



I have a Work Injury and Now I am Permanently Injured. Can I Do Anything?

A workplace injury can have a lasting impact on every part of your life.

You may have finished treatment, returned to work, or reached a point where your condition has stopped improving. But if you're left with ongoing pain, restrictions, or permanent symptoms, you may be wondering:

"Is there anything else I can claim?"

The answer may be yes.

A permanent work injury may give rise to

additional entitlements

Many injured workers are unaware that workers' compensation benefits can extend beyond payment of medical expenses and weekly income support.

If your work injury has resulted in a permanent impairment, you may be entitled to a lump sum payment under South Australia's workers' compensation scheme.

The availability of these payments depends on several factors, including the nature of your injury and the extent of any permanent impairment.

What is a permanent impairment?

A permanent impairment is a lasting loss of function, restriction or impairment caused by a workplace injury.

Examples may include:

- Ongoing back problems
- Reduced movement in a shoulder, knee, or other joint
- Loss of strength
- Chronic pain associated with a physical injury
- Reflux or digestive issues
- Physical restrictions that do not improve over time

Whether you have a permanent impairment is determined through an assessment conducted by an accredited doctor. See more on the PIA process [here](#).

What's the difference between being injured and being permanently impaired?

Not every workplace injury results in a permanent impairment.

Many workers recover fully with treatment and rehabilitation.

A permanent impairment exists when your condition has stabilised and there is a lasting impact on the way part of your body functions. Before an impairment can be assessed, your condition generally needs to have reached what is known as "**stability**" or "**maximum medical improvement**". See more on stability and maximum medical improvement [here](#).

What compensation might be available?

Depending on your circumstances, there may be different forms of compensation available.

These can include compensation for:

- The lasting impact the injury has had on your life (non economic loss)
- Future economic loss caused by the injury
- Ongoing workers' compensation benefits
- Potential claims through superannuation policies in some situations

The type and amount of compensation available will depend on your individual circumstances and the outcome of any permanent impairment assessment.

Do I need to do anything to find out?

Many workers assume the workers' compensation insurer will automatically tell them if they are entitled to a lump sum payment.

Unfortunately, that is not always the case.

If your injury has left you with ongoing symptoms or permanent restrictions, it is often worthwhile obtaining advice about whether a permanent impairment assessment should be arranged.

There are important rules about when an assessment can occur and who can conduct it. Because a worker is generally entitled to only one permanent impairment assessment for each injury, it is important to understand your rights before proceeding.

What if my injury is serious?

Workers who suffer more significant permanent impairments may have additional entitlements available to them.

In some cases, workers may be classified as seriously injured workers under the Return to Work Act, which can affect their ongoing rights and benefits such as ongoing income and medical expenses.

How can Andersons help?

If you have a workplace injury that has left you with ongoing symptoms, restrictions, or permanent effects, it is important to understand all of your options.

At Andersons, we can advise you about your workers' compensation entitlements, whether a permanent impairment assessment is appropriate, and whether there may be other avenues of compensation available to you.

Not sure where to start? Speak with our Workers Compensation team to find out whether your permanent work injury may give rise to further compensation entitlements.