

342.7305 Compensability of occupational hearing loss -- Authority for administrative regulations -- Rebuttable presumption as to employer liability.

- (1) In all claims for occupational hearing loss caused by either a single incident of trauma or by repetitive exposure to hazardous noise over an extended period of employment, the extent of binaural hearing impairment shall be determined under the "Guides to the Evaluation of Permanent Impairment."
- (2) Income benefits payable for occupational hearing loss shall be as provided in KRS 342.730, except income benefits shall not be payable where the binaural hearing impairment converted to impairment of the whole person results in impairment of less than eight percent (8%). No impairment percentage for tinnitus shall be considered in determining impairment to the whole person.
- (3) The commissioner shall provide by administrative regulation for prompt referral of hearing loss claims for evaluation, for all medical reimbursement, and for prompt authorization of hearing enhancement devices.
- (4) When audiograms and other testing reveal a pattern of hearing loss compatible with that caused by hazardous noise exposure and the employee demonstrates repetitive exposure to hazardous noise in the workplace, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the hearing impairment is an injury covered by this chapter, and the employer with whom the employee was last injuriously exposed to hazardous noise for a minimum duration of one (1) year of employment shall be exclusively liable for benefits.

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History: Amended 2018 Ky. Acts ch. 40, sec. 14, effective July 14, 2018. -- Amended 2010 Ky. Acts ch. 90, sec. 6, effective July 15, 2010. -- Created 1996 (1st Extra. Sess.) Ky. Acts ch. 1, sec. 38, effective December 12, 1996.