

# Employment Insurance and teachers



## Am I eligible for Employment Insurance?

All workers who meet Employment Insurance (EI) requirements are eligible to receive EI benefits. Teachers are no exception. There are, however, some variations to the rules because of contractual arrangements in the teaching profession, as follows:

- Teachers in pre-elementary, elementary, intermediate, secondary, technical, and vocational schools may be eligible for EI when their contract ends. However, if they are under a continuing contract, they are not eligible to receive EI during the Christmas, mid-winter, Easter, or summer breaks.
- Teachers above the secondary-school level (at universities, community colleges, and CEGEPs) are subject to the same rules as other claimants. Please see the following booklets, which are available from your local Service Canada Centre, for more information:
  - *Employment Insurance: Regular benefits*
  - *Employment Insurance: Maternity, parental and sickness benefits*
  - *Employment Insurance: Compassionate care*
- “Casual” or “substitute” teachers may be eligible for EI during the non-teaching periods in the year.



## How many hours do I need to work to qualify for EI?

The number of hours that teachers need to work to qualify for regular EI benefits is the same as for other workers. The following rules apply:

- Depending on the unemployment rate in your area, to qualify for EI, you must have worked between 420 and 700 insured hours within the last 52 weeks, or since the start of your last claim, whichever is shorter.
- If you are entering the work force for the **first time**, you will need to have worked a minimum of 910 insured hours in the last 52 weeks to qualify.
- If you are **re-entering** the work force after an absence of one year or more, you will need to have worked a minimum of 910 insured hours in the last 52 weeks to qualify, in most cases.
- If you are applying for sickness, maternity, or parental benefits, you will need 600 insured hours to qualify.

**Note:** Violations from previous EI claims may also increase the number of hours you need to qualify.

## How long can I receive benefits?

The length of time you can draw benefits depends on the unemployment rate in your region, and how long you worked in the last 52 weeks or since your last claim, whichever is shorter. You can receive benefits from 14 to a maximum of 45 weeks, depending on the number of insurable hours you have.

## Can I work while receiving EI benefits?

If you are working while on EI, you must declare all your earnings. You are allowed to earn up to \$50 a week or 25 percent of your regular benefits (whichever amount is higher) without losing any benefits. If you have earnings above that limit, we will deduct them dollar for dollar from your weekly benefits.

**Don't forget—you must declare all gross earnings in the weeks you earn them.** You can declare your earnings on the Internet ([servicecanada.gc.ca](http://servicecanada.gc.ca)), by telephone (1-800-531-7555), or by mail every two weeks.

## Do I have to look for work while I'm on EI?

To get regular benefits, you must be looking for work. During non-teaching periods, therefore, teachers must be willing to consider non-teaching jobs.

All people who receive EI regular benefits must be available for and able to work, even though they are unable to find a job. For this reason, if you are receiving EI regular benefits, you must report those days when you are not available for work (e.g., when you are on vacation). You can report your unavailability on the Internet, by telephone, or by mail every two weeks.

## What happens if I'm sick?

If you are sick, the following rules apply:

- If you are an unemployed casual or substitute teacher, you may be eligible for sickness benefits during non-teaching periods.
- As a teacher taking unpaid sick leave during the teaching periods, you may also be eligible for sickness benefits.
- If you are a teacher on a continuing contract, you cannot claim sickness benefits for non-teaching periods.



## Am I eligible for maternity/parental benefits and compassionate care benefits?

As with all other claimants, the rules concerning maternity/parental benefits and compassionate care benefits apply to teachers. If you qualify, you can collect maternity/parental benefits during non-teaching periods.

## How do I apply for EI benefits?

To apply, submit an EI application form online at [servicecanada.gc.ca](https://servicecanada.gc.ca), or in person at a Service Canada Centre. You will also need to:

- provide your social insurance number (SIN);
- provide your Record(s) of Employment (ROE) from your last employer(s); and
- make sure you have your current bank account information or a voided personal cheque, so we can deposit your EI payment directly into your bank account.

You have a maximum of **four weeks** from your final day of work to submit your application, even if you receive money when you stop working. If you delay filing your claim beyond the four-week deadline, you may lose benefits.

## Protecting the Employment Insurance system—with your help

At Service Canada, we take our responsibility for administering the EI fund very seriously. Ensuring that no one misuses the fund is a big part of fulfilling that responsibility. With your help, we can reduce the incidences of misuse and ensure that the EI system is used as it should be—as a temporary support measure when people find themselves out of work.

To protect the EI fund and to discourage people from misusing it, we work with employers and claimants to make sure we receive accurate information.

For more information, please contact us.

**CALL** 1 800 O-Canada (1-800-622-6232)  
TTY: 1-800-926-9105

**CLICK** [servicecanada.gc.ca](https://servicecanada.gc.ca)

**VISIT** a Service Canada Centre