



Why maintain LTD coverage during a leave of absence?



You insure your house, your car, and your life. Why not your income?

One in five members will file a long term disability (LTD) claim in their career. 40% of LTD claimants are never able to return to work. The ETFO Provincial Long Term Disability Plan provides a safety net that will replace a percentage of your salary and provide pension plan protection should you be unable to work because of an illness or injury.

I am in good health. Why do I need this coverage?

If you are wondering why it is important to have LTD coverage, ask yourself these questions:

- If you became ill, could not work, and knew your sick leave credits would be exhausted before you were able to return to work, could you maintain your home and meet your financial obligations without salary protection?
- If you were disabled and unable to work, would you be prepared to accept a lower pension because contributions to your pension plan would no longer be made?

Income replacement is crucial for many employees who cannot work due to illness or injury.

Example: Mariama is diagnosed with cancer while on maternity leave. While undergoing cancer treatment, her leave of absence ends, and she is unable to return to work. Since Mariama has LTD coverage, she is eligible to apply for LTD benefits. Mariama will get credit towards the LTD waiting period from the date of disability and the benefits, payable on or after the date her leave is scheduled to end, which will help her replace her income while she is unable to work.

Under the terms of the ETFO Provincial LTD Plan, a leave of absence approved by the employer includes maternity, paternity, educational, sabbatical, and other general leaves of absence provided for in the collective agreement, as well as secondments. A leave of absence does not include leaves due to an illness or injury (sick leave or unpaid medical leave).

The ETFO Provincial LTD Plan specifies that when a member is on an employer-approved leave of absence, LTD coverage must be maintained for as long as a member is eligible for coverage. This is normally 24 consecutive months or the number of years negotiated under the local collective agreement. Secondments and maternity leaves are not included in the 24 consecutive months limitation.



Do I need to maintain my LTD coverage when I go on a part-time leave?

If a member is on an employer-approved part-time leave for reasons other than medical-related, the member must maintain LTD coverage. This is based on the full-time salary earned immediately prior to the leave for a maximum of 24 consecutive months.

What happens if I don't pay contributions while I am on a leave of absence?

If a member does not remit LTD contributions during the approved leave of absence, the member will continue to owe the contributions to the LTD plan and the contributions required during the leave of absence will be collected by the employer via retroactive contribution deduction upon the member's return to work.