

Chapter 7. Division of Labor Statistics and Research
Subchapter 1. Occupational Injury and Illness Reports and Records
Article 2. Employer Records of Occupational Injury or Illness

§14300.10. Recording Criteria for Cases Involving Occupational Hearing Loss.

(a) Basic requirement. If an employee's hearing test (audiogram) reveals that the employee has experienced a work-related Standard Threshold Shift (STS) in hearing in one or both ears, and the employee's total hearing level is 25 decibels (dB) or more above audiometric zero (averaged at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz) in the same ear(s) as the STS, you must record the case on the Cal/OSHA Form 300 (Rev. 4/2004).

(b) Implementation.

(1) What is a Standard Threshold Shift? A Standard Threshold Shift, or STS, is defined in the occupational noise exposure standard at section 5097(d)(8) as a change in hearing threshold, relative to the baseline audiogram for that employee, of an average of 10 decibels (dB) or more at 2000, 3000, and 4000 hertz (Hz) in one or both ears.

(2) How do I evaluate the current audiogram to determine whether an employee has an STS and a 25-dB hearing level?

(i) STS. If the employee has never previously experienced a recordable hearing loss, you must compare the employee's current audiogram with that employee's baseline audiogram. If the employee has previously experienced a recordable hearing loss, you must compare the employee's current audiogram with the employee's revised baseline audiogram (the audiogram reflecting the employee's previous recordable hearing loss case).

(ii) 25-dB loss. Audiometric test results reflect the employee's overall hearing ability in comparison to audiometric zero. Therefore, using the employee's current audiogram, you must use the average hearing level at 2000, 3000, and 4000 Hz to determine whether or not the employee's total hearing level is 25 dB or more.

(3) May I adjust the current audiogram to reflect the effects of aging on hearing?

Yes. When you are determining whether an STS has occurred, you may age adjust the employee's current audiogram results by using Tables F as appropriate, in Appendix F of Title 8 General Industry Safety Orders, Article 105, section 5095 to 5100. You may not use an age adjustment when determining whether the employee's total hearing level is 25 dB or more above audiometric zero.

(4) Do I have to record the hearing loss if I am going to retest the employee's hearing?

No, if you retest the employee's hearing within 30 days of the first test, and the retest does not confirm the recordable STS, you are not required to record the hearing loss case on the Cal/OSHA 300 Log. If the retest confirms the recordable STS, you must record the hearing loss illness within seven (7) calendar days of the retest. If subsequent audiometric testing performed under the

testing requirements of the noise standard at section 5097 indicates that an STS is not persistent, you may erase or line-out the recorded entry.

(5) Are there any special rules for determining whether a hearing loss case is work-related?

No. You must use the rules in section 14300.5 to determine if the hearing loss is work-related. If an event or exposure in the work environment either caused or contributed to the hearing loss, or significantly aggravated a pre-existing hearing loss, you must consider the case to be work related.

(6) If a physician or other licensed health care professional determines the hearing loss is not work-related, do I still need to record the case?

If a physician or other licensed health care professional determines that the hearing loss is not work-related or has not been significantly aggravated by occupational noise exposure, you are not required to consider the case work-related or to record the case on the Cal/OSHA Form 300.

(7) How do I complete the Form 300 for a hearing loss case?

When you enter a recordable hearing loss case on the Cal/OSHA Form 300(Rev. 4/2004), you must check the 300 Log column for hearing loss.

NOTE

Authority cited: Section 6410, Labor Code. Reference: Section 6410, Labor Code; 29 Code of Federal Regulations section 1904.10.

HISTORY

1. New section filed 1-15-2002; operative 1-15-2002 pursuant to Government Code section 11343.4 (Register 2002, No. 3).

2. Repealer and new section filed 12-30-2002; operative 1-1-2003 pursuant to Government Code section 11343.4 (Register 2003, No. 1).

3. Amendment of subsections (a) and (a)(7) and amendment of NOTE filed 4-23-2004; operative 4-23-2004 pursuant to Government Code section 11343.4 (Register 2004, No. 17).