

# Did you know?

November 2005

## COMPASSIONATE CARE BENEFITS

The government of Canada has proposed a new kind of Employment Insurance (EI) benefit which comes into effect as of January 4, 2004. It is called the “compassionate care benefit”. These benefits will be paid to people who have to be away from work to care for a member of their family who is very sick.

### Who is considered to be a family member?

A family member is one of the following:

- Your child or the child of your spouse or common-law partner;
- Your wife/husband or common-law partner;
- Your father/mother; or
- Your father’s wife/mother’s husband, if you father/mother has remarried
- The common-law partner of your father/mother, if there has been no remarriage.

### How do you qualify for these benefits?

Any one who is eligible for regular EI benefits is eligible to apply for these new benefits to provide care or support to a member of their family.

You need to have worked for 600 hours of insurable earnings to be eligible to receive these benefits.

### How long can you get these new benefits?

The maximum number of weeks that you can receive compassionate care benefits are 6 weeks. Before receiving these benefits, you need to serve a waiting period of two weeks.

### Do you have to provide a medical certificate?

Yes. A medical certificate is necessary to indicate that the member of your family is seriously sick with a risk of death within the next 6 months, and requires your care and support.

For more information you can refer to the Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) website at: [www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca](http://www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca)

You can also call HRDC for more information at their 24-hour toll free enquiry number at: **1-800-206-7218.**