

Whole Person Impairment Assessment

An impairment assessment is undertaken if you have a permanent impairment resulting from a work injury. You are entitled to one assessment of permanent impairment for one or more injuries arising from the same trauma. Impairment for physical injury is assessed separately from impairment for psychiatric injury and consequential mental harm is not assessed.

When your work injury has stabilised, your Claims Case Manager will discuss referral to an accredited impairment assessor.

Impairment assessors are medical practitioners that are accredited under the Accreditation Scheme established by the Minister for Industrial Relations. Their role is to assess injured workers and prepare assessment reports in accordance with the Impairment Assessment Guidelines to determine:

- whether the injury has reached maximum medical improvement
- whether the injury has resulted in an impairment
- whether the impairment is permanent
- the degree of whole person impairment resulting from the work injury.

The degree of whole person impairment suffered will determine whether you are entitled to weekly payments after two years of incapacity and ongoing medical and like expenses and will be significant in determining your access to lump sum payments for economic and non-economic loss.

Further information about impairment assessments is detailed in section 22 of the Return to Work Act 2014.

ASSESSING SERIOUS INJURIES

From 1 July 2015, seriously injured workers will be defined as having a work injury that has resulted in a permanent impairment and the degree of whole person impairment has been assessed as 30% or more.

If your injury is likely to be classified as serious, your Claims Case Manager will refer you for a whole person impairment assessment when there is evidence that your injury has stabilised. If your Claims Case Manager does not refer you and you think that you may require an assessment, you may request one.

While you are waiting for your injury to stabilise, you may apply to your Claims Case Manager to make an interim decision to classify your injury as serious until such time as you are able to undergo an impairment assessment.

SERIOUSLY INJURED WORKERS

If you sustain a serious injury at work you are entitled to:

- income support until retirement age
 - 100% notional weekly earnings in the first year
 - 80% notional weekly earnings for subsequent years
- lifetime reasonable medical treatment, care and support services.

There is no obligation to return to work if you are seriously injured, but if you would like to, we will provide you with appropriate return to work services and assistance.