

BLOC-NOTES



to all members
of affiliated unions



NO TO THE WRECKING OF EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE!

The changes to the Employment Insurance program put in place by the Harper government will have significant consequences for workers. What's in it for teachers?

The New Program Creates Claimant Categories

Long-tenured Workers

You have contributed at least 30% of the annual maximum EI premium in at least seven of the past ten years and have received 35 weeks or less of EI regular benefits over the last five years before payments begin.

You will be given time to find an occupation in the same field and at an equivalent salary, meaning 90% of the previous hourly wage. After 18 weeks of benefits, you will be obliged to expand your search to include any occupation that you are qualified to perform and to accept wages equivalent to 80% of your previous hourly wage.

Frequent Claimant

You received over 60 weeks of benefits in the past five years before you start receiving benefits in three or more claims for EI regular benefits.

For the first six weeks of your EI claim, you will be required to expand your search to any similar occupation to the one that you had before and accept wages starting at 80% of your previous wage. After six weeks, you will be required to accept any occupation for which you are qualified and to accept wages starting at 70% of your previous wage.

Occasional Claimant

Any other claimant.

For the first six weeks of your EI claim, you can limit your search to your own occupation and wage (equivalent 90% of your previous wage). Starting in week seven of your claim, you must expand your search to include similar occupations to the job you normally perform with wages at 80% of your previous wage. After 18 weeks of your EI claim, you must further expand

your job search to include any occupation you are qualified to perform and to accept wages starting at 70% of your previous wage.

In all cases, claimants must prove that they are actively seeking employment.

To help make sense of this:

Own occupation: any job held by the claimant during her/his reference period.

Similar occupation: any job that has comparable functions to those carried out by the claimant during her/his reference period.

Reference salary: the remuneration of the occupation of the claimant during the greatest number of hours during her/his reference period.

Reference period: in general, the 52 weeks preceding the benefit period.

Suitable employment: Factors which are considered in determining what is suitable employment are based on an individual's situation and may include the work schedule, commuting time and the type of work. In addition, this definition may vary according to the claimant category.

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To Illustrate the Impact of These Changes

Anthony has taught at a cegep for three years. He had a contract for a full teaching workload for the fall semester, from August 15 to February 14, including the vacation period. He is unemployed until May 23 (in other words, for 14 weeks). He then begins to teach a 60 hour course over the next four weeks, after which he is unemployed for the next seven weeks. He will sign a contract for a full workload for the next fall semester. This pattern has repeated itself for three years.

Jackie is an hourly-paid teacher at a private college. During the 2010-2011 school year, she taught eight periods (1/3 of a full-time workload) for a salary of \$10678. During the 2011-2012 school year, she taught eight periods (1/3 of a full-time workload) for a salary of \$15158. During the 2012-2013 school year, she taught six periods (1/4 of a full-time workload) for a salary of \$11970. There was no return to work date on any of her contracts. In September 2013, Jackie was not offered a contract.

Charles is a replacement teacher at a private college. He obtained a medical leave replacement contract from November 2010 to April 2011 for a salary of \$21000. He obtains a maternity leave replacement contract from September 2011 to June 2012 for a salary of \$45500. He obtains a replacement contract for a teacher on an unpaid leave from January 2013 to June 2013 for a salary of \$23900. During the 2013-2014 school year he is not offered a contract. He has therefore been unemployed from September to November 2010 for eight weeks, from June to September 2011 for another eight weeks and from September 2012 to January 2013 for 13 weeks, for a grand total of 29 weeks.

Emily is an hourly-paid lecture rat a university. For the past several years she has worked the following pattern : two sections of a course in the fall semester paying \$8500 per section (for 16 weeks), three weeks of unemployment, a one-section load during the winter semester at \$8500 (16 weeks), one week of unemployment, one section during the summer semester for \$8500 (eight weeks), and eight weeks of unemployment. She is therefore unemployed for a total of twelve weeks per year.

Sebastian has been an hourly-paid lecturer at a university for two years. He taught one course during the fall 2012 semester and two courses during the winter 2013 semester, which provided him with enough hours to qualify for an initial employment insurance claim. He obtains a teaching workload for the fall 2013 semester.

Applying the new regulations to each of these examples, below is what applies in September 2013.

Name	Number of weeks of benefits received in the past five years	Claimant category
Anthony	63 weeks	Frequent
Jackie	27 weeks	Occasional
Charles	29 weeks	Occasional
Emily	60 weeks	Frequent
Sebastian	17 weeks	Occasional

As we can see, Anthony and Emilie are classified as frequent claimants and will be required to accept any similar occupation that pays at least 80% of his or her previous salary during the first six weeks of their benefit period and then after that any occupation that pays at least 70% of their previous salary.

Jackie, Charles and Sebastian will be required to accept an occupation in their field that pays at least 90% of their previous salary during the first six weeks of their benefit period, then any similar occupation paying at least 80% of their previous salary from the 7th to the 17th week, and finally after that, any occupation that pays 70% of their previous salary.

Please do not hesitate to contact your local union if you would like additional information.



**CHEZ NOUS, C'EST
NON
AU SACCAGE DE L'ASSURANCE-EMPLOI**

**Manifestation nationale
à Montréal
le samedi 27 avril**

COALITION QUÉBÉCOISE CONTRE LA RÉFORME DE L'ASSURANCE-EMPLOI

