

Please note that the only change that's been made to EI is to [EI sickness benefits](#), and the work sharing program, where the one week waiting period is waived and those [claiming sickness benefits](#) are prioritized over others. A medical certificate is not required, but if members can get one, it certainly makes the process smoother.

Service Canada now has a dedicated line for inquiries on changes to EI sickness benefits: 1-833-381-2725

What is a waiting period and how has it changed?

- A waiting period is a period of time in which an employee does not receive EI Sickness Benefits.
- Normally, there is a one (1) week waiting period for EI Sickness Benefits, in which an employee would not receive payment. For example, if an employee were under quarantine or self-isolated for two (2) weeks, they would only receive one (1) week of EI Sickness Benefits.
- The Government has now waived the one (1) week waiting period. This means employees will now be able to access benefits for their period of absence, up to a maximum of 15 weeks.

Is a doctor's note required to access EI Sickness Benefits?

- Normally, a medical certificate (signed by a qualified medical professional) is required to access the benefits.
- As of March 11, 2020, the Government has stated that they are waiving the medical note for individuals required to go into quarantine by law or by a public-health official.
- Should the quarantine period or self-isolation period be extended, a signed medical certificate may still be necessary.

What does EI Sickness Benefits provide?

- Financial support for eligible workers who:
 - are unable to work for a medical reason (which now includes being subject to quarantine or self-isolation);
 - have experienced a decrease in regular weekly earnings of more than 40% for one week; and
 - have accumulated 600 insured hours of work in the 52 weeks before the start of the claim.

How much can an employee claim and for how long?

- EI Sickness Benefits pay 55% of an employee's insurable earnings, up to a maximum of \$573 per week, less applicable taxes.
- Employees can claim these benefits for a maximum of 15 weeks.

Service Canada:

- The one-week waiting period for [EI sickness benefits](#) will be waived for new claimants who are quarantined so they can be paid for the first week of their claim
- Priority EI application processing for EI sickness claims for clients under quarantine
- People claiming EI sickness benefits due to quarantine will not have to provide a medical certificate
- People who cannot complete their claim for EI sickness benefits due to quarantine may apply later and have their EI claim backdated to cover the period of delay