



# Pneumoconiosis etc. (Workers' Compensation) Act 1979

1979 CHAPTER 41

**E+W+S**

An Act to make provision for lump sum payments to or in respect of certain persons who are, or were immediately before they died, disabled by pneumoconiosis, byssinosis or diffuse mesothelioma; and for connected purposes. [4th April 1979]

## Commencement Information

**II** Act wholly in force at 4. 7. 1979 see s. 10(3)

## 1 Lump sum payments. **E+W+S**

- (1) If, on a claim by a person who is disabled by a disease to which this Act applies, the Secretary of State is satisfied that the conditions of entitlement mentioned in section 2(1) below are fulfilled, he shall in accordance with this Act make to that person a payment of such amount as may be prescribed by regulations.
- (2) If, on a claim by the dependant of a person who, immediately before he died, was disabled by a disease to which this Act applies, the Secretary of State is satisfied that the conditions of entitlement mentioned in section 2(2) below are fulfilled, he shall in accordance with this Act make to that dependant a payment of such amount as may be so prescribed.
- (3) The diseases to which this Act applies are pneumoconiosis, byssinosis and diffuse mesothelioma [<sup>F1</sup>and any other disease which is specified by the Secretary of State for the purposes of this Act by order made by statutory instrument.]
- (4) Regulations under this section may prescribe different amounts for different cases or classes of cases or for different circumstances.
- [<sup>F2</sup>(5) No order shall be made under this section unless a draft of the order has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, each House of Parliament.]

*Changes to legislation: Pneumoconiosis etc. (Workers' Compensation) Act 1979 is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 14 August 2023. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes*

### Subordinate Legislation Made

- P1** S. 1: s. 1 (with s. 7) : power exercised by [S.I.1991/899](#)  
S. 1 : for previous exercises of power see Index to Government Orders

### Textual Amendments

- F1** Words added by [Social Security Act 1985 \(c. 53, SIF 113:1\)](#), [s. 24\(a\)\(i\)](#)  
**F2** S. 1(5) added by [Social Security Act 1985 \(c. 53, SIF 113:1\)](#), [s. 24\(a\)\(ii\)](#)

## 2 Conditions of entitlement. **E+W+S**

- (1) In the case of a person who is disabled by a disease to which this Act applies, the conditions of entitlement are—
- (a) that disablement benefit is payable to him in respect of the disease [<sup>F3</sup>or, subject to subsection (3A) below, would be payable to him in respect of it but for his disablement amounting to less than the appropriate percentage];
  - (b) that every relevant employer of his has ceased to carry on business;
  - [<sup>F4</sup>(ba) that no application has been made for a payment under the Diffuse Mesothelioma Payment Scheme in respect of the disease (for the scheme, see the Mesothelioma Act 2014);] and
  - (c) that he has not brought any action, or compromised any claim, for damages in respect of the disablement.
- (2) In the case of the dependant of a person who, immediately before he died, was disabled by a disease to which this Act applies, the conditions of entitlement are—
- (a) that no payment under this Act has been made to the deceased in respect of the disease;
  - (b) that death benefit is payable to or in respect of the dependant by reason of the deceased's death as a result of the disease, or that disablement benefit was payable to the deceased in respect of the disease immediately before he died [<sup>F5</sup>or, subject to subsection (3A) below, would have been so payable to him—
    - (i) but for his disablement amounting to less than the appropriate percentage; or
    - (ii) but for his not having claimed the benefit; or
    - (iii) but for his having died before he had suffered from the disease for the appropriate period];
    - (c) that every relevant employer of the deceased has ceased to carry on business;
    - [<sup>F6</sup>(ca) that no application has been made by the deceased, or any dependant, for a payment under the Diffuse Mesothelioma Payment Scheme in respect of the disease (for the scheme, see the Mesothelioma Act 2014);] and
    - (d) that neither the deceased nor his personal representatives nor any relative of his has brought any action, or compromised any claim, for damages in respect of the disablement or death.
- (3) In this section—
- [<sup>F7</sup> “the appropriate percentage” means, in the case of any disease, the percentage specified in subsection (1) of section 57 of the Social Security Act <sup>MI</sup> 1975 or, if regulations have been made under section 77 of that Act specifying a different percentage in relation to that disease, the percentage specified in the regulations;

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“ the appropriate period ” means, in the case of any disease, the period specified in subsection (4) of the said section 57 or, if regulations have been made under the said section 77 specifying a different period in relation to that disease, the period specified in the regulations; ]

“death benefit” means [<sup>F8</sup>industrial death benefit under [<sup>F9</sup>section 108 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992], or] death benefit under a scheme made, or having effect as if made, under [<sup>F9</sup>paragraph 4 of Schedule 8 to the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992];

“disablement benefit” means disablement benefit under section 76 of the Social Security Act 1975 [<sup>F10</sup>or section 108 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992] or under any corresponding provision of the former Industrial Injuries Acts, or an allowance under a scheme made, or having effect as if made, under section 5 of the Industrial Injuries and Diseases (Old Cases) Act 1975 [<sup>F10</sup>or paragraph 4 of Schedule 8 to the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992] or under any corresponding provision of the former Old Cases Acts;

“the former Industrial Injuries Acts” means the <sup>M2</sup>National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act 1946 and the <sup>M3</sup>National Insurance (Industrial Injuries) Act 1965;

“the former Old Cases Acts” means the <sup>M4</sup>Pneumoconiosis and Byssinosis Benefit Act 1951 and the <sup>M5</sup>Industrial Injuries and Diseases (Old Cases) Act 1967;

[<sup>F11</sup>“relevant employer” has the meaning given in the Schedule to this Act.]

[<sup>F12</sup>(3A) No amount is payable under this Act in respect of disablement amounting to less than 1 per cent.]

- (4) For the purposes of this section any action which has been dismissed otherwise than on the merits (as for example for want of prosecution or under any enactment relating to the limitation of actions) shall be disregarded.

#### Textual Amendments

- F3** Words added by [Social Security Act 1986 \(c. 50, SIF 113:1\)](#), s. 39, **Sch. 3 para. 17(2)**
- F4** S. 2(1)(ba) inserted (31.3.2014) by [Mesothelioma Act 2014 \(c. 1\)](#), s. 19(1), **Sch. 2 para. 1(a)**; S.I. 2014/459, art. 3(d)
- F5** Words and sub-paragraphs (i)–(iii) added by [Social Security Act 1986 \(c. 50, SIF 113:1\)](#), s. 39, **Sch. 3 para. 17(3)**
- F6** S. 2(2)(ca) inserted (31.3.2014) by [Mesothelioma Act 2014 \(c. 1\)](#), s. 19(1), **Sch. 2 para. 1(b)**; S.I. 2014/459, art. 3(d)
- F7** Definitions inserted by [Social Security Act 1986 \(c. 50, SIF 113:1\)](#), s. 39, **Sch. 3 para. 17(4)**
- F8** Words repealed (*prosp.*) by [Social Security Act 1986 \(c. 50, SIF 113:1\)](#), ss. 86(2), 88(1), **Sch. 11**
- F9** Words in s. 2(3) substituted (1.7.1992) by [Social Security \(Consequential Provisions\) Act 1992 \(c. 6\)](#), ss. 4, 7(2), **Sch. 2**, para. 55(1)(a)(b)
- F10** Words in s. 2(3) inserted (1.7.1992) by [Social Security \(Consequential Provisions\) Act 1992 \(c. 6\)](#), ss. 4, 7(2), **Sch. 2**, para. 55(2)(a)(b)
- F11** Words in s. 2(3) substituted (12.7.2007 for specified purposes, 10.8.2007 in so far as not already in force) by [Welfare Reform Act 2007 \(c. 5\)](#), ss. 58(2), 70(2); S.I. 2007/1991, art. 2(1)(2)
- F12** S. 2(3A) inserted by [Social Security Act 1986 \(c. 50, SIF 113:1\)](#), s. 39, **Sch. 3 para. 17(5)**

#### Marginal Citations

- M1** 1975 c. 14.

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<b>M2</b>	1946 c. 62.
<b>M3</b>	1965 c. 52.
<b>M4</b>	1951 c. 4.
<b>M5</b>	1967 c. 34.

**3 Dependants. E+W+S**

(1) In this Act “dependant”, in relation to a person who, immediately before he died, was disabled by a disease to which this Act applies, means—

- (a) if he left a spouse [<sup>F13</sup>or civil partner] who was residing with him or was receiving or entitled to receive from him periodical payments for her maintenance, that spouse [<sup>F13</sup>or civil partner];
- (b) if paragraph (a) above does not apply but he left a child or children who fall within subsection (2) below, that child or those children;
- [<sup>F14</sup>(c) if neither of the preceding paragraphs applies but he left a person who was residing with him and with whom he was in a qualifying relationship, that person;]
- (d) if none of the preceding paragraphs applies, any relative or relatives of his who fall within subsection (2) below and who were, in the opinion of the Secretary of State, wholly or mainly dependent on him at the date of his death.

(2) A person falls within this subsection if, at the relevant date, he was

- (a) under the age of 16;
- (b) under the age of 21 and not gainfully employed full-time; or
- (c) permanently incapable of self-support;

and in this subsection “relevant date” means the date of the deceased’s death or the date of the coming into force of this Act, whichever is the later.

[<sup>F15</sup>(2A) For the purposes of subsection (1)(c)—

- (a) two persons of the opposite sex are in a qualifying relationship if they are living together as husband and wife;
- (b) two persons of the same sex are in a qualifying relationship if they are living together as if they were civil partners.]

[<sup>F16</sup>(2A) For the purposes of subsection (1)(c) two persons are in a qualifying relationship if they are living together [<sup>F17</sup>as if they were a married couple or civil partners].]

<sup>F18</sup>(2B) .....

(3) Where any payment under this Act falls to be made to two or more persons, the payment shall be made to one of them or divided between some or all of them as the Secretary of State thinks fit.

(4) In this section—

“child” includes posthumous child;

“relative” means brother, sister, lineal ancestor or lineal descendant;

and for the purposes of this section a relationship shall be established as if any illegitimate child or step child of a person had been a child born to him in wedlock.

<sup>F19</sup>(5) .....

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### Textual Amendments

- F13** Words in s. 3(1)(a) inserted (3.7.2007) by [Welfare Reform Act 2007 \(c. 5\)](#), [ss. 59\(1\)\(a\)](#), 70(1)
- F14** S. 3(1)(c) substituted (3.7.2007) by [Welfare Reform Act 2007 \(c. 5\)](#), [ss. 59\(1\)\(b\)](#), 70(1)
- F15** S. 3(2A) substituted (E.W.) (13.3.2014) by [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), [Sch. 1 para. 18\(a\)](#)
- F16** S. 3(2A) substituted (S.) (16.12.2014) by [The Marriage and Civil Partnership \(Scotland\) Act 2014 and Civil Partnership Act 2004 \(Consequential Provisions and Modifications\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3229\)](#), art. 1(2), [Sch. 5 para. 7\(a\)](#)
- F17** Words in s. 3(2A) substituted (2.12.2019) by [The Civil Partnership \(Opposite-sex Couples\) Regulations 2019 \(S.I. 2019/1458\)](#), reg. 1(2), [Sch. 3 para. 7](#)
- F18** S. 3(2B) omitted (E.W.) (13.3.2014) by virtue of [The Marriage \(Same Sex Couples\) Act 2013 \(Consequential and Contrary Provisions and Scotland\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/560\)](#), art. 1(2), [Sch. 1 para. 18\(b\)](#); and (S.) (16.12.2014) by virtue of [The Marriage and Civil Partnership \(Scotland\) Act 2014 and Civil Partnership Act 2004 \(Consequential Provisions and Modifications\) Order 2014 \(S.I. 2014/3229\)](#), art. 1(2), [Sch. 5 para. 7\(b\)](#)
- F19** S. 3(5) repealed (3.7.2007) by [Welfare Reform Act 2007 \(c. 5\)](#), [ss. 59\(3\)](#), 70(1), [Schs. 8](#)

## 4 Determination of claims. **E+W+S**

- (1) Any reference in this Act to a claim under section 1 above is a reference to a claim under that section which is made—
- in the manner prescribed by regulations; and
  - within the period of 12 months beginning with the relevant date or within such further period as the Secretary of State may allow.
- (2) The Secretary of State may, if he thinks fit, before determining any claim under section 1 above, appoint a person to hold an inquiry into any question arising on the claim, or any matters arising in connection therewith, and to report on the question, or on those matters, to the Secretary of State.
- (3) Section <sup>[F20]</sup>18 of the Social Security Administration Act 1992 (appeal on question of law) shall apply in relation to any question of law arising in connection with the determination by the Secretary of State of any claim under section 1 above as it applies in relation to any question of law arising in connection with the determination by the Secretary of State of any question within section <sup>[F20]</sup>17(1) of that Act.
- (4) In this section “relevant date”—
- in the case of a person disabled by a disease to which this Act applies, <sup>[F21]</sup>other than a disease specified in an order under section 1 above,] means the date on which disablement benefit first became payable to him in respect of the disease or the date of the coming into force of this Act, whichever is the later;
  - in the case of the dependant of a person who, immediately before he died, was disabled by a disease to which this Act applies, <sup>[F21]</sup>other than a disease specified in an order under section 1 above,] means the date of the deceased's death or the date of the coming into force of this Act, whichever is the later.
- <sup>[F22]</sup>(c) in the case of a person disabled by a disease specified in an order under section 1 above, means the date on which disablement benefit first became payable to him in respect of the disease or the date of the coming into force of the order, whichever is the later;

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- (d) in the case of the dependant of a person who, immediately before he died, was disabled by a disease specified in an order under section 1 above, means the date of the deceased's death or the date of the coming into force of the order, whichever is the later.]

#### Textual Amendments

- F20** Words in s. 4(3) substituted (1.7.1992) by [Social Security \(Consequential Provisions\) Act 1992 \(c. 6\), ss. 4, 7\(2\), Sch. 2, para. 56\(a\)\(b\)](#)
- F21** Words inserted by [Social Security Act 1985 \(c. 53, SIF 113:1\), s. 24\(b\)\(i\)](#)
- F22** S. 4(4)(c)(d) added by [Social Security Act 1985 \(c. 53, SIF 113:1\), s. 24\(b\)\(ii\)](#)

## 5 Reconsideration of determinations. **E+W+S**

- (1) Subject to subsection (2) below, the Secretary of State may reconsider a determination that a payment should not be made under this Act on the ground—
- (a) that there has been a material change of circumstances since the determination was made; or
  - (b) that the determination was made in ignorance of, or was based on a mistake as to, some material fact;
- and the Secretary of State may, on the ground set out in paragraph (b) above, reconsider a determination that such a payment should be made.
- (2) Regulations shall prescribe the manner in which and the period within which—
- (a) an application may be made to the Secretary of State for his reconsideration of a determination; and
  - (b) the Secretary of State may of his own motion institute such a reconsideration.
- (3) Subsections (2) and (3) of section 4 above shall apply in relation to any reconsideration of a determination under this section as they apply in relation to the determination of a claim.
- (4) If, whether fraudulently or otherwise, any person misrepresents or fails to disclose any material fact and in consequence of the misrepresentation or failure a payment is made under this Act, the person to whom the payment was made shall be liable to repay the amount of that payment to the Secretary of State unless he can show that the misrepresentation or failure occurred without his connivance or consent.
- (5) Except as provided by subsection (4) above, no payment under this Act shall be recoverable by virtue of a reconsideration of a determination under this section.

## 6 Payments for the benefit of minors etc. **E+W+S**

Where a payment under this Act falls to be made to a person who is under the age of 18 or incapable of managing his own affairs, then, subject to section 3(3) above, the payment shall be made for his benefit by paying it to such trustees as the Secretary of State may appoint to be held by them upon such trusts or, in Scotland, for such purposes and upon such conditions as may be declared by the Secretary of State.



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## 7 Regulations. **E+W+S**

- (1) Any reference in the preceding provisions of this Act to regulations is a reference to regulations made by the Secretary of State.
- (2) Any power of the Secretary of State to make regulations under this Act shall be exercisable by statutory instrument and includes power to make such incidental, supplementary or transitional provision as the Secretary of State thinks fit.
- (3) No regulations shall be made under section 1 above [<sup>F23</sup>or paragraph 9 of the Schedule to this Act] unless a draft of the regulations has been laid before, and approved by a resolution of, each House of Parliament.
- (4) Any statutory instrument containing regulations made under any other provision of this Act shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.

### Subordinate Legislation Made

- P2** S. 7: s. 1 (with s. 7) power exercised by [S.I.1991/899](#)  
S. 7 : for previous exercises of power see Index to Government Orders

### Textual Amendments

- F23** Words in s. 7(3) inserted (12.7.2007 for specified purposes) by [Welfare Reform Act 2007 \(c. 5\)](#), **ss. 58(4), 70(2)**; [S.I. 2007/1991](#), art. 2(1)

## 8 Fraudulent statements etc. **E+W+S**

Any person who, for the purpose of obtaining a payment under this Act, whether for himself or some other person—

- (a) knowingly makes any false statement or representation; or
- (b) produces or furnishes or causes or knowingly allows to be produced or furnished any document or information which he knows to be false in a material particular,

shall be liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding [<sup>F24</sup>level 5 on the standard scale].

### Textual Amendments

- F24** Words substituted by virtue of (E. W.) [Criminal Justice Act 1982 \(c. 48\)](#), **s. 46** and (S.) [Criminal Procedure \(Scotland\) Act 1975 \(c. 21\)](#), **s. 289G** (as inserted by [Criminal Justice Act 1982 \(c. 48\)](#), **s. 54**)

## 9 Financial provisions. **E+W+S**

- (1) There shall be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament—
  - (a) any expenditure incurred by the Secretary of State in making payments under this Act; and
  - (b) any increase in the administrative expenses of the Secretary of State which is attributable to this Act.

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- (2) Any sums repaid to the Secretary of State by virtue of section 5(4) above shall be paid into the Consolidated Fund.

**10 Short title, construction, commencement and extent. E+W+S**

- (1) This Act may be cited as the Pneumoconiosis etc. (Workers' Compensation) Act 1979.
- (2) Except where the context otherwise requires, any expression to which a meaning is assigned by [<sup>F25</sup>the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992 or the Social Security Administration Act 1992], or by any regulations made under [<sup>F25</sup>either of those Acts], has that meaning also for the purposes of this Act.
- (3) This Act shall come into force on the expiration of a period of three months beginning with the day on which it is passed.
- (4) This Act does not extend to Northern Ireland.

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**Textual Amendments**

**F25** Words in s. 10(2) substituted (1.7.1992) by [Social Security \(Consequential Provisions\) Act 1992 \(c. 6\)](#), ss. 4, 7(2), [Sch. 2](#), para. 57(a)(b)



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THE  
SCHEDULE **E+W+S**

Section 2(3)

DEFINITION OF “RELEVANT EMPLOYER”

**Textual Amendments**

**F26** Sch. inserted (12.7.2007 for specified purposes, 10.8.2007 in so far as not already in force) by [Welfare Reform Act 2007 \(c. 5\), ss. 58\(3\), 70\(2\), Sch. 6; S.I. 2007/1991, art. 2\(1\)\(2\)](#)

*Basic definition*

- 1 Subject to the following provisions, “relevant employer”, in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Act applies, means any person—
- (a) by whom the disabled person was employed in a prescribed occupation at any time during the period during which he was developing the disease, and
  - (b) against whom he might have or might have had a claim for damages in respect of the disablement.

*Disregarded employers*

- 2 A person is not a relevant employer in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Act applies if the disabled person has had no period of employment with him which is a qualifying period of employment.
- 3 A person is not a relevant employer in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Act applies if the disabled person's qualifying period of employment with him did not exceed 12 months.
- 4 A person is not a relevant employer in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Act applies if the disabled person's qualifying period of employment with him—
- (a) did not exceed 5 years, and
  - (b) represents not more than 25% of the time during which the disabled person was employed in a prescribed occupation.
- 5 A person is not a relevant employer in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Act applies if the disabled person's qualifying period of employment with him—
- (a) did not exceed 7 years, and
  - (b) represents not more than 20% of the time during which the disabled person was employed in a prescribed occupation.
- 6 In paragraphs 3 to 5, references to the disabled person's qualifying period of employment with his employer, where there has been more than one such period, are to the aggregate of those periods.

*“Qualifying period of employment”*

- 7 (1) In this Schedule, “qualifying period of employment”, in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Act applies, means any period of employment in a prescribed occupation, except for—

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- (a) a period of employment which ended more than 20 years before the qualifying date, and
  - (b) in the case of a claim relating to diffuse mesothelioma, a period of employment which began not more than 15 years before the qualifying date.
- (2) In sub-paragraph (1), “qualifying date” means—
- (a) the date on which the Secretary of State determines a claim for disablement benefit made by or on behalf of the disabled person in respect of the disease, or
  - (b) if the disabled person has died without a claim for disablement benefit in respect of the disease having been determined, the date on which he died.

*“Prescribed occupation”*

- 8 (1) In this Schedule, “prescribed occupation”, in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Act applies, means an occupation prescribed in relation to the disease by the Secretary of State by order made by statutory instrument.
- (2) A statutory instrument that—
- (a) contains an order under sub-paragraph (1), and
  - (b) is not subject to any requirement that a draft of the instrument be laid before, and approved by a resolution of, each House of Parliament,
- shall be subject to annulment in pursuance of a resolution of either House of Parliament.

*Power to amend Schedule*

- 9 Regulations made by the Secretary of State may—
- (a) amend this Schedule for the purpose of adding to the cases in which a person is not a relevant employer in relation to a person disabled by a disease to which this Act applies;
  - (b) amend or repeal any provision of this Schedule relating to such cases.]

**Changes to legislation:**

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**Changes and effects yet to be applied to :**

- s. 2(2)(b) words repealed by [2012 c. 5 Sch. 14 Pt. 7](#)
- s. 2(3) words repealed by [2012 c. 5 Sch. 14 Pt. 7](#)