

Changes to the Impairment Assessment Guidelines 3rd Edition

From time to time, the Government can enact its power to make changes to or amend Acts and Regulations as it deems fit. When changes or amendments occur, it can affect people who are concurrently pursuing a legal matter in the same area of the law.

Recently the Minister for Industrial Relations and the Public Sector in South Australia (**the Minister**) has announced crucial changes to the guidelines used to assess injured workers under the Workers Compensation Scheme undergoing the Permanent Impairment Assessment.

Under the Act the Minister has an obligation to publish guidelines known as the Impairment Assessment Guidelines. The goal of the Impairment Assessment Guidelines is to assist accredited medical practitioners when assessing injured workers for the purposes of assessing permanent impairments.

In accordance with the Act, the Impairment Assessment Guidelines may be amended or substituted by the Minister.

The Minister has recently announced that as of Wednesday, 1 October 2025 new Impairment Assessment Guidelines (the 3rd edition) will commence.

Some of the changes in the Impairment Assessment Guidelines to the 3rd edition are vastly different to those that are currently in force.

How does this affect injured workers? Most importantly, if you are assessed before 1 October 2025, you will be assessed under the present 1st edition guidelines. If you are assessed on or after 1 October 2025, you will be assessed under the revised 3rd edition guidelines.

The timing of the assessment could have a material impact on the potential lump sum entitlements you receive.

Some of the changes mean that it will make it more difficult for injured workers to meet the minimum 5% threshold because the methodology for assessing impairment has become harsher. Other changes will result in lower whole person impairment percentages. In these instances, it is important to be assessed before 1 October 2025.

It must be noted however that there some instances where workers will benefit from the changes and should be assessed after 1 October 2025. In some cases, there will be no material different despite the changes and therefore assessment can occur before or after the changes.

It is important to understand that if you have an active workers compensation claim, or have in the past now is the time to get advice.

If you have suffered an injury as a result of a workers compensation claim and have not yet undergone your Permanent Impairment Assessment, then it is time to get advice. It is important that you seek quality and realistic legal advice on how the changes to the Impairment Assessment Guidelines may affect you.

Our team of dedicated lawyers have already done the reading on your behalf and understand the changes.

Feel free to give us a call and arrange a first free interview with one of our experienced workers compensation lawyers for some general advice. After all, it would be better to have a chat with one of our friendly staff now and find out that you’re not effected by the new changes, rather than finding out too late that you’ve been negatively impacted by them.

We are here to help. When you need it.

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