

# 2026 Employment Insurance weekly maximum increase: What sponsors need to know



This update affects plan sponsors with a **Canada Life short term disability (STD) plan** that participate in the **Employment Insurance (EI) Premium Reduction Program** through Service Canada.

There's **no action required for advisors**. This is for your awareness, in case you receive any questions from sponsors.

## What's changing

Starting Jan. 1, 2026, the federal government will increase the maximum insurable earnings from **\$65,700** to **\$68,900**. This means the maximum weekly EI benefit will rise to **\$729**, calculated as 55% of insurable earnings, over 52 weeks.

## Why this matters

To qualify for the EI Premium Reduction Program, STD plans must provide equal or better benefits than what EI offers.

## What sponsors need to do

Sponsors need to check their STD plan details.

## If their plan includes the automatic update feature:

- **No action is needed.** Their plan will automatically adjust to the new EI maximum on Jan. 1, 2026.
- Sponsors should look for this wording in their contract: *"Benefits are limited to the maximum weekly payment under the Employment Insurance Act of Canada."*

## If their plan doesn't include automatic updates:

- Sponsors need to review their contract to ensure the **no evidence maximum** and **overall maximum** meet or exceed the new EI weekly benefit.
- If they don't, sponsors need to contact Canada Life to **request an amendment** to update the **no evidence maximum/overall maximum** so it meets or exceeds the new maximum of **\$729**, effective Jan. 1, 2026.

## Additional info

Sponsors may get a letter from Service Canada if an amendment is required to maintain their EI Premium Reduction Program eligibility.

Canada Life offers an STD automatic update feature that adjusts plans when EI benefits change. We encourage sponsors to talk to their Canada Life group representative to learn more about this option.

## Questions

Contact your Canada Life group representative for more information.