

# Employment Insurance (EI) Sickness Benefits

Revised March 20, 2020

**The response to Covid 19 has been evolving at a rapid pace and you are advised to check the Covid 19 Service Canada website for updates.**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>

**The response to Covid 19 has been evolving at a rapid pace and at this time these temporary measures have been added to EI Sick benefits:**

For employees affected by COVID-19 and placed in quarantine or isolation the following temporary measures apply:

- The one-week waiting period for EI sickness benefits will be waived for new claimants who are quarantined so they can be paid for the first week of their claim;
- Establishing a new dedicated toll-free phone number to support enquiries related to waiving the EI sickness benefits waiting period;
- People claiming EI sickness benefits due to quarantine will not have to provide a medical certificate;
- People who cannot complete their claim for EI sickness benefits due to quarantine may apply later and have their EI claim backdated to cover the period of delay.

After applying for EI Sick benefits contact Service Canada to inform them your claim is COVID-19 related and request to have the waiting period waived.

- Telephone: 1-833-381-2725 (toll-free)
- Teletypewriter (TTY): 1-800-529-3742

## EI SICK BENEFITS

### *How do I qualify for sickness benefits?*

With respect to sickness benefits, the qualifying conditions stipulate that you must have accumulated 600 hours of insurable employment during the qualifying period and must have an interruption of earnings from employment. In addition, you must demonstrate that you are incapable of work by reason of a prescribed illness, injury or quarantine and that you would be otherwise available for work. When you apply for sickness benefits, you must also obtain a medical certificate signed by your doctor. You will know if you need to submit your medical certificate when you complete the online application process. Be sure to keep this certificate in a safe place, since you may be asked to provide it later.

### *How long will I receive EI sickness benefits?*

EI sickness benefits can be paid for a maximum period of 15 weeks, depending on how long you are unable to work.

### *Do I have to submit EI reports to receive sickness benefits?*

Yes. After you apply for EI benefits, you must complete and submit EI reports to get the benefits you are entitled to receive. During the period your EI claim is active, you have to submit reports to Service Canada every two weeks that show you are still entitled to receive EI benefits.

### *Do I have to serve a 1 week waiting period?*

Before you can start receiving EI benefits, there is a one-week waiting period during which you will not be paid. You usually serve the waiting period at the beginning of your benefit period, unless you receive earnings during the first two weeks. In that case, the waiting period will start during the first week you should begin to receive benefits.

If you already received EI benefits during the last 52 weeks and you served the one-week waiting period, you will not have to serve an additional waiting period if you reactivate your claim.

### *What will happen if I work or receive other payments during my benefit period?*

If you work while receiving EI sickness benefits, the entire amount you earn will be deducted dollar for dollar from your benefits.

### ***When you receive other payments:***

#### **The following types of income will be deducted from your EI sickness benefits:**

- Other income from employment (including self-employment), such as commissions;
- Payments received as compensation for a work accident or an occupational illness, such as compensation for lost wages;
- Payments received under a group health insurance plan or a group wage loss replacement plan;
- Certain payments received under an accident insurance plan to replace lost wages;
- Retirement income from a retirement plan, a military or police pension, the Canada Pension Plan, the Quebec Pension Plan, or provincial employment-based plans;
- Allowances, amounts, or other benefits paid under provincial legislation, such as benefits under the Quebec Parental Insurance Program.

### ***Other types of income have no impact on your EI sickness benefits, including:***

- Disability benefits;
- Survivor or dependent benefits;
- Workers' compensation benefits paid under specific regulations;
- Additional insurance benefits paid under a private plan approved by Service Canada (for example, payments for pain and suffering or medical expenses that you receive from an insurance company after you have been injured in a car accident);
- Additional sickness benefits paid by your employer from a supplemental unemployment benefit plan (as long as the income, benefits, and additional amounts combined do not exceed 100% of your weekly earnings);
- Sickness or disability payments received under a private wage loss replacement plan;
- Retroactive salary increases.

### ***When you receive money during the waiting period:***

Any amounts you receive that are allocated to the one-week waiting period, including vacation pay or severance pay, will be deducted dollar for dollar from the first three weeks of benefits that you are entitled to receive.

### ***Am I allowed to leave Canada while receiving EI sickness benefits?***

You can only leave Canada and continue to receive EI sickness benefits if you are outside Canada to obtain medical treatment that is not offered or immediately available in a hospital, medical clinic, or equivalent health institution in Canada. If you decide on your own initiative to go to another country to rest or recuperate, you are not entitled to benefits.

## ***COVID-19 EI Sickness Temporary Measures***

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