

INDEPENDENCE ALLOWANCE

Under Section 67.1 of The Workers' Compensation Act, 1979, if your work injury results in a permanent functional impairment, you may be entitled to an independence allowance. This allowance is to help you maintain a reasonable degree of independence.

Permanent Functional Impairment

An example of a permanent functional impairment would be the loss of the use of a limb, or the loss of the limb itself. The amount of impairment is defined as a percentage of normal function.

Who is eligible for the independence allowance?

If you have a 10% or greater permanent functional impairment, you will be considered for the allowance. To be eligible, one of the following conditions must also exist:

- As a result of your impairment, you have additional costs for maintaining your principal residence (e.g. hiring someone to cut grass, remove snow, perform interior cleaning, etc.); or
- As a result of your impairment, you incur costs in order to maintain a reasonable degree of independence (e.g. hiring taxis for transportation).

Injured workers living in nursing homes, extended-care facilities or other special-care institutions are not eligible, unless their dependent spouse and children continue to maintain the family home. In such cases, the allowance may be paid to the dependent spouse or children.

Your income, including other payments from the WCB, does not affect your eligibility for the independence allowance.

What expenses are covered?

Routine (i.e. daily, weekly, seasonal) maintenance activities that represent an annual cost are covered. Major projects or renovations (e.g. house-painting, roof repairs) are not covered.

Travel and mobility expenses may also be covered, e.g. transportation by taxi.

How is the allowance calculated?

Clients with permanent functional impairment ratings of 40% or greater, and who are eligible to receive independence allowance, are to receive the \$2,260 per year maximum. Clients with permanent functional impairment ratings from 10% to 39% and who are eligible to receive an independence allowance are to receive a prorated amount.

The initial independence allowance will be calculated as of:

- the date of the PFI award;
- the date other criteria are met; or
- the date the worker contacts the WCB to request Independence Allowance, whichever is latest.

The amount of the payment will be based on the criteria in effect on that same date.

Independence allowance is paid annually, and continues throughout your lifetime, regardless of age.

For more information view this policy on our website www.wcsask.com or:

Phone: (306) 787-4370 or 1-800-667-7590

Fax: (306) 787-7582 or 1-888-844-7773

Email: internet_clientsvc@wcsask.com

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