



Permanent Impairment Assessments: What Every Injured Worker Should Know

Thinking about a lump sum compensation claim?

If you've suffered a workplace injury that has left you with lasting symptoms, you may be entitled to lump sum compensation for permanent impairment.

A permanent impairment assessment is sometimes also called a Whole Person Impairment (WPI) assessment.

To determine your entitlement, you will need to undergo a permanent impairment assessment.

What is a permanent impairment?

Permanent impairment is the permanent loss of function of a body part or bodily system caused by a workplace injury.

The assessment does not focus on temporary symptoms. Instead, it measures the lasting impact of

the injury once recovery has stabilised.

Who carries out the assessment?

Permanent impairment assessments must be conducted by an accredited doctor.

These doctors are specially trained to assess permanent impairment using prescribed guidelines and assessment methods.

Can I choose my own doctor?

Yes.

Importantly, the choice of assessor is yours but it cannot be a doctor you have seen before.

The workers compensation insurer should provide a list of accredited doctors, and you may choose the doctor who conducts the assessment from that list.

Because you are generally only entitled to one assessment for each workplace injury, obtaining legal advice before making your choice can be important.

See more about choosing an accredited doctor [here](#).

What is the 5% threshold?

Not every permanent impairment qualifies for lump sum compensation.

To receive compensation, the permanent impairment must be assessed at 5% whole person impairment or greater.

If the assessment is less than 5%, lump sum compensation is generally not payable.

Why is it important to include all injuries?

Many workers focus only on their primary injury.

However, multiple injuries or related conditions may contribute to the overall impairment assessment. These can be known as “secondary”, “consequential” or “sequelae” injuries.

Failing to include all relevant body parts and conditions could affect your entitlement.

See more on “secondary” injuries [here](#).

Speak with an experienced workers compensation lawyer

Understanding the permanent impairment process can be challenging. A lawyer can help ensure all relevant injuries are considered and guide you through the assessment process to make sure you get the right entitlements. **Contact us today to arrange your free, no obligation chat.**