



Alberta

MyCHOICE

Long Term Disability Income Continuance Plan



Long Term Disability Income Continuance Plan

The Long Term Disability Income (LTDI) Continuance Plan is designed to provide income replacement if you are unable to work due to an illness or injury. This coverage is in force for permanent or temporary salaried employees. The premium is cost-shared 50/50 between you and the Employer. For Premium Information, refer to your MyCHOICE *Premium Rate Sheet*.

CLAIMS ADJUDICATOR

All claims are adjudicated by The Canada Life Assurance Company (Canada Life).

LTDI BENEFITS

The LTDI Plan ensures that you receive 70% of your pre-disability salary.

Your LTDI entitlement will be reduced by the amount of income you receive from the following sources:

1. Canada Pension Plan disability benefits;
2. Workers' Compensation benefits;
3. Benefits from any other employer-sponsored group disability plans;
4. Vacation leave pay;
5. Income from other employment or self-employment; and/or
6. Loss of income benefits under an auto insurance plan.

LTDI benefits are taxable income.

ELIGIBILITY AND EFFECTIVE DATE OF COVERAGE AND PREMIUMS

Coverage is mandatory. **Permanent salaried** employees are eligible and automatically covered under the LTDI Plan on the first day of the pay period following three months of continuous employment without absence due to illness or disability, except for casual illness. **Temporary salaried** employees are eligible for the LTDI Plan on the first day of the pay period following one year of continuous salaried employment. Coverage is in effect as of the first day of that pay period and the full employee portion of the premium will be deducted.

TERMINATION OF COVERAGE AND PREMIUMS

Your coverage ceases on the earliest of the following:

- The date of your 65th birthday
- The date you transfer to a position which is not eligible for coverage or are terminated from government service, if not in receipt of benefits
- The date you resign from government service

Premiums cease on the earliest of the following:

- The last day of the pay period in which you are 80 days from reaching your 65th birthday
- The last day of the pay period in which you transfer to an ineligible position or are terminated from government service
- The last day of the pay period in which you resign from government service

MAKING A CLAIM

You are eligible to apply for LTDI benefits if an illness or injury has caused you to miss work for 80 consecutive work days (or an equivalent number of work hours). This 80-day period is the plan's elimination period. Usually General Illness benefits are payable for this period. If you are approved for LTDI benefits, your payments will begin **AFTER** the elimination period is over.

A LTDI Liaison Officer has been designated for each government ministry. This person serves as your primary contact when you apply for LTDI benefits and throughout the period when you are receiving benefits.

When you apply, Canada Life determines if you qualify for LTDI benefits. Once receiving benefits the adjudicator determines, based on medical evidence received, when you are fit to participate in a rehabilitation program or, the date you are no longer entitled to benefits and are able to return to the workplace or, gainful employment.

REHABILITATION

Rehabilitation programs are designed to assist you in returning to employment. These programs include:

- Periods of trial employment;
- Part-time return to work;
- Work of a different nature;
- On-the-job training; or
- Vocational training.

Full or partial LTDI benefits are payable while you are participating in an approved program depending on whether you receive income from rehabilitation employment. In most cases, rehabilitation should lead to your full return to work.

GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT

Gainful employment means suitable work in any occupation:

- For which you are medically capable of performing;
- For which you have the necessary education, skills, training and experience; and

- Which provides you with at least 60% of your pre-disability income.

If Canada Life determines that you are not able to perform your regular duties, but you are medically fit for gainful employment, you are eligible to receive LTDI benefits for up to three months from the time of this decision, or until you find a suitable job — whichever comes first. If not gainfully employed after three months, you may be eligible for a severance package.

INCOME MAINTENANCE

Income maintenance is available when Canada Life has made the determination you are capable of performing gainful employment, and you have not received a severance payment. Income maintenance is payable for up to 36 months from the date Canada Life made the determination you are capable of performing gainful employment. Income maintenance equals the difference between the pre-disability salary and the gainful employment income.

LIMITATIONS

LTDI benefits are not paid for:

- Disabilities caused by self-inflicted injuries or illness;
- Disabilities caused by participation in criminal activities or war;
- Medical conditions which existed and for which you received treatment three months before the effective date of your employment. This limitation does not apply after you have been employed in a permanent or temporary position for two consecutive years and if you are not absent due to your pre-coverage medical condition(s) when this two-year period is completed;
- Any period during which you are not under the continuous care of a physician or following the treatment your physician prescribes; or
- Any period during which you are incarcerated in a prison or similar institution.

A Benefits Program for Government of Alberta Union Employees

CONTINUATION OF BENEFITS WHILE YOU ARE RECEIVING LTDI PAYMENTS

If you participated in the MyCHOICE group life insurance, extended medical, prescription drugs and dental plans prior to receiving LTDI benefits, your participation in these plans continues for as long as you continue to receive LTDI benefits. Your life insurance will be based at your pre-disability level of coverage. You and your employer continue to pay your respective portions of the premiums.

Your LTDI premium contributions are waived during the time you are receiving LTDI payments. Your public service pension contributions are paid by your employer. The period during which you are receiving LTDI benefits is considered pensionable service.

If after two years from the date of disability you continue to receive your LTDI payments, your Core Group Life Insurance and AD&D Insurance, and if applicable, Enhanced Life Insurance will remain in force without further premium payment at your pre-disability level of coverage. The waiver of premium will remain in effect throughout the period of disability until you are deemed fit for gainful employment, death or age 65, whichever comes first. If you have Dependent Life Insurance, you must continue to pay the full premium to keep that insurance in force.

TERMINATION OF LTDI BENEFITS

For **permanent salaried** employees, eligibility for LTDI benefits terminates on the earliest of:

- Fit for own or gainful employment;
- Termination of employment or retirement;
- Transfer to a position which is not included in the group eligible for the MyCHOICE benefits;
- 65th birthday; or
- Death.

For **temporary salaried** employees, eligibility for LTDI benefits terminates on the earliest of:

- Fit for own or gainful employment;
- Termination of employment or retirement;
- In receipt of LTDI benefits for 24 months;

- Transfer to a position which is not included in the group eligible for the MyCHOICE benefits;
- 65th birthday; or
- Death.

APPEALS

If your application for LTDI benefits is denied or ongoing benefits are terminated, you have the option of appealing.

There are two levels of appeal. You must file an appeal within 30 calendar days of receiving notice of the adjudication decision. Medical evidence or other written submissions in support of the filed appeal must be forwarded to Canada Life within 90 calendar days of receiving notice of their decision. Further information on the appeals process can be obtained from your LTDI Liaison Officer.

First Level

The first level of appeal is a review with Canada Life to discuss the claim. When all relevant information has been submitted or presented, Canada Life will review the claim and make a ruling. If Canada Life upholds the initial decision, you have the option of proceeding to the second level of appeal.

Second Level

If your first level appeal is denied, you may present your case to the LTDI Second Level Appeal Board. This board is made up of three individuals: a representative nominated by the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees; a representative nominated by the employer; and a third person agreed upon by both parties.

The decision of the LTDI Second Level Appeal Board is final and binding on all parties involved.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Contact your Service Alberta Employee Benefit and Support LTDI Liaison Officer. The LTDI Liaison Officer portfolio listing is found here: <http://www.servicelink.gov.ab.ca/582.html>