



ADDITIONAL EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (EI) REGULAR BENEFITS FOR UNEMPLOYED WORKERS IN AFFECTED REGIONS

DETERMINING THE DURATION OF EI BENEFITS

The number of weeks of EI benefits available to unemployed workers is based on the unemployment rate in the region where they live when they are laid off. There are currently 62 EI economic regions across the country. The unemployment rate for each region is updated monthly, based on an average of the local rate for the three previous months.

SELECTING THE 12 EI ECONOMIC REGIONS

All 62 economic regions were evaluated, and 12 of them were selected because:

- they experienced an increase in the unemployment rate of two or more percentage points between March 2015 and February 2016;
- this increase was sustained for three consecutive months beyond the rate posted for use in the EI program between December 2014 and February 2015; and
- their unemployment rate between March 2015 and February 2016 did not return to within 1 percent of the rate observed in the December 2014 to February 2015 period.

The twelve hardest-hit economic regions have been identified. They are:

- Northern Alberta;
- Nunavut;
- Whitehorse;
- Newfoundland/Labrador;
- Sudbury;
- Northern Manitoba;
- Northern Saskatchewan;
- Calgary;
- Southern Alberta;
- Northern British Columbia;
- Northern Ontario; and
- Saskatoon.

The recent rise in unemployment in some regions has stretched the responsiveness of the EI system. Because the regional unemployment rates are based on the average rate for the three previous months, they do not reflect sudden and sustained declines in hiring rates and increases in layoffs, which can lead to longer unemployment for long-tenured workers.

The recent federal budget proposes to extend the duration of EI regular benefits by 5 weeks, up to a maximum of 50 weeks, for eligible claimants in 12 EI economic regions that have experienced sudden, sharp and sustained increases in unemployment.

Additional Employment Insurance (EI) regular benefits for unemployed workers in affected regions

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PDF Cat. No.: Em20-43/2016E-PDF
ISBN: 978-0-660-05039-3

ESDC Cat. No.: IN-483-04-16E