



HOW MUCH MONEY IS A PERSONAL INJURY CASE WORTH?

by Jonathan Dixon

How much is a personal injury case worth? A fair settlement for an accident/injury case is an amount that will adequately pay you for your expenses and injuries. That includes your medical bills, the cost of repairing your car (or whatever other personal property of yours that may have been damaged), lost time from your job and lost wages, as well as a fair amount to repay you for the pain you have suffered due to the accident.

Before you can come to any settlement, first you need to complete your medical treatment for your injuries. All of your medical bills should be factored in; it is unwise to negotiate any settlement until all of your medical treatment is complete and you know how much your total medical bills are going to be. The same goes for any repairs to your car (as well as any other damage to your personal property). You will need to know how much all of the bills or estimates are before you can negotiate any settlement.

If the accident has caused you to lose time from your job and you have lost earnings and wages you would otherwise have gotten, these losses are recoverable, also. These damages should be factored into the settlement amount.

You may also be in pain after the accident; this, too, should be factored in. The common expression for the discomfort, pain, and aggravation resulting from injuries suffered in an accident is “pain and suffering.” For better or for worse, the expression “pain and suffering” is often ridiculed because it is associated with slick lawyers promising a big windfall in late night TV commercials. Also, “pain and suffering” is sometimes highly subjective; some people are simply stronger and healthier than others, while others are more vulnerable, and injuries that may be minor for one person are not minor at all for someone else. As well, soft tissue injuries – perhaps the most common type of injury in auto accidents – are not as easy to diagnose and verify as injuries like broken bones (which are, of course, obvious). All of these factors combine to make people highly suspicious of so-called “pain and suffering” damages. Nevertheless, you know your body – you know what’s normal pain for you – you know how you felt before the accident, and how you feel after the accident – you know how slow or how fast your recovery after the accident has been. Listen to yourself. Whether anyone ridicules your so-called “pain and suffering” or not, you are entitled to fair compensation for the pain and aggravation you have gone through due to your injuries from the accident.

One last word: you are entitled to monetary compensation not as a means to get rich. No one can take your pain away, but they can offer you money as the only viable means of recompense.