

# Coal dust lung diseases — power station workers

If you are concerned you may have a coal dust lung disease, such as coal workers' pneumoconiosis, or have symptoms of a respiratory illness, you should visit your doctor or check with your employer to see if they offer a voluntary health screening program, which you may also be able to access.

## For current power station workers

If you are a current power station worker and concerned you may have a coal dust lung disease, such as coal workers' pneumoconiosis, or are experiencing respiratory symptoms you believe are related to your work you should see your doctor and discuss your concerns.

You should also contact WorkCover Queensland to understand your workers' compensation rights.

If your doctor issues a medical certificate that indicates you may have a coal dust lung disease (or other work-related respiratory disease), you can make a workers' compensation claim.

You can lodge your claim by phoning 1300 362 128 or using the online claim form at [worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://worksafe.qld.gov.au).

If your workers' compensation claim is accepted, you may receive compensation for:

- lost wages
- medical, surgical and hospital expenses
- chest x-rays or scans
- rehabilitation treatment and equipment services
- travel expenses for tests, scans or rehabilitation appointments.

As part of your compensation, you may also be entitled to:

- return to work assistance
- permanent impairment assessment
- lump sum payments if you are diagnosed with pneumoconiosis (an occupational lung disease caused by the inhalation of respirable dust)
- other lump sum payments if diagnosed with a terminal respiratory disease.

## For former or retired power station workers

If you are a former or retired power station worker, you may be eligible for a lung disease examination through WorkCover Queensland. You will need to demonstrate:

- employment in an industry involved in mining, loading, transporting or otherwise dealing with coal
- you permanently stopped working in the industry before 1 January 2017

- six months cumulative exposure to coal dust as a worker at your place/s of employment in Queensland.

## How to apply for a lung disease examination

1. Visit your doctor and get a medical certificate which states you are a former coal worker concerned about having a coal dust lung disease. Your doctor may refer you for a chest x-ray.
2. Contact WorkCover Queensland and apply for a lung disease examination. You can apply online at [worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://worksafe.qld.gov.au) or by calling 1300 362 128.
3. WorkCover Queensland will arrange for your lung disease examination with a qualified specialist. WorkCover Queensland will cover the cost of this examination as well as reasonable travel costs.

## What process is used to diagnose coal dust lung disease?

Any medical investigations conducted by WorkCover Queensland will be consistent with the **Coal Mine Workers' Health Scheme Clinical Pathways Guidelines**. These guidelines ensure consistent diagnosis for all workers exposed to coal dust in Queensland.

These guidelines include:

- chest x-rays reviewed by two qualified B reader with additional readers available for adjudication. (A B reader is a radiologist who has undertaken specialised training to detect coal dust lung diseases such as coal workers' pneumoconiosis, silicosis, mixed dust pneumoconiosis and progressive massive fibrosis)
- spirometry (lung function) testing used to detect emphysema, bronchitis, dust induced fibrosis and acute silicosis.

If test results are positive, you will be referred to a respiratory physician for further investigation and diagnosis.

**For more information visit [worksafe.qld.gov.au](http://worksafe.qld.gov.au) or call 1300 362 128.**