

Frequently Asked Questions – Supplemental Employment Benefit

(AKA: Mat Leave Top-up)

July 24, 2011

How many weeks of the Supplemental Employment Benefit (SEB), or Mat-Leave Top-Up will I receive?

As long as you meet the eligibility requirements, the birth mother will be entitled to SEB for the 2 week waiting period, 15 weeks of maternity EI benefits top-up, and 10 weeks of Parental EI benefits top-up.

A non-birth mother parent will be entitled to SEB for any 2 week waiting period required to be served, plus 10 weeks of Parental EI benefits top-up.

I'm a parent taking a parental leave of absence, but not the birth mother. Why don't I get an extra 15 weeks of top-up?

This first 15 weeks is considered Maternity leave, which the Government of Canada only provides to birth mothers. In order to receive SEB payments, you must provide proof of receiving maternity leave benefits, which you will not be able to do unless you are the birth mother.

What are the eligibility requirements?

You must have been working for your employer for 13 weeks prior to commencing your maternity/parental/adoption leave, and you must be in receipt of EI benefits (maternity and/or parental/adoption benefits).

I'm currently on Mat Leave. Will I receive the top-up?

You will receive a portion of the top-up. If you have already received all of your maternity leave benefits from EI at the time the Collective Agreement is ratified, then you will not be eligible for any SEB payments for the Maternity portion of your leave, but if you are eligible, you may still receive Parental top-up to a maximum of 10 weeks.

If you are in receipt of Maternity EI benefits at the time the Collective Agreement is ratified, you will receive the SEB for the number of weeks of Maternity EI benefits you have left, plus a maximum of 10 weeks of Parental top-up.

If you are currently in receipt of Parental EI benefits, then you will receive a maximum 10 weeks of SEB, or less if you have fewer remaining weeks of EI benefits.

I took a mat leave in 2010. Will I receive retro-SEB payments?

No, unfortunately, the SEB is not retro-active.

What deductions are taken off my SEB payments?

- Income tax, CPP, and Union dues are deducted from your payment.
- As the SEB is not considered to be EI insurable earnings, EI deductions are not made.

- Pension deductions are also not made as the employee is on leave and does not receive credited service for the period of leave.
- Group Life Insurance premiums are not deducted. As in the past, you are required (it is not optional) to maintain Group Life coverage during your maternity leave and you must pre-pay your life insurance premiums.
- Disability Insurance Plan (DIP) premiums are not deducted. As normal, if you wish to maintain your DIP coverage while on leave, you are required to pre-pay the premiums prior to your leave commencing.

Can I still work casually while in receipt of the SEB?

Yes, but please note that you must stay within the maximum payment allowed by EI, otherwise it will affect your EI benefits (which in turn would affect the SEB). If you work during any period in which you receive SEB, EI will be deducted from the full pay, including the SEB.

Do I have to apply for the SEB, or is it automatic?

You must apply to the employer for the SEB by providing proof that you are in receipt of EI maternity/parental/adoption benefits, including the amount you are receiving from EI.

Will the SEB have an impact on my tax return?

It could have an impact, depending on your individual situation. If you are currently on a leave and are now making an application for SEB, there is a good chance that income tax will not be taken off your payment for a number of pay periods, depending on how long it has been since you last had a pay generated through payroll, the amount of the SEB, and the amount you stated on your TD1. This may put you in a situation whereby you owe tax when you file your return. As HSAS does not provide advice in this regard, we highly recommend you check with a tax professional regarding the implications this may have.

Where can I find more information about maternity/parental/adoption leave?

<http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca/eng/ei/types/special.shtml#Maternity3>