

Work Related Hearing Loss and Tinnitus

A guide to compensation

Expert advice

Many people realise as they begin to get older that their hearing is not as it once was. It may be that they're struggling to hear the TV, family members may have mentioned it to them, or they might find it difficult to follow conversations when they're out socialising.

When this happens, most people put it down to getting older. However, if you've worked in a noisy environment, even if it was many years ago, this may well have contributed to your hearing problems.

If you have hearing problems and worked in a noisy environment, you may be entitled to compensation. This is because your employers had a duty to provide you with adequate hearing protection.

Slater and Gordon has a team of experts who specialise in work related hearing loss and tinnitus and can ensure that you get the best possible outcome to your claim.

What is noise induced hearing loss?

There are numerous causes of hearing loss, one of which is exposure to excessive noise. If you're exposed to high noise levels for a long period of time, this can damage your hearing.

Examples of noise which can cause hearing damage are, attending rock concerts, firing guns and listening to loud music. However, the most common exposure to excessive noise is in the workplace.

Noise induced hearing loss, work related hearing loss, industrial deafness and occupational deafness are all phrases that describe hearing loss as a result of exposure to noise at work.

What is tinnitus?

Exposure to excessive noise can not only cause hearing loss, but can also cause a condition known as tinnitus. Tinnitus is a medical term for any noise that people hear in their ears such as a ringing, buzzing, whistling or hissing.

Tinnitus can be an intermittent or permanent ringing, buzzing, whistling or hissing which can be heard in one or both ears. It can affect concentration, disturb sleep and can be very distressing for the sufferer.

Many people who suffer from tinnitus will also have a degree of hearing loss.



What lines of work can cause hearing problems?

People who work, or have worked, in a noisy environment with noisy machinery over a prolonged period of time are at risk.

Areas of employment include:

- Construction and engineering
- Factories and mills
- Processing
- Shipbuilding
- Stone cutting and quarrying
- Textile industry
- Power stations
- Steelworks

Advice on making a claim for compensation

For those who don't have experience of the legal process, contacting a lawyer and making a claim for compensation can be a daunting prospect. However, we're with our clients every step of the way, ensuring they understand the claims process, and relieving the burden of having to deal with a variety of practical issues, at what can be a difficult time.



What should you do if you think you have a claim?

Contact us. Our team of specialists have a vast amount of experience in dealing with industrial illnesses such as work related hearing loss.

Once we've taken details, we'll confirm whether or not you have a claim. If you're entitled to compensation, we can start work on your case straightaway and begin gathering evidence.

Time limits apply when making a claim for compensation, so don't delay in contacting us.

What is the cost of making a claim?

We understand that the cost of legal advice can be a worry, but there are options available to fund injury claims.

You may have legal expenses insurance under an existing insurance policy which entitles you to free representation. If legal expenses insurance is not in place, we may be able to conduct your case under a Conditional Fee Agreement, also known as a 'No Win, No Fee' Agreement. This means if the case fails, no payment is due.

Once we know the circumstances of your claim, we'll be able to discuss your funding options in more detail.

What is the amount of compensation likely to be?

Compensation will be based on the severity of your illness, and also on your personal circumstances. For example, if you've been unable to work as a result of your illness, loss of earnings may be accounted for. If you were responsible for household chores or caring for a dependent and are no longer able to, the cost of assistance will be taken into account.

How long is the case likely to take?

Every case is different so it's difficult to estimate how long a case is likely to take without first reviewing the circumstances.

However, the case will be dealt with by an expert in industrial illnesses who will deal with the case as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Frequently asked questions

Will I have to go to court?

A large majority of cases settle before a trial takes place. However, if the case doesn't settle before trial, attendance at court may be necessary.

Can I claim compensation if my employer has gone out of business?

Don't worry if the company has gone out of business. It's often still possible to trace their insurers. Our industrial illness team has unrivalled expertise in tracing the insurers of companies which have been out of business for many years. We often take over cases and succeed in tracing the company's insurers, where other firms have failed.

Will I have to attend a medical appointment?

If we advise you that we're able to pursue a claim for work related hearing loss on your behalf, you'll have to attend an independent medical appointment in order for us to obtain a report as part of your evidence. It will also benefit you as it will help determine whether you need any medical assistance.

What if I need assistance in other areas?

We have expert lawyers in many areas of law such as family, employment, welfare benefits, trusts, Court of Protection and disability rights and work closely with those departments to ensure that you get the best possible outcome.