

## Answer 3 Questions To Determine If a Worker's Hearing Loss Is Recordable

### 1. Has the employee suffered a STS (Standard Threshold Shift)?

The OSHA noise standard defines a STS as an average 10dB or more loss in one or both ears relative to the most current baseline audiogram averaged at 2000, 3000 and 4000 Hz.

No → Stop. This is *not* an OSHA recordable hearing loss.

Yes → Continue to question 2.

### 2. Is the employee's overall hearing level at 25dB or more above audiometric zero?

Take this measurement for the affected ear(s) and average at 2000, 3000 and 4000 Hz.

No → Stop. This is *not* an OSHA recordable hearing loss.

Yes → Continue to question 3.

### 3. Is the hearing loss work-related?

Remember that work-relatedness is assumed for hearing loss cases. Unless you can *completely* attribute the hearing loss to a non-work related event or the employee's physical condition, you must record the case on your OSHA Log.

No → Stop. This is *not* an OSHA recordable hearing loss.

Yes → Record this as a hearing loss case on your OSHA log.

Check the appropriate category for the type of case (days away, restriction/transfer, or other recordable) and check Column M5: Hearing Loss.

	Classify the case <small>CHECK ONLY ONE box for each case based on the most serious outcome for that case:</small>	Enter the number of days the injured or ill worker was:	Check the "Injury" column or choose one type of illness:																								
<p style="text-align: center;">(F)</p> <p>Describe injury or illness, parts of body affected, and object/substance that directly injured or made person ill (e.g., <i>Second degree burns on right forearm from acetylene torch</i>)</p> <p>Hearing loss – daily noise exposure of milling machinery</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Remained at Work</b></p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Death (G)</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Days away from work (H)</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Job transfer or restriction (I)</td> <td style="width: 25%; text-align: center;">Other recordable cases (J)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Death (G)	Days away from work (H)	Job transfer or restriction (I)	Other recordable cases (J)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">Away from work (K) - days</td> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: center;">On job transfer or restriction (L) - days</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Away from work (K) - days	On job transfer or restriction (L) - days	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p style="text-align: center;">(M)</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 12.5%; text-align: center;">Injury (1)</td> <td style="width: 12.5%; text-align: center;">Skin disorder (2)</td> <td style="width: 12.5%; text-align: center;">Respiratory condition (3)</td> <td style="width: 12.5%; text-align: center;">Poisoning (4)</td> <td style="width: 12.5%; text-align: center;">Hearing loss (5)</td> <td style="width: 12.5%; text-align: center;">All other illnesses (6)</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input checked="" type="checkbox"/></td> <td style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></td> </tr> </table>	Injury (1)	Skin disorder (2)	Respiratory condition (3)	Poisoning (4)	Hearing loss (5)	All other illnesses (6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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### Hearing Loss Notes

- 🔔 Use the most current baseline to determine a STS under the hearing conservation provisions of the noise standard (§1910.95).
- 🔔 If an STS occurs in only one ear, you may only revise the baseline audiogram for that ear.
- 🔔 The audiogram may be adjusted for presbycusis (aging) as defined in (§1910.95).
- 🔔 A separate hearing loss column was added to the OSHA 300 Forms in January 2004. It is listed under Column M: Injury and Illness Types.
- 🔔 Audiometric exams given prior to 2003 are subject to different recording criteria

## **1904.10 Recording Criteria For Cases Involving Occupational Hearing Loss**

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**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 OSHA 300 Log.

**What is a Standard Threshold Shift?** A Standard Threshold Shift, or STS, is defined in the occupational noise exposure standard at 29 CFR 1910.95(g)(10)(i) 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.

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

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).

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.

**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-1 or F-2, as appropriate, in Appendix F of 29 CFR 1910.95. You may not use an age adjustment when determining whether the employee's total hearing level is 25 dB or more above audiometric zero.

**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 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 § 1910.95 noise standard indicates that an STS is not persistent, you may erase or line-out the recorded entry.

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

No. You must use the rules in § 1904.5 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.

**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 OSHA 300 Log.

**How do I complete the 300 Log for a hearing loss case?**

When you enter a recordable hearing loss case on the OSHA 300 Log, you must check the 300 Log column for hearing loss. (A hearing loss category was added to the OSHA Log in January 2004.) If the case does not have days away, restriction, or transfer, you must also check Column J: Other Recordable Cases.