Please note that the only change that’s been made to EI is to EI sickness benefits, and the work sharing program, where the one week waiting period is waived and those claiming sickness benefits are prioritized over others. A medical certificate is not required, but if members can get one, it certainly makes the process smoother.

Service Canada now has a dedicated line for inquiries on changes to EI sickness benefits: 1-833-381-2725

**What is a waiting period and how has it changed?**

* A waiting period is a period of time in which an employee does not receive EI Sickness Benefits.
* Normally, there is a one (1) week waiting period for EI Sickness Benefits, in which an employee would not receive payment. For example, if an employee were under quarantine or self-isolated for two (2) weeks, they would only receive one (1) week of EI Sickness Benefits.
* The Government has now waived the one (1) week waiting period. This means employees will now be able to access benefits for their period of absence, up to a maximum of 15 weeks.

**Is a doctor’s note required to access EI Sickness Benefits?**

* Normally, a medical certificate (signed by a qualified medical professional) is required to access the benefits.
* As of March 11, 2020, the Government has stated that they are waiving the medical note for individuals required to go into quarantine by law or by a public-health official.
* Should the quarantine period or self-isolation period be extended, a signed medical certificate may still be necessary.

**What does EI Sickness Benefits provide?**

* Financial support for eligible workers who:
	+ are unable to work for a medical reason (which now includes being subject to quarantine or self-isolation);
	+ have experienced a decrease in regular weekly earnings of more than 40% for one week; and
	+ have accumulated 600 insured hours of work in the 52 weeks before the start of the claim.

**How much can an employee claim and for how long?**

* EI Sickness Benefits pay 55% of an employee’s insurable earnings, up to a maximum of $573 per week, less applicable taxes.
* Employees can claim these benefits for a maximum of 15 weeks.

**Service Canada:**

* The one-week waiting period for [EI sickness benefits](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-sickness.html) will be waived for new claimants who are quarantined so they can be paid for the first week of their claim
* Priority EI application processing for EI sickness claims for clients under quarantine
* People claiming EI sickness benefits due to quarantine will not have to provide a medical certificate
* People who cannot complete their claim for EI sickness benefits due to quarantine may apply later and have their EI claim backdated to cover the period of delay