

CUPE EDUCATION WORKERS' BENEFITS TRUST



ONE PLAN
UNITED TO THE CORE

Fall 2020 member update

As summer fades into autumn, everyone settles into the 'new' standard of this year's school calendar, and Thanksgiving approaches, we hope that this finds you and yours both healthy and happy.

While this year's fall member update is focused on important updates regarding member contribution amounts and obligations, it also serves as a reminder of how important it is to ensure that our loved ones are cared for, both now and into the future.

The contribution holiday is ending

In April, the Trustees approved a three-month contribution holiday designed to help with the financial burden that a number of our members faced during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. At the end of June, the contribution holiday was extended for another three months to September 30, 2020.

The contribution holiday **concluded on September 30, 2020**. As a result, members can expect their premium **withdrawals to begin again on October 15, 2020**.

For members who are on repayment plans to pay back contributions that are in arrears, please note that these repayment plans will also be reinstated on October 15, 2020.

An update for members on layoff

If you are on layoff you have a 60-day grace period during which your member contributions will continue as if you were an active employee. If you are still on layoff after the 60-day period ends, you have the option to continue your coverage for up to an additional 22 months, during which time you will be responsible for paying 100% of the premium costs.

For example:

- If you were on layoff effective June 30, 2020, your coverage continued until August 31 (the end of the benefit year) without changes to your member contributions.
- If you remained on layoff and did not return to work on September 1 your 60-day grace period would begin, extending from September 1 to October 31. Beginning November 1, you could choose to continue your coverage, and you would be responsible for paying 100% of the premium costs.

Annual benefit reset

Each year in October, there is a "checkpoint" to update any changes to your hours that may affect your eligibility and/or premium share going forward for the 2020-2021 benefit year. Any premium changes identified during the October checkpoint will come into effect in November 2020.

If your regularly scheduled hours happen to *increase* during the benefit year, you can take advantage of the lower premium share and you will not have to provide medical evidence of insurability for Health and/or Dental coverage if you apply for coverage within 31 days of the increase.

On the contrary, if your regularly scheduled hours have *decreased* as of the October checkpoint, you will move to the appropriate cost share category and your premium share will be adjusted accordingly.

If you have a decrease in hours that affects your benefits funding level, your benefits will be suspended effective November 1. OTIP will send you an email to complete an event and reinstate the benefits that you wish to continue. This ensures that the higher level of premium required for your benefits is not deducted from your bank account without your permission.

As a reminder, benefits cost-sharing for Health and/or Dental falls into three categories:

Hours worked per week	Percentage of total cost you pay for benefits
15 or more hours/week	4%
10 - <15 hours/week	50%
<10 hours/week	100%

Naming a beneficiary

Have you named a beneficiary? If so, is your designation up to date?

Naming a beneficiary (or beneficiaries) is critical to ensuring that, upon your death, your life insurance benefits are paid according to your wishes.

It also enables the insurance company to pay out the benefits to your beneficiaries (tax-free) without the delay of settling your estate.

If you do not designate a beneficiary, then your benefits will be paid to your estate. If life insurance proceeds are paid to the estate, they may be subject to probate fees, reducing your estate.

You should review your beneficiary designations annually, or whenever you have a major life event such as getting married, getting divorced or having a child.

To help make it easy for you to do so, you can update your beneficiary(ies) designation any time through the Beneficiary Designation form in *My Benefits* on the OTIP website at www.otip.com.

Is your email address up to date?

Now is a good time to make sure you have your preferred email address on file to receive all important updates and communications from CUPE EWBT.

By default, your email address on file with OTIP is your school board email. However, some members prefer to switch to their personal email address in the summer months, or if they are on leave, secondment or retiring in the near future.

Whichever address you prefer, it's important to make sure OTIP has it and you're able to receive important communications.

You can update your preferred email on the home page of *My Benefits* on the OTIP Member Access website. Click on "Review/Update My Email Information" and be sure to choose an email account that you check regularly.



Check your mailbox!

If you don't have a designated beneficiary(ies) on file, OTIP will mail a letter to your home that reminds you to do so. When you receive this notice, simply log on to the *My Benefits* section of the OTIP website at www.otip.com and update your beneficiary(ies) designation.

A final word

This bulletin has been prepared exclusively for eligible CUPE education workers in the province of Ontario covered by the CUPE Education Workers' Benefits Trust. It is not intended to be comprehensive or to provide advice. If there are any differences between the information provided in this bulletin and any legal documents that govern the delivery of benefits, the legal documents will apply. The CUPE EWBT Trustees have sole discretion to modify any or all plan terms, including benefits levels, eligibility conditions, premium share, limits and co-pay amounts.