

DISABILITY BENEFITS PROGRAM (Updated January 1, 2012)

Eligibility

All active benefits eligible employees are covered under the Interim and Long term disability programs the first of the following month after one year of service with the University. **If you are absent from work on the day your coverage would otherwise begin, your effective date of coverage will be the day you return to work.**

If you have been insured for long term disability by a previous employer, within four months of being hired into a benefits eligible position at Northeastern, the one year service period is waived. It is your responsibility to provide HRM Benefits with the waiver form completed by your previous employer within 30 days of beginning employment at Northeastern, which must include the effective dates of coverage, the name of the insurance carrier and the type of policy.

Northeastern University reserves the right and privilege to examine an employee whenever it may be reasonably required, such as during the pending of a claim, or a benefit period to the extent allowed by law.

Interim Disability/Salary Continuation

If you have been absent from work on approved medical leave for thirty consecutive days, you become eligible for interim disability benefits once you have exhausted your earned sick time. Please note that absences due to work-related injuries or illnesses are not covered under this plan, but may be covered under Workers' Compensation law.

No interim disability benefits will be paid until the Application for Leave of Absence and Income Protection Forms have been completed and returned to HRM Benefits. Interim Disability will pay you 60% of your salary at the time you become disabled up through the sixth month of your disability. All benefits, except Travel Accident and Workers' Compensation remain in effect and any required contributions to the benefit plans will be deducted from your paycheck. Since this plan is self-insured by Northeastern, you will continue to receive a paycheck (60%) directly from Northeastern.

If the time for recovery is expected to exceed six months, applications for long term disability and Social Security Disability Benefits may be initiated during the fifth month of your disability to facilitate continuation of disability payments. Northeastern's long term disability benefit is integrated with Social Security Disability Benefits if you are under age 65 and Social Security Retirement Benefits if you are over age 65.

During periods of interim disability leave, you have the opportunity to return to your position, or a similar position, provided that you have the appropriate medical authorization. When possible your ability to return to your position will be evaluated prior to the conclusion of interim disability benefits, based on the most current medical information available. Evaluation of your ability to return to work will be based on medical information provided by your health care provider and consideration of the essential functions of your position. These situations are evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Interim Disability: Resumption of Coverage

If you return to work with us on a full time basis for fourteen consecutive days or less, and you again become disabled, then your current disability will be treated as part of your prior claim and you will not have to complete another elimination period.

If you return to work full time for fifteen or more consecutive days, your current disability will be treated as a new claim. The new claim will be subject to all of the provisions of the Policy and you will be required to satisfy a new elimination period. Absences related to a new or different illness/injury will be treated as a new claim.

Please refer to the Interim Disability/Salary Continuation Policy for more information.

Long Term Disability

Long term disability (LTD) is defined by our insurance policy as the complete inability of an employee, by reason of sickness or bodily injury, to engage in **his/her regular occupation for the first thirty months** of a disability or sickness. (The time is figured from the first day you go out on medical leave.) **After the first thirty months**, a long term disability is defined as the inability of an employee, by reason of sickness or bodily injury, to engage in **any occupation** for which the employee is reasonably qualified by education, training, or experience.

Upon approval for long term disability benefits, payments begin on the first day of the seventh month of disability. Monthly income benefits continue as long as you are still disabled or until the following age or time limits are reached:

Age When LTD Begins	Age When LTD Benefits End
Less than age 60	To age 65, but not less than 5 years
60-64	5 years
65-69	To age 70 but not less than 1 year
70 and over	For one year

Monthly Income Benefit

The monthly income benefit is equal to 60% of your monthly salary at the time you are first disabled. This monthly benefit shall not exceed \$25,000, nor will it be less than \$100 per month. This long term disability plan is integrated with other benefit plans to equal 60% of your monthly salary. If you are approved to receive benefits under other disability plans, Worker's Compensation, Social Security disability or Social Security retirement benefits, the other benefit amount(s) will be subtracted from your monthly disability income benefit. The maximum monthly benefit you may receive, including all of the above sources, is 60% of your monthly salary up to \$25,000 maximum.

Retirement Plan Contributions While on Long Term Disability

Contributions to Northeastern University's Retirement Plan are insured by the long term disability carrier. If you are participating and contributing to Northeastern University's Basic Retirement Plan at the time you become disabled, you will continue to have the minimum 5% employee contribution and the University's 10% contribution funded to your Retirement Account by the long term disability carrier. This will continue for as long as you remain on approved disability status. These contributions are based on your eligible base salary at the time you first begin medical leave/disability status.

Basic Life Insurance

Basic Life Insurance remains in effect to the earlier of the end of long term disability or age 65.

Health and Dental Insurance

If you have completed one year of benefits eligible service, health and dental insurance remain in effect until you reach Medicare eligibility which occurs two years from the date of disability. During these two years you may continue health and dental coverage provided you pay 50% percent of the premium costs. If you choose to remain in the health and dental plans, you will receive a bill each month for your share of the premium. If you do not choose this option or you have less than one year of benefits eligible service, you will be offered COBRA coverage. Once you transfer to Medicare, a spouse or same-sex spousal equivalent and any eligible children will be offered COBRA coverage.

If you meet the eligibility for early retiree status at the time you are approved for LTD, you may remain on the health and dental plans at 50% of the premium cost up to age 65. For more detailed information regarding eligibility, please refer to the Retirement Policy on the HRM website.

Tuition

Tuition benefits terminate for you and your spouse when you are on long term disability status. If your spouse is enrolled in an academic program, your spouse may remain covered by the Tuition Waiver Program until the end of the quarter/semester. Full-tuition scholarship is available for dependent children who qualify for admission to one of the programs leading to a degree in any of the university's colleges or graduate schools, provided you have a minimum of 10 years of continuous benefits eligible service at the start of your disability. For complete details, please refer to the Tuition Waiver Policy.

Employment Status

Your position is held open during your 180 day elimination period, while you are eligible for interim disability benefits. When possible, your ability to return to your position will be evaluated prior to the date on which you become eligible for long term disability benefits, based on the most current medical information available. Evaluation of your ability to return to work will be based on medical information provided by your health care provider and consideration of the essential functions of your position. If you are approved for Long term disability benefits due to your continued inability to work, your employment with the University may end.

Exclusions

The Interim or Long-Term disability plans do not cover certain injuries and/or illnesses. You are not eligible to receive interim or long term disability benefits if the injury or illness:

- is the result of war;
- occurred prior to the date of insurability;
- was intentionally self-inflicted; or
- if you are not under regular and continued care of a doctor for the injury or illness.

For more detailed information regarding our Long Term Disability policy, please refer to the Certificate of Coverage. The certificate can be obtained by contacting HRM/Benefits.