

All you need to know about pre-employment medicals

What is a pre-employment medical?

In many industries and workplaces, medical assessments are considered an essential part of the recruitment process. Pre-employment medicals enable employers to hire workers who meet the health and safety demands of the role.

A pre-employment medical is a comprehensive occupational health examination that is commonly requested in the recruitment stage. The medical evaluates several body functions engaged in workplace activities, such as vision and hearing. General health is also covered in the medical history and examination components.

There are certain health and safety requisites that candidates must demonstrate the ability to either meet completely or with an aid. An example of this may be the use of prescription lenses to correct poor vision.

Candidates must consider how their health and personal choices may influence their ability to meet job requirements prior to applying. This is especially relevant for roles in a high-risk industry.

What is involved in a pre-employment medical assessment?

Pre-employment medical examinations are conducted in a clinical setting by trained occupational health professionals that test a range of components.

These differ depending on the industry, company and role requirements, however, are typically a combination of:

Medical history

The health practitioner will ask the candidate questions about their past and present medical history. This questionnaire will cover health conditions, injuries, disabilities, vaccinations, health and fitness habits. Applicants should always be honest when completing this section of the health assessment. False information can compromise safety and create risk in the workplace. Under certain state and territory workers' compensation act's, full disclosure of medical history is required prior to claiming¹.

Medical examination

The medical examination component generally consists of an assessment of the candidate's cardiovascular (heart), respiratory (chest) and auditory (ear) systems. The nurse will also check the candidate's blood pressure (BP) and body mass index (BMI).





Spirometry (lung function test)

A spirometry is conducted by the candidate blowing into a mouthpiece (spirette). This action generates a reading that indicates their lung function. Spirometry tests are often used to identify asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).

Audiometry (hearing test)

An audiometry test measures the candidate's ability to hear different frequencies, pitches and sounds. Audiometry tests can identify any hearing loss (mild, moderate or severe) the candidate might have.

Vision

The vision test determines the candidate's visual acuity, colour perception and any need for corrective lenses.

Urinalysis

A urinalysis is a test that uses a candidate's urine sample to identify health conditions such as diabetes.

Drug and alcohol screen (DAS)

Many employers request a DAS to confirm whether the candidate is in breach of company policy. The screen will measure alcohol concentration in the blood and check for any illicit and prescription drug use. There are two common types of drug and alcohol screens. The first is completed in a clinic with either a urine cup, saliva swab or breath test. This is called an instant DAS, as results are available immediately. The second method is conducted in a pathology clinic and is called a lab DAS. The lab DAS is a more accurate test; however, the results take longer to finalise.

How to prepare for a pre-employment medical

Information on how to prepare for the assessment will be provided prior to the appointment. However, in general, candidates should:

- Arrive on time



- Bring valid photo ID (driver licence or passport)
- Bring corrective glasses – no contact lenses (as required)
- Bring Ventolin puffer or bronchodilator (if required e.g. asthmatic)
- Beforehand;
- Avoid loud noises and/or music
- Avoid smoking and/or consuming caffeine 8 hours prior

Pre-employment functional assessments

A pre-employment functional assessment is a physical examination conducted by an accredited Exercise Physiologist, Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist. Functional examinations are used to determine the candidate's ability to meet the physical requirements of their role. Many companies request functional assessments alongside pre-employment medicals. The assessor will test the candidate's range of motion, grip strength, positional tolerances, lifting and carrying capacity and cardiovascular fitness.

What does a pre-employment medical mean for the status of a job application?

Although pre-employment medical assessments are important, the result of the health assessment is only one component of the recruitment process. There are many factors that employers consider when processing a job application. The healthcare professional conducting the medical assessment can offer recommendations for the candidate's suitability for the role. However, it is up to the employer's discretion as to whether they wish to continue the recruitment process.

How can KINNECT help?

Pre-employment medicals take the stress out of recruitment by ensuring that candidates can safely perform the demands of the role. KINNECT offer a truly different experience when it comes to pre-employment medicals. Our systems and online platform allow us to engineer out many of the human errors commonly experienced in the industry.

We offer a turn-key pre-employment service tailored to your needs. Our friendly staff contact and liaise with your candidate to determine their location and availability. From there, your candidate will receive details regarding their booking and subsequent SMS and email reminders closer to the appointment date. Throughout the booking process, frequent communication is provided to you regarding the progress of the assessment.

Upon completion of the assessment, our team will compile the results and send directly to you via email. Results are sent within 8 business hours after the assessment is completed.

We look forward to assisting you in this stage of your recruitment process.

References

1. <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/workers-compensation>

