

LTD PLANS FOR UNION MEMBERS TO THE EMPLOYER:

LONG TERM DISABILITY (LTD) CLAIM CHECKLIST

For New Claimants under the:

- **Health Science Professionals Collective Agreement (HSP Agreement)**
- **Health Services and Support Community Subsector Collective Agreement (Community Agreement)**
- **Health Services and Support Facilities Subsector Collective Agreement (Facilities Agreement)**
- **Nurses' Provincial Collective Agreement (Nurses' Agreement)**
- **Resident Doctors of BC Collective Agreement (Resident Doctors Agreement)**

- Review LTD Claims sections in the HBT Administration Guide.**
- Obtain all the healthcare LTD claim forms and information sheets from the HBT website:**
<https://www.hbt.ca/forms-guides/>
- Confirm which Trust your employee's LTD coverage is administered under and place a checkmark beside the applicable Trust on the Claimant's Statement, Employer's Statement and Attending Physician's Statement.**
- Give the claimant and physician forms (or the links) to your employee.** Ensure you indicate the correct Trust (Policy number) on each form.
- Counsel your employee on the LTD benefit provisions and the claims process. Explain the LTD benefit to the employee:**
 - Who pays?** Claims are paid out of the applicable Trust's trust fund. Healthcare employers and employees pay contributions to the trust fund, which are then used to pay benefits to claimants. Canada Life's role is to assess, manage and pay claims.
 - What is the LTD waiting period?** The qualification (waiting) period is:
 - **Community, Facilities, HSP and Resident Doctors Agreements**5 months
 - **Nurses' Agreement**4 months
 - How much is the LTD benefit?**
 - **Community and Facilities Agreements:** The LTD benefit is the greater of: 70% of the first \$4,053* of pre-disability earnings plus 50% of excess earnings; or 66 2/3% of pre-disability earnings.
 - **Nurses' Agreement:** The LTD benefit is the greater of: 70% of the first \$7,084* (RN's) or \$4,194* (LPN's) of pre-disability earnings plus 50% of excess earnings; or 66 2/3% of pre-disability earnings.

- **HSP Agreement:** The LTD benefit is the greater of: 70% of the first \$6,718* of pre-disability earnings plus 50% of excess earnings; or 66 2/3% of pre-disability earnings.
- **Resident Doctors:** The LTD benefit is the greater of 70% of the first \$4,191* of pre-disability earnings plus 50% of excess earnings; or 66-2/3% of pre-disability earnings.

*As at April 1, 2021. Adjusted annually for new claims based on increases in the applicable weighted average wage rate. If the claim is accepted, the claimant's LTD benefit will be adjusted ("indexed") every 4 years based on increases in the weighted average wage rate under the applicable collective agreement.

Is the LTD benefit taxable? Yes

When do payments start? Benefits are paid monthly in arrears, starting one month after the end of the qualification period. Payments are made directly to the claimant's bank account via electronic funds transfer (EFT).

Accommodation? For information on the employer's obligations to accommodate employees during the LTD qualification period (see above) or during the LTD "own occupation period" (see below), refer to:

- **Community Agreement:** "Long-Term Disability Insurance Plan" Appendix
- **Facilities Agreement:** "LTD – Early Accommodation Measures for Employees" MOA
- **HSP Agreement:** "Early Accommodation Measures for Employees" Appendix

How long? Benefits are paid for a specified period of time if the employee is medically unable to do their own job. This is defined as the "own occupation period" and its duration is:

- **Community and Facilities Agreements** 19 months
- **HSP, Nurses and Resident Doctors Agreements**..... 24 months

After the "own occupation period", benefits continue to be paid if the employee has not recovered and does not have the education, training and experience to do another job that will pay 70% of the current rate of pay for the employee's pre-disability job. This is defined as the "any occupation period". LTD benefits continue to the earliest of receiving the Early Retirement Incentive Benefit, recovery, death or age 65.

Not always long term. Although the benefit is called "Long Term Disability", it is really a "salary continuance plan". If the employee's claim is approved, it does not necessarily mean that the disability will be lengthy. If the employee can eventually return to work (own job or another job), the employer, union and/or a Rehabilitation Consultant at Canada Life will provide assistance. See also "Rehabilitation and Returning to Work" below. If a return to work is not possible, then the LTD benefit is there to provide an income for as long as the employee qualifies.

Rehabilitation and Returning to Work. Canada Life's Rehabilitation Consultants offer many opportunities that help claimants return to work through Approved Rehabilitation Plans (ARP): return to work programs, vocational assessment, work conditioning, counseling, rehabilitative employment, and/or retraining for another job. A claimant is required to participate in an ARP.

The joint employer-union sponsored Enhanced Disability Management Program (EDMP) may provide the employee with medical intervention, transitional work, graduated return to work, workplace modifications, vocational rehabilitation or training. EDMP participants who are on LTD receive regular reviews,

monitoring and support and, as appropriate, services under the ARP will be aligned to ensure support for a return to work.

Other benefits? While receiving LTD benefits, the employee's Group Life, AD&D and LTD coverage will continue. The employer continues to pay the Group Life and AD&D contributions and will issue an annual T4 for those taxable benefits. The employee's MSP coverage also continues through the employer. Employees can elect to continue Dental and/or Extended Health coverage if they pay 50% of the contributions. Such an election must be made at the time the LTD claim is accepted and contributions must be paid to the employer monthly in advance.

Frequency of medical? Canada Life assess claims based on the medical evidence they receive. When a claim is accepted, Canada Life will periodically ask for updated medical information. The frequency of requests depends on the status of the employee's medical condition. The employee pays the cost of obtaining medical information.

Appeals. If the claim is denied and the employee disagrees with the decision, the claim can be appealed. The employee sends any new medical information to Canada Life and requests that the claim be re-assessed. If Canada Life do not change their decision, the employee can then request that the claim be reviewed by a panel of three physicians (a Claims Review Committee).

Nurses and Health Science Professionals must submit an appeal within 2 years of Canada Life's last decision letter, unless there are good and sufficient reasons to extend the time period. (Not applicable to the Community and Facilities Agreements.)

Review the claims process with the employee.

When to claim. Claims are to be sent to Canada Life two months prior to the end of the LTD qualification period unless the employee is in receipt of WorkSafeBC benefits [See WorkSafe LTD Claim Notification Process section in the HBT Administration Guide]. It is important that claims are not late. (Note: If the employee has worked in the qualification period, the claim should still be submitted at the normal time.)

Forms. The applicable forms are to be completed by the employee, employer and physician. All sections must be completed by the parties. Indicate the Policy number and complete the relevant employer section of the Claimant Statement **before** giving the employee the claimant and physician forms. Employers are **not** required to wait to submit the complete package to Canada Life. You have the option to submit the Employer's Statement to Canada Life without the rest of the claim information in order to ensure timelines are met. The employee and physician may also submit their forms to Canada Life independently. Canada Life will follow up with the employee if there is any information missing.

Obtain complete medical information. The employee should make sure the physician includes all test results, specialists' reports, etc. If material is missing, the claim assessment will be delayed. The physician may send the information directly to Canada Life, or the employee may give it to the employer in a sealed envelope for submission to Canada Life. The employer should then forward the **unopened** envelope directly to Canada Life to ensure the employees' privacy is protected.

Other benefits. Does the employee wish to purchase Dental and/or Extended Health benefits when the claim commences?

Sick leave. How does the employee wish to utilize any unused sick leave credits?

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- Apply for other income.** Has the employee applied for all other sources of disability income that the employee may qualify for at this time (e.g. EI, WorkSafeBC, ICBC, CPP)? The employee must advise Canada Life of any other disability income, and LTD benefits will be reduced by the other disability income (excluding EI, as EI benefits are reduced by LTD).

The employee will be required, by Canada Life, to apply for CPP disability benefits when the medical evidence indicates the employee may meet the CPP test of disability ("severe and prolonged"); or the employee may choose to apply earlier.

LTD is not reduced by benefits from private insurance and certain association plans.

LTD benefits are not reduced by wage loss benefits paid by ICBC if the motor vehicle accident occurred on or after May 17, 2018, as those ICBC benefits are reduced by LTD. However Canada Life will still require information on the ICBC claim.

- Decision soon?** If all the information is sent to Canada Life with the claim, the employee should hear from the case manager within two weeks. If information is missing (which unfortunately is often the case), Canada Life will send the employee a letter requesting the material within two weeks. Note: Canada Life will not assess the claim until all information is received.

- Retirement instead?** For employees age 60 and over: Does the employee wish to look into whether early retirement would be a better financial option than LTD? (The employee should still submit the LTD claim in the meantime.)

- Complete all sections of the Employer's Statement.** Ensure that each section of the form is filled out by the appropriate staff member, and that the information is complete and accurate. The job description must describe the physical and cognitive demands of the employee's own job (i.e. not generic).

- Send the following to Canada Life at the appropriate office:**

- Calgary Disability Management Services: calgary.dms@canadalife.com
- Langley Disability Management Services: langley.dms@canadalife.com
- Vancouver Disability Management Services: vancouver.dms@canadalife.com

If you are unable to email, documentation may be submitted by mail and should be directed to:
The Canada Life Assurance Company, PO Box 1055, Winnipeg, MB R3C 2X4

- Claimant's Statement:** If any information is missing, Canada Life will contact the employer or employee directly.
- Attending Physician's Statement** and reports from all consulting specialists: These reports may be given to you in a sealed envelope to ensure confidentiality or sent directly to Canada Life by the Physician.
- Employer's Statement:** Ensure you have checked the box for the correct Trust. Note: the Job Description is to be completed by the employee's immediate supervisor. Include Job Demands Analysis for the employee's position (if available).
- Employer's Statement of Available Positions** (if applicable).
- Calculation of Part-time Earnings** (if applicable): Complete this form for part-time employees.

