
WORKSAFE

▶ Working with Hearing Loss

Hearing loss is considered the fastest-growing disability in the world. In North America, 10% of people are thought to have some degree of hearing loss, ranging from mild loss to profound deafness; for those aged 65 and over, the percentage rises to 50%.

Most employers have employees with hearing loss, and most organizations can expect hearing issues to become increasingly common among workers. If someone in your workplace suffers from hearing loss, seek assistance from your Strategic Human Resource Management Divisions. Recommendations may be made to modify the workplace:

- Where possible, consider moving an employee's desk to a quiet area away from the photocopier, main phone system, outside noise, congregating areas such as corridors, water fountains, restrooms and lunchrooms.
- Rearrange traffic routes within and between work areas to decrease noise.
- Enable the hearing-impaired employee to sit with his or her back against the wall in order to see people approaching.
- Use curtains or tinted windows to cut down on glaring light that can obscure faces.
- Use acoustical walls or screens and sound absorbing materials on walls, floor and ceilings. This will reduce background noise. Drapes and carpets also absorb sound.
- Choose office machines that are designed to run quietly.
- Place sound reduction covers on printers and typewriters.
- Use telephones with adjustable volume controls and blinking lights where appropriate.

Adapted from: www.chha.ca/documents/Working_With_Hearing_Loss.pdf

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