



Social Security (Tables for the Assessment of Work-related Impairment for Disability Support Pension) Determination 2011

Table 11 – Hearing and other Functions of the Ear

Introduction to Table 11

- Table 11 is to be used where the person has a permanent condition resulting in functional impairment when performing activities involving hearing (communication) function or other functions of the ear (e.g. balance).
- The diagnosis of the condition must be made by an appropriately qualified medical practitioner with supporting evidence from an audiologist or Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) specialist.
- Self-report of symptoms alone is insufficient.
- There must be corroborating evidence of the person's impairment.
- Examples of corroborating evidence for the purposes of this Table include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - a report from the person's treating doctor;
 - a report from a medical specialist (e.g. an ENT specialist or neurologist) confirming diagnosis of conditions associated with hearing impairment or other impaired function of the ear (e.g. congenital deafness, presbycusis, acoustic neuroma, side-effects of medication, Meniere's disease or neurological conditions including Multiple Sclerosis);
 - results of audiological assessment undertaken by a fully qualified audiologist or ENT specialist.
- Table 11 should be applied with the person using any prescribed hearing aid, cochlear implant or other assistive listening device that they usually use.
- If the person uses recognised sign language or other non-verbal communication method as a result of hearing loss only, the person's hearing and communication function should be assessed using Table 11.

Points	Descriptors
0	<p><i>There is no functional impact on activities involving hearing (communication) function or other functions of the ear.</i></p> <p>(1) The person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) can hear a conversation at average volume in a room with an average level of background noise (e.g. other people talking quietly in the background); and (b) does not have to turn the television volume up louder than others in the household to hear clearly; and (c) the person does not need to use a hearing aid, cochlear implant or other assistive listening device.

5	<p><i>There is mild functional impact on activities involving hearing (communication) function or other functions of the ear.</i></p> <p>(1) The person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) has some difficulty hearing a conversation at an average volume in a room with background noise (e.g. other people talking quietly in the background); and (b) may use a hearing aid, cochlear implant or other device; and (c) has difficulty hearing conversations when using a standard telephone, particularly in a room with background noise; or <p>(2) The person has occasional difficulty with balance (e.g. occasional dizziness) or ringing in the ears which occasionally interferes with communication ability or routine activities due to a medically diagnosed disorder of the inner ear (e.g. Meniere's disease, or tinnitus).</p>
10	<p><i>There is a moderate functional impact on activities involving hearing (communication) function or other functions of the ear even when using a hearing aid, cochlear implant or other assistive listening device; or sign language interpreting is required.</i></p> <p>(1) The person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) has difficulty hearing a conversation at average volume in a room with no background noise; and (b) the person has to use a telephone with a T switch and has occasional difficulty with some words ; and (c) is partially reliant on lip-reading or a recognised sign language (e.g. Auslan), that is, the person needs to lip-read or watch a sign language interpreter in some situations where background noise is present or needs to have parts of conversations clarified or repeated using lip-reading or recognised sign language; or <p>(2) The person has more frequent difficulty with balance (e.g. has to sit down or hold on to a solid object) or ringing in the ears which interferes with communication ability or routine activities, due to a medically diagnosed disorder of the inner ear (e.g. Meniere's disease or tinnitus).</p>

20	<p><i>There is a severe functional impact on activities involving hearing (communication) function or other functions of the ear even when using a hearing aid, cochlear implant or other assistive listening device or technology or sign language interpreting.</i></p> <p>(1) The person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) has severe difficulty hearing any conversation even at raised volume in a room with no background noise (that is, is unable to hear someone speaking to them in a loud voice, or is not able to hear someone shouting a warning (e.g. 'Look out!')); and (b) is unable to hear sounds needed for personal or workplace safety (e.g. a smoke alarm, fire evacuation siren, or car or truck horn); and (c) is reliant on captions to follow a television program or movie; and (d) needs to use a captioned telephone; and (e) is completely reliant in all situations on a recognised sign language (e.g. Auslan), lip reading, other non verbal communication method (e.g. note taking) to converse with others; or <p>(2) The person has continual difficulty with balance (e.g. the person has continual dizziness or has to sit down or hold on to a solid object) or continual ringing in the ears that interferes with hearing, due to a medically diagnosed disorder of the inner ear (e.g. Meniere's disease or tinnitus).</p>
30	<p><i>There is an extreme functional impact on activities involving hearing (communication) function or other functions of the ear even when using a hearing aid, cochlear implant or other assistive listening device.</i></p> <p>(1) The person:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) is unable to hear anything at all; and (b) has limited or no ability to understand a recognised sign language (e.g. Auslan).