



COVID-19 Update for CDHA members
March 17, 2020

CDHA is Here to Help

Read our latest updates: www.cdha.ca/safetyalerts

Email us: alerts@cdha.ca

Dear member,

The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) recognizes the unprecedented and extraordinary circumstances dental hygienists and all health care professionals face related to growing concern about COVID-19. CDHA is deeply concerned for the health and well-being of the public and dental hygienists.

In order for the dental hygiene profession to do its part to mitigate the spread of COVID-19, and support the rational use of personal protective equipment across the health system, **CDHA calls for all dental and dental hygiene offices across Canada to postpone all non-urgent care to a later date.**

To address your most pressing questions during this challenging and rapidly evolving situation, we are sharing the following updates. There will continue to be many unanswered questions in the days ahead until the relevant federal and provincial authorities set out further statements and measures in the coming days, so please be as patient as you can.

- **Employment insurance details**

In our meeting with government representatives late today, it was clarified that **at present**, only sickness benefits have been changed to accommodate eligible claimants who are unable to work because of illness, injury or quarantine due to the pandemic. **We anticipate further announcements in the new few days - so this could change.**

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We brought attention to the common situations that have been shared with CDHA and were given the following advice:

- **For those that meet the existing eligibility criteria for regular, maternity or sickness benefits:** proceed with an application right away. Consult with Employment and Social Development Canada (links below) and let the processing agents guide the start of your application. For regular EI, the waiting period is currently one week from the time you apply.
- **Clarification on EI Sickness Benefits:**
An individual will qualify for the waiver of the one week waiting period for EI Sickness Benefits if they are self-isolated or quarantined due to COVID-19 and if they meet all other eligibility requirements required for EI Sickness Benefits*.
- The closing of businesses, schools, etc. is being done in an effort to encourage individuals to social distance to prevent possible spread of the virus. Social distancing does not amount to self-isolation or quarantine as required for EI Sickness Benefits.
- In most provinces at this time, individuals are being asked to self-isolate or self-quarantine for 14 days if they:
 - Have travelled outside of Canada,
 - Have come into contact with someone known to have COVID-19, etc.

Please note, this is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Refer to and listen to relevant health authorities. Example: Canada.ca COVID-19 Website, "[Risk to Canadians](#)" heading

The rules surrounding a medical certificate for these circumstances are as follows:

- Claimants placed in quarantine will not have to provide a medical

certificate, if the quarantine is:

- o Imposed on the claimant under the laws of Canada or a province
- o Imposed on the claimant by a public health official for the health and safety of the public at large, or
- o Recommended by such an official for health and safety of the public at large, and the claimant was asked by their employer, medical doctor, a nurse or a person in authority to place themselves under quarantine.

However, **claimants who fall sick during the quarantine period and collect benefits beyond the period of quarantine will be required to obtain and retain a medical certificate**, which is the current practice for all other sickness benefits claims. As these individuals would be under active medical care, getting a medical certificate is expected not to be problematic.

- **For those that do not meet the existing criteria:** Wait for new government measures to be announced this week – likely tomorrow. Be aware that it is not yet clear what specific measures will be made available and what kind of applicability they may have.
- **For those inquiring about a ‘mass lay-off number’ to facilitate EI processing:** We continue to seek clarification on what options exist and will report further as more specific guidance is received.

Helpful links:

Employment Insurance Benefits

<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/benefits/ei/ei-regular-benefit.html>

Employment and Social Development Canada

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>

- **Legal guidance for members**

With the support of an employment lawyer, a guide is being developed to address many common questions you been asking. Look for this to be circulated soon on our web site.

- **List of provincial job protection measures - available [here](#)**

CDHA has prepared a summary list of new measures that have been announced by provincial governments concerning job security as it relates to COVID-19. In some instances, legislation is required. The list is preliminary and will be updated as further announcements are made. Ensure you read details closely to see how the eligibility criteria apply to you.

- **What more can you do?**

During these unprecedented times, it's critical to ensure that provincial authorities with mandates in public health and dental hygiene regulation hear directly from health care workers in their province.

Consider your

- Province/territory's chief [public health office](#)
- [Provincial/territorial dental hygiene regulator](#)

Please be well and take care of yourselves in this difficult time.

Please also note that CDHA's Facebook page is unfortunately, and inexplicably, currently down. We are investigating and hoping to have it restored quickly. In the meantime you can follow @thecdha on Instagram or Twitter and we'll continue to send regular email bulletins and update our website www.cdha.ca/safetyalerts. We appreciate your understanding.