

## **Employment Insurance and You: A Shared Responsibility**

The Employment Insurance (EI) program provides Canadians with temporary financial assistance while they are unemployed, participating in an apprenticeship or a work-sharing program, pregnant, caring for a newborn or newly adopted child or children, sick/injured, caring for a family member with a significant risk of death, or providing care or support to a critically ill family member.

The right to receive benefits involves a shared responsibility between Service Canada and you, our client.

### **Service Canada's responsibilities**

#### **When you request EI benefits, we aim to:**

- give you prompt and courteous service;
- advise you of the programs and services available to you;
- serve you in the official language of your choice;
- establish a claim for benefits, if you meet the qualifying conditions specified in the *Employment Insurance Act and Regulations*;
- process your claim within the same timeframe regardless of how you apply-online, in person or by mail;
- give you accurate information about your claim, including how you may share Parental benefits with your EI-eligible spouse or partner, Compassionate Care or Family Caregiver benefits with other EI-eligible family members; and whether or not you will be required to serve a one-week waiting period;
- let you know about decisions we've made about your claim and explain the process to follow if you disagree with a decision.

### **Your responsibilities**

#### **When requesting EI Regular benefits, including Fishing benefits, you must:**

- be capable of and available for work and unable to obtain suitable employment;
- actively search for and accept offers of suitable employment. For further information on what constitutes suitable employment, visit the Employment Insurance section of the Service Canada website at [servicecanada.gc.ca](http://servicecanada.gc.ca)
  - conduct job search activities that increase your opportunities to find suitable employment, such as:
    - assessing employment opportunities;
    - preparing a résumé or cover letter;
    - registering for job search tools or with electronic job banks or employment agencies;
    - attending job search workshops or job fairs;
    - networking;
    - contacting prospective employers;

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- submitting job applications;
  - attending interviews;
  - undergoing evaluations of competencies.
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- keep a detailed record as proof of your job search efforts to find suitable employment as we may ask you to provide that proof at any time. Therefore you must keep your job search record for 6 years;
  - you **are not** required to have employers sign your job search form or provide you with a letter confirming that you have applied for a job;
  - let us know when you refuse any offers of employment;
  - report all periods when you are not available for work;
  - provide all the required information and documents;
  - keep your appointments with our office;
  - notify us of any separation from employment and the reasons for the separation;
  - report any absences from your area of residence and/or any absence from Canada;
  - report all employment, whether you work for someone else or yourself;
  - accurately report all employment earnings before deductions in the week(s) in which you earn them, as well as any other money you may receive.

**When requesting Sickness benefits you must:**

- accurately report all periods of incapacity;
- obtain a medical certificate that confirms the duration of your incapacity;
- provide all other required information and documents;
- report any absences from your area of residence and/or any absence from Canada;
- report all employment, whether you work for someone else or for yourself;
- accurately report all employment earnings before deductions, in the week(s) in which they were earned, as well as any other monies you may receive.

**When requesting Compassionate Care benefits you must:**

- provide an authorization to release a medical certificate and a medical certificate completed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner indicating that your ill family member has a significant risk of death within the next 26 weeks (six months) and requires your care and support;
- provide all required information and documents;
- notify Service Canada of any situation that may arise which could affect EI benefits; for example, if your gravely ill family member dies or recovers;
- report all employment, whether you work for someone else or yourself;
- accurately report all employment earnings before deductions, in the week(s) in which they were earned, as well as any other monies you may receive;
- decide with other eligible family members who will serve the waiting period if Compassionate Care, Parental or Family Caregiver benefits are shared.
- inform us whether you or the other family members are requesting Family Caregiver benefits in relation to the same gravely ill family member.

**When requesting Maternity or Parental benefits you must:**

- provide all required information and documents;
- provide our office with your child's actual date of birth;
- in the case of an adoption, provide the date of the child's placement with you, and the name and address of the adoption authority;
- report if you stop providing care for your child;
- report all employment, whether you work for someone else or for yourself;
- accurately report all employment earnings before deductions in the week(s) in which they were earned, as well as any other monies you may receive.

**When requesting Family Caregiver benefits, you must:**

- provide an authorization to release a medical certificate and submit a medical certificate completed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner indicating that your family member is critically ill and requires your care or support;
- provide all required information and documents;
- notify Service Canada of any situation that may arise which could affect EI benefits; for example, if your critically ill family member dies or recovers to the point that they no longer require your care or support;
- report all employment, whether you work in self-employment or for someone else;
- accurately report all employment earnings before deductions, in the week(s) in which they were earned, as well as any other money you may receive. If your earnings come from self-employment, you may deduct operating expenses before declaring the amount;
- decide with the other eligible family members who will serve the waiting period if Family Caregiver benefits are shared.
- inform us whether you or other family members are requesting Compassionate Care benefits in relation to the same critically family member.

## **Other important information**

**Payment of benefits**

Your EI payments may be delayed if, for example, you received vacation or severance pay from your employer. If your EI payments are delayed or affected in any way, we will let you know in writing.

**Waiting period**

Usually, there is a one-week waiting period at the start of your claim when you will not receive any benefits. There are certain circumstances, however when we can waive the waiting period.

**Reports**

If you have chosen not to complete reports while claiming Maternity, Parental, Compassionate Care, Family Caregiver or Apprenticeship benefits, you must inform Service Canada immediately if you have any earnings and/or employment to declare.

**Apprentices**

To be eligible for EI as an apprentice, you must be taking courses in an apprenticeship program the EI Commission has referred you to and you must have stopped working to attend the course.

**Absence from Canada**

You must report any absences from Canada. You may be able to receive EI benefits when you are temporarily outside Canada. For example, you can receive Sickness benefits if you are in the United States receiving medical treatment that is not readily or immediately available in Canada. You may also file a claim for Maternity, Parental, Compassionate Care or Family Caregiver benefits if you reside outside of Canada and are covered by Canada's EI program.

**Interest**

We charge interest on any debts you incur as a result of misrepresentation. We calculate interest on overdue debts daily, and that interest compounds monthly on the amount owing at the average Bank of Canada rate plus 3%.

**False or misleading statements**

If you knowingly withhold information or make a false or misleading statement, you have committed an act or omission that could result in an overpayment of benefits as well as severe penalties or prosecution. However, if you notify Service Canada of your actions, we can waive monetary penalties or prosecution if we are not already investigating the matter.

**Money owing**

If you owe any money to the Employment Insurance program, or the Canada Revenue Agency, or if the Department of Justice is garnisheeing your wages for unpaid family support, we may have to deduct money directly from your benefits. To make repayment arrangements, call the number indicated on your overpayment notice.