

Symptoms of mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI) or concussion can affect a person's ability to work or volunteer. When a person is not able to return to work or volunteering immediately after an injury they may feel:

- Lonely, or cut off from others
- Loss of confidence
- Anxiety

**Returning to work and volunteering once you are medically cleared is an important step in the recovery process. Benefits of working include:**

- Financial stability (income and health benefits)
- Work activities can be enjoyable
- A sense of purpose or accomplishment
- A regular routine

**Benefits of volunteering include:**

- Giving back to others while doing things you enjoy
- A sense of purpose or accomplishment
- Prepares you for the physical, mental, and social demands of a job as a step toward returning to work
- Allows you to try different roles and job duties to help plan next steps if you decide to return to work

**Things to consider before returning to work or volunteering:**

Whether you already have a job, are looking for a job or are planning to volunteer, talk to your healthcare provider or vocational specialist about how to return safely and successfully.

- If you already have a job:
  - Request reasonable accommodations if you think you may have difficulty performing some job tasks or working in certain environments.
    - The Americans with Disabilities Act requires employers to provide reasonable accommodations to people with disabilities.
    - Reasonable accommodations are changes to a job or the work setting to assist people with disabilities in performing their job duties.
  - If you believe you need reasonable accommodations, ask your healthcare provider or a vocational specialist to help you figure out what accommodations are needed. The [Job Accommodations Network website](#) may also be a helpful resource and lists ideas about accommodations for people recovering from brain injury.



- If you are looking for a job:
  - Look into different types of jobs (See O\*NET and CareerOneStop resources below)
  - Learn about different skills for job searching, making a resume, and interviewing (See Career Advice tab on Indeed's homepage)
  - Look for and use employment resources in your community
- If you want to volunteer in your community:
  - Identify the skills and knowledge you can offer or that you want to improve
  - Decide how much time you have to volunteer
  - Consider using a resource like [Volunteermatch.org](https://www.volunteermatch.org) or [unitedway.org](https://www.unitedway.org) to find where you can volunteer in your community
  - Be professional – treat volunteering like having a job

**Check out these free resources to learn more about getting back to work and volunteering:**

(Veteran-specific resources indicated by ♦)

- [O\\*NET](https://www.onetonline.org/)
- [CareerOneStop](https://www.careeronestop.com/)
- [JAN](https://www.janet.org/) (Job Accommodation Network)
- [Indeed](https://www.indeed.com/)
- [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/)
- [Glassdoor](https://www.glassdoor.com/)
- [Wounded Warrior](https://www.woundedwarrior.org/) ♦
- [Veteran's Affairs](https://www.va.gov/) ♦
- [Hire Heroes](https://www.hireheroes.com/) ♦
- Department of Labor (See local Department of Labor, veteran counselors available♦)

**Additional Comments:**

