

WAC 296-307-63615 Conduct annual audiograms. (1) The employer must conduct annual audiograms for employees as long as they continue to be exposed to noise that equals or exceeds 85 dBA TWA₈.

Note: Annual audiometric testing may be conducted at any time during the work shift. By conducting the annual audiogram during the work shift with the employee exposed to typical noise for their job, the test may record a temporary threshold shift. This makes the test more sensitive to potential hearing loss and may help you improve employee protection before a permanent threshold shift occurs. A suspected temporary shift is one reason an employer may choose to retest employee hearing.

(2) The employer must make sure each employee is informed of the results of his or her audiometric test.

Include whether or not there has been a hearing level decrease or improvement since their previous test.

(3) The employer must make sure each employee's annual audiogram is compared to his or her baseline audiogram by an audiologist, otolaryngologist, another qualified physician, or the technician conducting the test to determine if a standard threshold shift has occurred.

If the annual audiogram indicates that an employee has suffered a standard threshold shift, the employer may obtain a retest within thirty days and consider the results of the retest as the annual audiogram.

(4) The employer must make sure that an audiologist, otolaryngologist, or other qualified physician sees any annual audiogram that indicates a standard threshold shift.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 49.17.010, 49.17.040, 49.17.050, and 49.17.060. WSR 20-21-091, § 296-307-63615, filed 10/20/20, effective 11/20/20; WSR 05-01-166, § 296-307-63615, filed 12/21/04, effective 4/2/05.]