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**Employment Insurance****What is Employment Insurance?**

Employment Insurance gives temporary financial help to unemployed workers who meet specific eligibility criteria.

Who can receive Employment Insurance benefits?

To be eligible for benefits you must meet the following criteria:

- you have contributed to the Employment Insurance fund;
- you have worked for a minimum period of time in a job that contributes to the fund.

You may be able to receive benefits if your reason for unemployment is one of the following:

- losing a job through no fault of your own (regular benefits);
- the birth or adoption of a child (maternity or parental benefits);
- care for a newborn baby (maternity or parental benefits);
- inability to work due to illness (sickness benefits);
- providing care or support to a gravely ill family member or someone who considers you to be a family member, who is at risk of dying within 26 weeks (compassionate care benefits);
- enrolment in a training program approved by Service Canada (regular benefits);
- work sharing, in specific circumstances (regular benefits).

How do I contribute to the Employment Insurance fund?

If you are a worker, you automatically contribute through deductions from your pay.

How long do I need to have contributed to the fund to qualify?

To receive sickness, maternity or parental benefits, you must have worked 600 hours in the last 52 weeks, in a job contributing to the fund. The hours you need for regular benefits depends on the unemployment rate where you live. That rate also decides how long you can receive benefits. In some cases, a minimum of 910 hours may be needed to qualify for benefits.

How do I obtain Employment Insurance Benefits?

First, you must file an application. The application is only available in English or French and you must fill it out in English or French. Application forms are available on-line at servicecanada.gc.ca or at your local Service Canada Centre. Service Canada Centres are offices where fully-trained staff are ready to help you find the information you need on all Government of Canada programs and services.

Then, if your application is approved, you will have to complete reports of all earnings and also any absences from your residence during the time you receive benefits. This will ensure you get paid and avoid repayments or penalties. The reports are only available in English and French and must be completed in one of those languages.

When should I apply for Employment Insurance benefits?

You should apply immediately after your last day of work. You might lose benefits if you do not apply within four weeks after your last day of work.

What documents and information do I need to apply for Employment Insurance?

- **Social Insurance Number** - If your Social Insurance Number begins with a 9, you need to give proof of your immigration status and work permit;
- **A Record of Employment** from each job held over the last 52 weeks. If you are applying for **regular Employment Insurance benefits**, your employer must give you a Record of Employment within five days after your last day of work. If you do not have your Record of Employment **after 14 days** from the last day for which you were paid, you must give proof of employment such as pay stubs;
- **Personal identification** such as your driver's license, birth certificate or passport if you are applying in person;
- **Your detailed version of facts** if you quit or were dismissed from any job in the last 52 weeks;
- **Details about your most recent employment:** Your total salary before deductions including tips and commissions, your salary before deductions for your last week of work — from Sunday to your last day worked — gross amounts received or to be received: vacation pay, severance pay, pension, pay in lieu of notice or lay off and other monies;
- **A medical certificate** if you are claiming sickness benefits;
- **The Social Insurance Number of the other parent** if you are applying for parental benefits;
- **A medical certificate for compassionate care benefits** if you are applying for compassionate care benefits, as well as information about the gravely ill person.

How can I get more information?

This is general information, offered as a convenience only. For more information on Employment Insurance, visit servicecanada.gc.ca or call toll-free:

English: 1 800 206-7218

French: 1 800 808-6352

Tele-type: 1 800 529-3742