

Hearing Assistive Devices Financial Assistance Scheme

In accordance with the Occupational Deafness (Compensation) Ordinance, the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board (the Board) is empowered to provide financial assistance to eligible persons for acquiring hearing assistive devices for use in connection with their noise-induced deafness.

Eligibility

Persons who are entitled to receive compensation under the Occupational Deafness (Compensation) Ordinance may apply to the Board for any expenses reasonably incurred in the acquisition, fitting, repair or maintenance of a hearing assistive device used by them in connection with their noise-induced deafness.

Applicants should take note of the followings:

1. Application for reimbursement of the expenses should be made within 12 months from the date on which the expenses were incurred;
2. The hearing assistive devices and related expenses should not be funded by any grant, sponsorship or donation.

Application

1. Reimbursement: applicants who have paid for the expenses first should apply for reimbursement from the Board;
2. Direct payment: applicants may submit an application together with quotation of the expenses to the Board. Upon approval by the Board, they may collect the hearing assistive devices from the device provider. The Board will pay the device provider directly.

Maximum Amount of Assistance for Each Applicant

1. The amount of expenses that an applicant is entitled to, whether by way of reimbursement or direct payment, shall not in aggregate exceed **\$115,760**.
2. The amount of expenses that may be reimbursed to an applicant or paid to a device provider on his/her behalf for the first time in respect of an application in relation to the acquisition and fitting of a hearing assistive device shall not exceed **\$25,000**.

© **Hearing Assistive Device?**

Under the Occupational Deafness (Compensation) Ordinance, hearing assistive device includes:

- i. Hearing aid;
- ii. Telephone amplifier specially designed for use by persons with hearing difficulty;
- iii. Desktop telephone with flashing light or other visual device to indicate ringing;
- iv. Any device the use of which by a person suffering from noise-induced deafness is determined by the Board, upon the advice of the Medical Committee, to be reasonably necessary in connection with such deafness; or
- vi. Any accessories or parts of the above hearing assistive devices.

Application Procedure and Documents

An applicant shall submit the following documents for the application of reimbursement or direct payment of expenses:

1. specified application form;
2. the original receipt (reimbursement application) or quotation (direct payment application) of the devices or services required;

3. if hearing aid or related expenses are included, a written advice issued by one of the categories of persons* designated by the Board (The written advice should indicate that the applicant reasonably requires the use of the hearing aid); and
4. any other supporting documents e.g. hearing test report for hearing aid prescription.

***The categories of persons designated by the Board are:**

1. Medical Practitioners conferred by the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine with the designation of Fellow of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (Otorhinolaryngology); or
2. Medical Practitioners conferred by the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine with the designation of Fellow of the Hong Kong Academy of Medicine (Community Medicine) and in the sub-specialty of occupational medicine; or
3. Audiologists with a degree of Master of Science in Audiology issued by a local University or its equivalent (e.g. master degrees in audiology issued by universities in the UK, USA, Australia, Canada or New Zealand, etc.); or
4. Audiologists with Postgraduate Diploma in Audiology from Australia; or
5. Audiology Technicians with Certificate of Audiology Technicians Training Course (Part I) issued by institutions recognised by the British Association of Audiologists/British Society of Audiology; and Certificate of qualification examinations (Part II) issued by British Association of Audiologists/British Society of Audiology or its equivalent.

Prescription of Hearing Aid

Applicant should visit hearing centres which have engaged designated persons listed above for the prescription of a suitable hearing aid. These centres include:

1. Ear, Nasal and Throat Specialist Clinics under the Hospital Authority (to be referred by outpatient clinic)
2. Private hearing centres**
3. Hearing centre as arranged by the Board

** Applicant should confirm with the private hearing centre that the prescription service will be carried out by designated persons listed above in order to ensure that a valid written advice could be issued.

Duty of the Applicant

In order to enable the Board to determine whether the use of the relevant hearing assistive device or related service is reasonably required, applicants may be required to undergo hearing test as arranged by the Board.

Enquiries

Please contact the Occupational Deafness Compensation Board for further information.

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