

How loud is too loud?

Noise is commonly measured in A-weighted decibels (dBA). The sound of a whisper is approximately 30 dBA, a normal conversation is about 60 dBA, and an ambulance siren is 150 dBA. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) prohibits exposure above 90 dBA as an 8-hour time-weighted average. If you are exposed at or above 85 dBA, you must be enrolled in Northwestern's HCP.

Generally, if you need to shout to speak to someone three feet away, the work area is probably too loud. If you believe there may be unsafe noise levels in your work area, contact your supervisor or