

Term Adjuncts and EI Benefits During COVID-19

Important Notes for Term Adjuncts Pertaining to EI Benefits for Loss of Work or Absences During COVID-19

The Government of Canada had made important changes to the Employment Insurance Benefit program for “qualified employees” who have either been laid off work, (“EI benefits”), or who require a leave of absence for sickness, quarantine, or other reasons associated with the COVID-19 virus, (“EI Sick Benefits”). In each case, a “qualified employee” is an employee who has worked the required “hours of insurable employment.”

Hours of Insurable Employment: EI Benefits

Hours of insurable employment for the purposes of EI Benefits will generally be calculated based on the number of hours worked in your last 52 weeks of employment. The current required number of insurable hours needed for EI benefits in Kingston is 700 hours.¹

Requesting Additional Hours of Insurable Employment

In accordance with Appendix R of the Collective Agreement, each full course delivered at Queen’s is credited with 464 qualifying hours, and a 0.5 credit course is credited with 232 hours.²

The unexpected need to transfer all courses to a remote learning format may result in an increase in the actual time necessary for you to instruct and evaluate your current courses.

Appendix R permits you to seek approval from your Unit Head to include this additional unpaid hours in the calculation of insurable hours for the purposes of EI. It is your responsibility to track your time and to submit the claim no later than 30 days after the last day of the class.

Hours of Insurable Employment: EI Sick Benefits

EI Sick Benefits are available if you cannot do your job because of illness, or are under quarantine on an unpaid leave resulting from the COVID-19 virus, and are not covered by the University’s Sick Leave as per Article 33.2.3.

To qualify, you must have accumulated 600 insurable hours, and incurred a minimum drop of 40% in your wages. The need for a medical certificate has been waived in return for a personal attestation that the application is being made in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

Opening a Claim

Currently, applications for either EI or EI Sick benefits must be filed online.³

You must file the application within 4 weeks of your final day of work. You

do not need to wait for your Record of Employment to open the file: you can add that later. If you can reach an operator, you can call to have the one-week wait period waived by calling 1-833-381-2725. Otherwise, the personal attestation that your claim arises from COVID-19 will result in the same entitlement. The online process takes about one hour, and you will need the following information:

- names and addresses of employer(s);
- a brief statement outlining why you lost your job(s);
- your SIN and banking information.

Support for Employees Who Do Not Meet the EI Threshold

The Government of Canada has announced the intention to introduce emergency care benefits for individuals who do not meet the EI threshold, but are in quarantine or have to stay at home to care for children or other family members. Emergency Care Benefits should be available after 1 April. The intent is to pay a biweekly payment of \$900.00 for a 15-week period. The toll-free registration number has not yet been announced.

Stay Informed

The Government has indicated that more changes and benefits may be introduced. If you have questions about your personal situation, please

feel free to contact me at my e-mail below

Notes

¹<https://srv129.services.gc.ca/rbin/eng/kingston.aspx?rates=1&period=379>

²<https://www.queensu.ca/facultyrelations/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca/files/files/QUFA%20CA%202019-22%20amended%20July%2015%202019.pdf>

³<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit/apply.html>

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