

11. Will travel expenses and overnight accommodations be paid?

Travel and accommodation expenses will be paid by the WCB, if they are determined by the WCB to be necessary. If you are unsure what expenses will be covered, please contact us before incurring them.

You will receive a travel expense form with the confirmation letter of your PMI appointment. Please bring the form with you to your appointment and we will process and mail you the cheque, or you may mail the form back to us at the Halifax office address provided on the back of this pamphlet.

12. Will the WCB pay for my time away from work to attend the assessment?

If time is lost from work to attend the assessment, your employer must complete the "Confirmation of Time Loss for Medical Appointment" form, which is available from the WCB.

When the WCB receives this form, wages will be reimbursed at the same rate used to calculate your temporary earnings replacement benefit (either 75% net or 85% net).

13. Where do I get more information about PMI assessments?

If you have any further questions about your PMI assessment, contact your Adjudicator or Case Worker directly.

Please have your claim number in hand.

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WORKERS' COMPENSATION BOARD OF NOVA SCOTIA

Halifax Office

PO Box 1150
5668 South Street
Halifax, NS B3J 2Y2
Tel: 902.491.8999
Toll free: 1.800.870.3331
General fax: 902.491.8002
Injury reporting fax: 902.491.8001

Sydney Office

404 Charlotte Street, Suite 200
Sydney, NS B1P 1E2
Tel: 902.563.2444
Toll free: 1.800.880.0003
Fax: 902.563.0512

E-mail:

info@wcb.gov.ns.ca

On the Web:

www.wcb.ns.ca
www.worksafeforlife.ca

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Permanent Medical Impairment Assessment

Frequently asked questions



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1. What is a permanent medical impairment (PMI) assessment?

Some work injuries result in a permanent loss of function to areas of the body affected by your injury. This loss of function may continue even after complete and appropriate medical treatment. This is called a permanent medical impairment (PMI).

A PMI assessment is a process to determine and measure the extent of the permanent impairment. The assessment begins with a complete review of the claim file and an update provided by the worker.

The review is followed by a thorough physical examination of the injury and any areas that may be affected by the injury.

Finally, if it is determined that there is a permanent impairment, an impairment rating will be assigned and used to calculate benefits.

2. Who examines me?

The PMI examination is conducted by one of the WCB's Medical Advisors. They are physicians who have been trained to do thorough impairment evaluations. All WCB Medical Advisors are certified members of the American Board of Independent Medical Examiners (ABIME).

3. What happens during the assessment?

A Medical Advisor will gather general background information from you about your health and the nature of your injury.

After the background information is collected, the Medical Advisor conducts a thorough physical exam in relation to your injury and any areas affected by it using tests for motion, strength and sensation. These tests are not strenuous and are performed in such a way as to avoid discomfort, as much as possible.

It is important for the Medical Advisor to conduct as thorough a physical exam as medically appropriate for an accurate assessment.

The Medical Advisor is there to perform an assessment only and will be unable to answer any questions you may have related to your claim. If you have questions specific to your claim, please be sure to call or make an appointment with your Case Worker, who will be happy to assist you.

4. How long will the assessment take?

The length of the assessment depends on the time it takes to collect your background information and thoroughly examine your injury. This usually takes between 20 and 60 minutes.

5. How should I prepare for the assessment?

This depends on the nature of your injury. For most assessments, it is recommended that you bring, or wear, loose-fitting clothing. Shorts are recommended for an examination of an injury affecting the lower body, while a t-shirt is recommended for an exam of an injury to the upper body.

For women undergoing a PMI assessment with a male doctor, there is always a female employee of the WCB present in the examination room.

At the WCB's discretion, a chaperone may be present in the exam room.

6. Can I bring someone with me to my PMI assessment?

Yes, a family member may be present during the assessment, if both you and the Medical Advisor give permission.

7. Will I see the results of the assessment?

Yes, the results of the PMI assessment become part of your WCB claim file. You may request to see your file or have a copy of it sent to another person, such as your doctor.

8. Can I be reassessed?

Yes, if your injury worsens you may be eligible to be reassessed. PMI assessments may be done every 16 months, if necessary. Before a reassessment is conducted, the WCB requires a recent medical report from your doctor explaining the changes in your injury.

9. Do I have to participate in a PMI assessment?

You may refuse a PMI assessment, but the WCB will then be unable to determine if you are entitled to certain WCB benefits and services. Your full cooperation is required for the best outcome.

10. What happens after the PMI assessment?

Following your PMI assessment, the results are sent to your Case Worker.

If you have a PMI, you will be reviewed for a Permanent Impairment Benefit (PIB) by your Case Worker. This review is conducted when temporary compensation benefits have ended. If your PMI is less than 30% and you have returned to work with no loss of earnings, you will receive a one-time lump sum payment (your PIB is commuted).

If it is determined that you are experiencing a loss of earnings because of your compensable injury or if your PMI is greater than 30%, your PIB will be paid monthly for your lifetime.

Questions pertaining to a PIB should be directed to your Case Worker. Your Medical Advisor does not have this information and cannot discuss claims resolutions.

Your Case Worker will contact you to discuss the outcome, and/or provide you with a written decision.