

Do you have Short Term Disability Insurance on your group plan?

Companies that have a Short Term Disability/Weekly Indemnity plan in place are eligible for a reduction in their EI premiums.

If you have a Short Term Disability plan in place that meets the following requirements, you are eligible to apply for a reduced Employment Insurance rate.

Basic Requirements:

To be considered for a premium reduction, a plan that provides short-term disability benefits to employees must:

- provide at least 15 weeks of benefits for short-term disability;
- match or exceed the level of benefits provided under EI;
- pay benefits to employees within 14 days of illness or injury;
- be accessible to employees within three months of hiring;
- cover employees on a 24-hour-a-day basis.

We're on the Web!

www.canwestgroup.com

For your information, we have attached a Service Canada brochure and an initial application form.

Create an "In-House" Policy

If an employee becomes disabled, what happens to their group benefits? Who pays the premiums, and for how long? What if the employee is permanently disabled?

Group Plan premiums will continue to be charged when an employee is on disability. We encourage all of our clients to create an "In-House" policy regarding the premium payments for group benefits if an employee is on Long Term Disability. This policy should state how long the employee can continue to receive the other benefits available, and *who will pay* the premiums. If the employee is responsible for paying the premiums, you should state *how* the premiums will be collected. Having an "In-House" policy can help to alleviate a lot of confusion for both the employee and employer during the difficult circumstances surrounding disability.

An "In-House" policy should be distributed to all employees, and included in 'new hire' packages so that everyone is made aware.

Tips about Disability:

- Disability payments are based on earnings. You should inform the insurance company whenever there are wage changes.
- Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) can be useful in reducing the number of disability claims. By offering services such as counseling, and resources to help employees deal with stress, substance abuse or family issues, you can help your employees avoid long absences from work.