



THOMPSONS
SOLICITORS

STANDING UP FOR YOU

An introduction to
claiming compensation:

Road accidents

Our pledge to you

Thompsons Solicitors has been standing up for the injured and mistreated since Harry Thompson founded the firm in 1921. We have fought for millions of people, won countless landmark cases and secured key legal reforms.

We have more experience of winning personal injury and employment claims than any other firm – and we use that experience solely for the injured and mistreated.

Thompsons will stand up for you by:

Staying true to our principles – regardless of how difficult our job is made by government, employers or the insurance industry

Remaining committed to the trade union movement, working closely with them and with professional associations for the benefit of working people everywhere

Thompsons pledge that we will:

Work solely for the injured or mistreated

Refuse to represent insurance companies and employers

Invest our specialist expertise in each and every case

Fight for the maximum compensation in the shortest possible time

Be open and transparent about fees and costs

standing up for you

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“

I've been really pleased with the way my case has been handled. The accident had taken the gloss off my retirement but luckily my settlement will have a positive effect on me and my family's future.”

Grantley Charles James
Road accident client

Introduction

Every 30 seconds, somewhere in the world someone is killed in a road accident.*

Road accidents happen on a daily basis and the range and severity of injuries caused by road accidents is enormous.

Some injuries can have a short-term impact on day-to-day life and then heal permanently. Others can have life-changing consequences.

Whiplash injuries, for example, can heal relatively quickly but if they are still present after two years, are likely to be permanent.

Some injuries take time to develop – and the expenses involved in adapting to them can escalate.

Road accidents often affect victims' families, too. It can be a very real struggle for family members to provide the care and support needed, and specialist legal advice can open doors to much-needed financial support.

*Source: Brake, the road safety charity.

Why Thompsons?

Our specialist road accident teams have experience of winning cases, big and small, and work closely with groups such as Headway, the brain injury association, Brake and Road Peace North East to provide advice and support to victims of road accidents.

With more experience of winning personal injury claims than any other firm, Thompsons uses that experience solely for people who have been injured, never insurance companies or employers.

We are experts in settling high-value compensation claims in the shortest possible time and, where possible, secure interim payments to cover immediate medical costs for the injuries you have suffered. We strive to secure compensation for any ongoing care, rehabilitation and future support you, and your family, may need.

Neil's story

“I was travelling to work on the A57 towards Sheffield when a lorry veered over to my side of the road after the driver had fallen asleep at the wheel. We had a head-on collision, with both vehicles travelling at 50mph. I woke up in hospital, not remembering what had happened to me.

I'm quite thankful that I don't have any recollection of the accident. I spent three months in hospital, and was told I had sustained a diffused brain injury, which means the brain isn't injured in one specific place, the damage is all over the brain. I also suffered optical nerve damage and leg damage.

Staff at the hospital didn't expect me to live, but I started to show signs of improvement. I don't ever expect to fully recover from the loss of peripheral vision in my right eye and continue to have ongoing pain in my right leg, but my family were told that it was likely I would be paralysed on one side of my body. Luckily this wasn't the case, so it really does go to show that miracles can happen.

In 2009, my family contacted Thompsons Solicitors on my behalf. We had been working with another solicitors firm who were not working to our expectations. Thompsons Solicitors was absolutely fantastic, I could not have asked for a better team. My solicitor was so personal and I felt like she gave me a tailored service. They secured a very early settlement for me, and I was very pleased with the way Thompsons handled my case.”



Scan to learn about the road accident victims we've supported.



“

Thompsons Solicitors was absolutely fantastic, I could not have asked for a better team.

”

Neil Dexter
Road accident client

Making a road traffic accident compensation claim

Pedestrians

Pedestrians must be given the right of way by motorists. If you were hit by a car – even if it didn't stop – you may be able to make a claim.

It is important that you report the accident to the police and seek medical attention. Your solicitor will investigate further with the police and with witnesses as part of your claim.

Motorcyclists

Motorcycles represent approximately 1% of the traffic on UK roads but they account for 18% of all deaths and serious injuries. Motorcyclists are vulnerable drivers and a collision often leads to very serious injuries.

A claim would be made against the responsible party's insurers – this might be the driver of a car who collided with you or perhaps a landowner if a road in poor condition caused the accident.

Passengers

You may have been a passenger on public transport, in a taxi or in a private vehicle such as a car, van, bus or coach.

Drivers

If you were the driver of a car your claim would be against the person who was responsible for the accident – perhaps another driver was driving without due care and collided with you.

Cyclists

Cycling can be good fun, great exercise and an enjoyable leisure activity. However cyclists are very vulnerable on the road and have little protection if they are involved in any type of collision.

You should always seek medical attention after a cycling accident and if you have hit your head, you should speak to a solicitor who specialises in head and brain injuries.

Get the best evidence you can to help your claim

To make a successful claim for compensation it has to be proven that someone else was to blame for your accident and your injuries.

If you have been injured by another driver running into the back of your vehicle, responsibility will generally be admitted by the other driver's insurance company. However, in other circumstances it would help your claim if you can let us have details of independent witnesses to the accident and photographs of where the accident happened.

If you don't have this information, do not delay contacting us as we may be able to help get that information for you.

Timing can be vital

In the UK, there is a standard time limit of three years from the date of an accident in which a claim for compensation can be made. It is always best to seek legal advice as soon as possible so that a solicitor can thoroughly prepare your claim and, where appropriate, apply for interim payments to help ease the financial strain during your treatment if you are unable to work. Some exceptions to the time limit do exist, and special rules apply for children or adults who lack legal capacity, but it is always best to take legal advice as soon as possible.

What if the driver wasn't insured or didn't stop?

If you have been injured by someone who was uninsured, or who left the scene of the accident without stopping and giving their details, there are still ways we can help you.

The Motor Insurance Bureau (MIB) is an organisation that helps members of the public who have been affected by uninsured or untraced drivers.

We can contact the MIB on your behalf but, again, such accidents need to be reported within time limits so you should contact us as soon as possible.

How much compensation might be awarded?

The circumstances of road accidents are often similar; but the effect on the individual involved is unique and this makes every compensation claim unique.

Compensation is awarded for pain, suffering and the inability to do things you could do before your accident. It can also cover the effects that an accident has had on your physical mobility and mental health.

We will obtain expert medical reports on your injuries if necessary and will claim for all your losses and expenses, including; loss of earnings now and in the future, and the ongoing costs of your care and assistance.

This also includes the costs of having others help you with the everyday things that you used to do – such as DIY, gardening and car maintenance. We will also claim all travelling expenses incurred because of the accident, including those of close relatives visiting you in hospital.

What about State Benefit claims?

You may be entitled to state benefits, such as disablement benefit.

While these claims are made separately to your claim for compensation, Thompsons can provide advice, or you can contact your local Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) office.

Next steps

We hope this booklet has provided you with the information and guidance you need.

If you would like to talk to us to discuss your situation in more detail, you can contact us, without obligation, for free compensation claim advice.

Phone us: **0800 0 224 224**

Visit us: **www.thompsons.law**

Useful contacts

The Motor Insurance Bureau

01908 830 001
www.mib.org.uk

Department for Work and Pensions benefit enquiry line

Freephone 0800 88 22 00
Textphone 0800 24 33 55
www.dwp.gov.uk

ROSPA, The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents

0121 248 2000
www.rospa.com

SCARD, Support and Care After Road Death and Injury offers support to people affected by road death and injury.

0845 123 5542
www.scard.org.uk

Brake, the road safety charity

0845 603 8570
www.brake.org.uk

0800 0 224 224

For more information visit:

www.thompsons.law



@thompsons injury

The information contained in this booklet is not a substitute for legal advice. You should talk to a lawyer or adviser before making a decision about what to do. Thompsons Solicitors is a trading name of Thompsons Solicitors LLP and is regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority.

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