



# JSL Benefitknews

Special Edition November 2005

## Compassionate Care Benefits – When You Need to Take Care

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In 2004 the federal government introduced a new form of EI benefits especially designed for those caring for a seriously ill family member. It is hoped that compassionate care benefits will help employees provide care or support to a gravely ill family member at risk of dying without having to quit their job. In some cases, employees who have quit their jobs could still collect benefits provided they submit supporting documentation that leaving employment was the only reasonable alternative. In other words, all the necessary steps to avoid quitting employment was taken by the employee. This newsletter outlines details around the Compassionate Care Benefit should an employee of yours need to apply.

Based on specific criteria, the Compassionate Care Benefits may be paid to an applicant up to a maximum of 6 weeks (after satisfying a 2 week waiting period). The person who is absent from work is providing care or support to a gravely ill family member at risk of dying within 26 weeks.

To be eligible for compassionate care benefits you must apply and show that:

your regular weekly earnings from work have decreased by more than 40%; and  
you have accumulated 600 insured hours in the last 52 weeks or since the start of your last claim. This period is called the qualifying period.

The accumulated number of insured hours could be more if in the past, you applied for EI and received a warning letter for making a false statement.

## Who is considered a family member, and what is considered “care”?

You can receive compassionate care benefits to care for one of the following family member:

your child or the child of your spouse or common-law partner;  
your wife/husband or common-law partner;  
your father/mother;  
your father’s wife/mother’s husband;  
the common-law partner of your father/mother.

Common-law partner means a person who has been living in a conjugal relationship with that person for at least a year.

Care is defined as providing psychological or emotional support, arranging for care by a third party, or directly providing or participating in the actual care.

If there are a number of people in your family responsible for the ill family member, you can share the 6 weeks compassionate care benefits. The other members of your family must also apply and are eligible for these benefits.

## Required Documentation to Apply.

When applying for benefits, a medical certificate as proof that the ill family member needs care or support and is at risk of dying within 26 weeks. The medical certificate called ***“Medical certificate for Employment Insurance Compassionate Care Benefits”*** must be completed and signed by a medical doctor or other medical practitioner authorized to treat the gravely ill family member. Copy and paste this in your internet browser to download the required form.

[www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eforms/forms/ins5216e.pdf](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eforms/forms/ins5216e.pdf)

In some cases, another medical practitioner, such as a nurse practitioner, is accepted when. Check the government website for details in this case.

## What Else will you require?

**EI Application** - You can submit an EI application online or in person at your Service Canada Centre, and you should apply as soon as you stop working.

**Record of Employment (ROE)** - You’ll also need a Record of Employment (ROE) from your last employer. If you have your ROE from your last employer, apply



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immediately. If getting your ROE is a problem, you can complete a form "Request for Record of Employment" explaining what efforts you have made to obtain it.

**Social Insurance Number (SIN)** - If your SIN begins with a 9, you need to supply proof of your immigration status and work permit.

**Personal identification** - such as your driver's licence, birth certificate or passport if you are applying in person.

**Your complete bank information-** as shown on your cheque or bank statement — or a voided personalized blank cheque from your current account. This will ensure that your payment of benefits will be made directly to your bank account with Direct Deposit;

**Information about the ill family member-** such as first and family name, date of birth and residential address;

**Details regarding your most recent employment-** Such as total salary before deductions including commissions 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 pay.

All of the on-line government forms, and on-line application capabilities for the Compassionate Care Benefits can be located at:

[www.hrsdc.gc.ca/asp/gateway.asp?hr=en/ei/types/compassionate\\_care.shtml&hs=tyt#proof](http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/asp/gateway.asp?hr=en/ei/types/compassionate_care.shtml&hs=tyt#proof)

## How much will you receive?

The basic benefit rate for Compassionate Care Benefits is the same **at 55% of your average insured earnings**. The maximum EI benefits are \$413 per week. Your EI payment is a taxable income, meaning federal and provincial or territorial — if it applies — taxes will be deducted.

## What happens at Tax Time?

When you file your income tax return, you will not be required to repay any of the compassionate care benefits you received. But, if you received compassionate care and regular EI benefits within the same taxation year, you may be required to repay some or all of the regular benefits.

Details as outlined in this newsletter are valuable for your employees' reference. If you have company intranet capabilities, post this on your HR website so your employees know where to get answers to their questions should this situation arise.

