have questions in your mind as you read. Questions give you a purpose for reading and help you stay focused on the reading assignment. Form questions by changing each chapter heading into a question. Use the words who, what, when, where, why, or how to form questions. For example, for the heading "Uses of Electricity" in a chapter about how science improves lives, you might form the question "What are some uses of electricity?" If a heading is stated as a question, use that question. When a heading contains more than one idea, form a question for each idea. Do not form questions for the Introduction, Summary, or Conclusion.

## Read:

Read the information that follows each heading to find the answer to each question you formed. As you do this, you may decide you need to change a question or turn it into several questions to be answered. Stay focused and flexible so you can gather as much information as you need to answer each question.

## Write:

Write each question and its answer in your notebook. Reread each of your written answers to be sure each answer is legible and contains all the important information needed to answer the question. As you practice using SQRW, you will find you learn more and have good study notes to use to prepare for class participation and tests.

## HINT:

Once you complete the Survey step for the entire chapter, complete the Question, Read, and Write steps for the first heading. Then complete the Question, Read, and Write steps for the second heading, and so on for the remaining headings in the chapter.





# Reading Comprehension: The REDW Strategy for Finding Main Ideas

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REDW is a good strategy to use to find the main idea in each paragraph of a reading assignment. Using this strategy will help you comprehend the information contained in your assignment. Each of the letters in REDW stands for a step in the strategy.

## Read:

Read the entire paragraph to get an idea of what the paragraph is about. You may find it helpful to whisper the words as you read or to form a picture in your mind of what you are reading. Once you have a general idea of what the paragraph is about, go on to the next step.

## Examine:

Examine each sentence in the paragraph to identify the important words that tell what the sentence is about. Ignore the words that are not needed to tell what the sentence is about. If you are allowed to, draw a line through the words to be ignored. For each sentence, write on a sheet of paper the words that tell what the sentence is about.

## Decide:

Reread the words you wrote for each sentence in the paragraph. Decide which sentence contains the words you wrote that best describe the main idea of the paragraph. These words are the main idea of the paragraph. The sentence that contains these words is the topic sentence. The other words you wrote are the supporting details for the main idea.

## Write:

Write the main idea for each paragraph in your notebook. This will provide you with a written record of the most important ideas you learned. This written record will be helpful if you have to take a test that covers the reading assignment.

Use REDW to help you understand the information in your reading assignments.





# The DETER Strategy for Taking Tests

To do well on a test, you must have good knowledge of the information that is being tested. But you must also have a strategy for taking the test that allows you to show what you know. The DETER strategy can help you do your best on any test. Each letter in DETER reminds you what to do.

## D = Directions

- Read the test directions very carefully.
- Ask your teacher to explain anything about the test directions you do not understand.
- Only by following the directions can you achieve a good score on the test.
- If you do not follow the directions, you will not be able to demonstrate what you know.

## E = Examine

- Examine the entire test to see how much you have to do.
- Only by knowing the entire task can you break it down into parts that become manageable for you.

## T = Time

- Once you have examined the entire test, decide how much time you will spend on each item.
- If there are different points for items, plan to spend the most time on the items that count for the most points.
- Planning your time is especially important for essay tests where you must avoid spending so much time on one item that you have little time left for other test items.

## E = Easiest

- The second E in DETER reminds you to answer the items you find easiest first.
- If you get stuck on a difficult item that comes up early in the test, you may not get to answer items that test things you know.

## R = Review

- If you have planned your time correctly, you will have time to review your answers and make them as complete and accurate as possible.
- Also make sure to review the test directions to be certain you have answered all items required.

Using the DETER strategy will help you do better on tests and get better grades.





# Test Anxiety

## WHAT IS TEST ANXIETY?

Too much anxiety about a test is commonly referred to as test anxiety. It is perfectly natural to feel some anxiety when preparing for and taking a test. In fact, a little anxiety can jump start your studying and keep you motivated. However, too much anxiety can interfere with your studying. You may have difficulty learning and remembering what you need to know for the test. Further, too much anxiety may block your performance during the test. You may have difficulty demonstrating what you know during the test.

## HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE TEST ANXIETY?

You probably have test anxiety if you answer YES to four or more of the following:

1. I have a hard time getting started studying for a test.
2. When studying for a test, I find many things that distract me.
3. I expect to do poorly on a test no matter how much or how hard I study.
4. When taking a test, I experience physical discomfort such as sweaty palms, an upset stomach, a headache, difficulty breathing, and tension in my muscles.
5. When taking a test, I find it difficult to understand the directions and questions.
6. When taking a test, I have difficulty organizing my thoughts.
7. When taking a test, I often "draw a blank."
8. When taking a test, I find my mind wandering to other things.
9. I usually score lower on a test than I do on assignments and papers.
10. After a test, I remember information I couldn't recall during the test.

*You have to know the material to do well on a test. You have to control test anxiety to show what you know.*

## WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT TEST ANXIETY?

Here are some things you can do before, during, and after a test to reduce your test anxiety.

1. Use good study techniques to gain cognitive mastery of the material that will be covered on the test. This mastery will help you to approach the test with confidence rather than have excessive anxiety. Employ the tips we provide at Preparing to Study.
2. Maintain a positive attitude as you study. Think about doing well, not failing. Think of the test as an opportunity to show how much you have learned.
3. Go into the test well rested and well fed. Get enough sleep the night before the test. Eat a light and nutritious meal before the test. Stay away from junk foods.
4. Stay relaxed during the test. Taking slow, deep breaths can help. Focus on positive self-statements such as "I can do this."
5. Follow a plan for taking the test such as the DETER strategy we describe at A Strategy for Taking Tests. Don't panic even if you find the test difficult. Stay with your plan!
6. Don't worry about other students finishing the test before you do. Take the time that you need to do your best.
7. Once you finish the test and hand it in, forget about it temporarily. There is nothing more you can do until the graded test is returned to you. Turn your attention and effort to new assignments and tests.
8. When the graded test is returned to you, analyze it to see how you could have done better. Learn from your mistakes and from what you did well. Apply this knowledge when you take the next test.





# Using Acronyms to Remember Information

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Forming an acronym is a good strategy to use to remember information in any order that can be remembered. An acronym is a word that is formed from the first letter of each fact to be remembered. It can be a real word or a nonsense word you are able to pronounce.

Here is how to form an acronym.

- Write the facts you need to remember.
- Underline the first letter of each fact. If there is more than one word in a fact, underline the first letter of only the first word in the fact.
- Arrange the underlined letters to form an acronym that is a real word or a nonsense word you can pronounce.

“HOMES” is an example of an acronym that is a real word you can use to remember the names of the five Great Lakes: Michigan, Erie, Superior, Ontario, Huron: In HOMES, H is the first letter of Huron and helps you remember that name; O is the first letter of Ontario, and so on.

“Talk” is an acronym that can be used to remember the following animals: tiger, lion, elephant, kangaroo. “Talk” is not a real word, but you can easily pronounce it. You could also have used “kelt” as an acronym. Notice that in this example, you cannot form a real word using the first letter of each fact to be remembered.

Sometimes two or more of the facts you must remember each begin with the same first letter. For example, the acronym “capp” can be used to remember the following fruits: pear, apple, peach, cherry. You can use the first letter “p” in the acronym to remember either “pear” or “peach” and the second letter “p” to remember the other.

Use the acronym strategy as a way to remember information.





# Important Contacts

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## **My Advisor:**

Office Location & Hours:

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Phone Number:

Email Address:

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## **Instructor:**

Office Location & Hours:

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Phone Number:

Email Address:

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## **Instructor:**

Office Location & Hours:

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Phone Number:

Email Address:

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Office Location & Hours:

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Phone Number:

Email Address:

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# Important Contacts

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## Disability Services Coordinator:

Office Location & Hours:

Phone Number:

## Learning Center Coordinator:

Office Location & Hours:

Phone Number:

## Other Important Contacts

Name:	Name:
Phone Number:	Phone Number:
Email Address:	Email Address:
Name:	Name:
Phone Number:	Phone Number:
Email Address:	Email Address:
Name:	Name:
Phone Number:	Phone Number:
Email Address:	Email Address:
Name:	Name:
Phone Number:	Phone Number:
Email Address:	Email Address:
Name:	Name:
Phone Number:	Phone Number:
Email Address:	Email Address:







# Contact Information

If you have a claim or a policy with us, please have your claim or policy number available and include it in all communications with us so we can respond to you quickly and effectively.

## In Person:

Main Office - Bismarck  
1600 East Century Avenue, Suite 1,  
Bismarck ND 58503-0644  
Business Hours:  
8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Hearing Impaired: 1-800-366-6888

24/7 Claim Reporting: 1-800-777-5033

Fraud & Safety HotLine: 1-800-243-3331

Employer Services Coordinators Education:  
(701) 328-7227 or (701) 328-3858

Medical Provider Assistance Line: 1-800-777-5033

Office of Independent Review:  
(701) 328-9900  
Toll-Free: 1-800-701-4932

Preferred Worker Program Coordinator :  
(701) 328-3876

Communications: (701) 328-5931

Utilization Review: (701) 328-5990  
Toll-Free: 1-888-777-5871

## By E-mail:

General comments/web site suggestions: [ndwsi@nd.gov](mailto:ndwsi@nd.gov)

Job applicants:

Send cover letter and resume to [wsijobs@nd.gov](mailto:wsijobs@nd.gov)

Office of Independent Review: [wsiour@nd.gov](mailto:wsiour@nd.gov)

Employer Services: [wsiemployerservices@nd.gov](mailto:wsiemployerservices@nd.gov)

Preferred Worker Program: [wspworker@nd.gov](mailto:wspworker@nd.gov)

Safety information: [wsisafety@nd.gov](mailto:wsisafety@nd.gov)

## By Fax:

Main Office - Bismarck  
Main Fax: (701) 328-3820  
Legal Department: (701) 328-6040  
Loss Prevention: (701) 328-6028  
Office of Independent Review: (701) 328-9911  
Policyholder Services: (701) 328-3750  
Communications: (701) 328-5956  
Utilization Review: (701) 328-3765  
Toll-Free: 1-866-356-6433

## By Mail:

Main Office - Bismarck  
Regular mail: PO Box 5585, Bismarck ND 58506-5585  
Overnight mail: 1600 East Century Avenue,  
Suite 1, Bismarck ND 58503-0644

Service Concerns and Complaints:

If you have a concern or a question regarding any WSI service or process, we want to hear from you. Please send us an e-mail at [ndwsi@nd.gov](mailto:ndwsi@nd.gov)

# WSI

**North Dakota Workforce  
Safety & Insurance**

[www.WorkforceSafety.com](http://www.WorkforceSafety.com)

# WSI

**North Dakota Workforce  
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