

**icare**<sup>™</sup>

Dust Diseases Care



# Applying for workers compensation

## Dust Diseases Care

### Applying for workers compensation

**You may be able to obtain financial and health care support from Dust Diseases Care if you have a NSW work-related dust disease.**

Applying for compensation with Dust Diseases Care is free and we can assist you with your application. We can help you gather all the information and supporting documents needed to determine your application.

It is important that you make an application or contact us to discuss your situation to facilitate early and timely access to care and support. We accept applications lodged at any time, including outside of business hours.

### Who is entitled to receive compensation?

You may be entitled to receive compensation if you have been diagnosed with a dust disease that was caused by harmful exposure to dust as a worker in NSW.

### What dust diseases are covered?

We cover the following dust diseases, caused by exposure to asbestos, silica and other harmful workplace dusts:

- Mesothelioma
- Asbestosis
- Asbestos induced carcinoma
- Asbestos related pleural disease
- Silicosis
- Silicosis tuberculosis
- Aluminosis
- Bagassosis
- Berylliosis
- Byssinosis
- Coal dust pneumoconiosis\*
- Farmers' lung
- Hard metal pneumoconiosis
- Talcosis

\* Workers who worked in or around a coal mine are not covered by Dust Diseases Care. Coal Services Limited looks after coal mine workers.

We may also cover other conditions affecting the lungs, pleura or peritoneum that can also cause one of the diseases listed above.

### How do I know if I have a dust disease?

Dust diseases are rare and slow to develop. Most dust diseases do not develop for at least 10 years after your first exposure.

Dust diseases can only be detected through a medical examination. The examination should be carried out by a doctor who has experience in respiratory medicine and usually includes a chest X-ray or CT scan, and a lung function test. Other medical tests may also be required.

The examination may determine that you have pleural plaques. The presence of pleural plaques on an X-ray, while an indicator that you have been exposed to asbestos, is not, on its own, a dust disease. Refer to our Fact Sheet on Pleural Plaques for more information about this.

If you haven't been medically examined or had a chest X-ray in the last six (6) months, we can arrange a free medical examination for you with the provider of your choice. You can make a request for a medical.

examination securely online, or you can download an form from our website or you can contact us by phone.

### **How do I know if I have a dust disease?**

Once you submit your application, we can assess your eligibility for compensation and care.

You may be interviewed by one of our industrial history officers after they have gathered information on your exposure to dusts at work, such as asbestos or silica.

Your application is then reviewed by an independent medical panel. They determine if you have a compensable dust disease, and if so, the level of related disability and the proportion of exposure due to working in NSW.

A decision will be made on whether you are eligible. We will inform you of our decision by phone, and then send you written confirmation.

### **What compensation will I receive?**

If your application for compensation is granted, you may receive a fortnightly compensation payment for you and your eligible dependents, together with payment of your medical, hospital and treatment expenses related to the dust disease.

The payment will vary according to your level of disability and the portion of exposure that happened in a NSW workplace. The amount of your payment may also vary if you are still working or return to the workforce.

Your payments will continue for the remainder of your life. We'll also provide \$9,000 towards the payment of funeral expenses.

### **Will my Centrelink or Veterans Affairs pension be affected?**

Your Dust Diseases Care compensation payment will be considered as income by other agencies. You may find that your pension payments are reduced when you receive compensation payments from us.

You should discuss the possible impact on your pension with the relevant agency. Centrelink can be contacted on (02) 9280 2001 and Veterans Affairs can be contacted on 133 254.

### **Your privacy?**

Your privacy is important to us and your personal information is protected by law. We cannot use or disclose your personal information unless you've agreed to its use or disclosure, or it is otherwise allowed under the *New South Wales Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*.

You can learn more about the personal and health information icare and Dust Diseases Care holds and how we manage it by referring to our Privacy Management Plan on the icare website or contacting us at [privacy@icare.nsw.gov.au](mailto:privacy@icare.nsw.gov.au).

### **Would you like more information?**

If you have any questions or would like more information you can contact us toll free on 1800 550 027. You can also send an email to [DDCenquiries@icare.nsw.gov.au](mailto:DDCenquiries@icare.nsw.gov.au) or a letter addressed to GPO Box 5323 Sydney, NSW 2001.

For more information about Dust Diseases Care and our services visit our website [www.icare.nsw.gov.au](http://www.icare.nsw.gov.au)