

## Can a PFI be rated for cosmetic impairment?

Disfigurement or severe scarring resulting from burns or other trauma are rated on the basis of physical impairment and cosmetic impairment. Cosmetic impairment generally does not apply to normal, uncomplicated healing of surgical incisions.



## Does a PFI benefit affect my entitlement to other benefits?

No. The PFI is not a final settlement. Entitlement to other benefits is determined separately in accordance with WorkplaceNL's legislation and policies.

## How to reach WorkplaceNL



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# Permanent Functional Impairment



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## Permanent Functional Impairment (PFI)

### What is functional impairment?

Impairment refers to a change in function of the injured part of the body as a result of a work injury as assessed by medical means. It is not an assessment of other medical problems unrelated to your work injury. Impairment is also different from disability.

Disability is a decrease, loss or absence of an individual's capacity to meet personal, social or occupational demands. Compensation for disability is provided through other benefits, such as wage-loss benefits, health care benefits, etc. You may wish to discuss this with your Case Manager.

### What is permanent?

Permanent refers to the medical status of your work injury. For example, your injury is considered permanent when there is:

- No active medical treatment is planned.
- No further potential for medical improvement.

There is a guideline for PFI assessments as some injuries are best assessed after a certain period of time.

Please consult your WorkplaceNL Case Manager for further information.

### How is impairment measured?

Impairment is determined by WorkplaceNL's Permanent Functional Impairment Rating Schedule, which is similar to schedules used by other compensation jurisdictions in Canada. The American Medical Association (AMA) Guides may also be used to evaluate the extent of functional impairment. Many cases do not fit neatly into the rating schedule, and the examining physician will use his or her professional judgment to determine the percentage of total body impairment.



The PFI rating schedule illustrates that different parts of the body are more functionally important than others. Total body functioning is evaluated at 100 per cent, and impairment of any body part is a percentage of the total.

For example, losing the index finger is considered 5 per cent PFI of total body function. A similar principle applies to all parts of the body including back and neck injuries.

A rating is not given specifically for pain and suffering. However, the impairment rating makes allowance for pain that may accompany the condition.



### What is the process for a PFI assessment?

A PFI is determined by physicians with special training in performing PFI assessments and who have the expertise to apply the rating schedule.

These doctors review the available medical information, often including an examination. In specific cases, such as hearing loss and finger amputations, an examination may not be required by WorkplaceNL's physicians.

### How do I arrange a PFI assessment?

You do not need to apply for a PFI assessment. Your Case Manager is knowledgeable about PFI requirements and, where appropriate, will refer your claim to the WorkplaceNL's Health Care Services Department.

### What if my impairment later deteriorates?

If deterioration is supported by medical evidence, you may request a further review of your PFI rating. You should contact WorkplaceNL if this happens.

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