



## PUBLIC EDUCATION BENEFITS TRUST

*March 30, 2020*

### **K-12 Unionized Support Staff**

### **JEIS and LTD Programs Continue During the COVID-19 Pandemic**

While the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the suspension of in-classroom instruction across British Columbia, eligible K-12 Support Staff will continue to have access to benefits from the Public Education Benefits Trust (PEBT) including the Joint Early Intervention Services (JEIS) and long-term disability (LTD) programs.

The PEBT and all our service providers are working together to ensure Members continue to have access to their benefit programs while incorporating as much flexibility in their delivery as possible to adapt to these extraordinary circumstances.

### **Member Action Required**

During the suspension of in-classroom instruction, if you feel you are disabled due to illness or injury for more than six (6) consecutive days, please notify your school district so that you can be referred to the JEIS program. Indicate only that you feel you are disabled and do not share any medical details such as a diagnosis or treatment details with your school district. If you have contacted your district but have not heard from Desjardins, the service provider for the JEIS program, or you feel you are disabled and are not sure who to contact at your school district, please contact Desjardins directly at 1-800-263-1810 (option #1, then option #4 for disability) and provide your policy number: 64090L.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **1. What is the JEIS program?**

JEIS is a proactive and timely service offered through the PEBT for Members that facilitates their recovery and return to work in a caring, safe, and timely manner. Supports may include access to medical specialists, rehabilitation programs, treatments, and diagnostic tests such as an MRI.

When you first become ill or injured, a Health Care Management Specialist (HCMS) from Desjardins contacts you. If necessary, the HCMS follows you through your treatment and recovery and helps you return to work during the 120-day qualifying period for Core LTD benefits. If you are unable to return to work after the LTD qualifying period, the HCMS helps you transfer to the LTD program.

**After six (6) days of disability resulting from illness or injury, you are required to participate in the JEIS program.** Further details about the JEIS program can be found at [www.pebt.ca](http://www.pebt.ca).

**2. Am I eligible for the JEIS program?**

Members who:

- Were working or scheduled to work 15 or more hours per week as a regular employee prior to the pandemic response and whose work would not otherwise have been interrupted save for the pandemic response; or
  - Are currently working 15 or more hours per week as a regular employee; and
  - Have served the three (3)-month waiting period as a regular employee for coverage
- are eligible for the JEIS program.

**3. Can I wait until in-classroom instruction resumes to participate in the JEIS program?**

Participating in the JEIS program is a requirement for LTD eligibility. Not participating in the JEIS program may mean that you are not eligible for LTD benefits.

**4. Who can I contact if I cannot reach my school district or local union, or if I want more information?**

If you feel you are disabled, you can contact Desjardins at 1-800-263-1810 (option #1, then option #4 for disability). You will need to know your school district number and your policy number: 64090L. You may also visit [www.pebt.ca](http://www.pebt.ca).

**5. I am quarantined or self-isolating. Do I need my school district to refer me to the JEIS program?**

If you are quarantined or self-isolating and feel you are disabled due to illness or injury for six (6) days or more, please report this to your school district on the sixth day so you can be referred to the JEIS program. If you are quarantined or self-isolating but you are not disabled, you do not need your school district to refer you to the JEIS program.

**6. I am quarantined or self-isolating. What precautions will be taken by the HCMS?**

After you report that you are disabled to your school district, the HCMS from Desjardins will contact you by phone. No contact will be made in person. The HCMS will work with you and your doctor on a personalized recovery plan - if appropriate.

Where possible, Desjardins will send any documents to you electronically. Please avoid sending information to Desjardins by mail if possible. Please use the following methods to send in completed forms:

Online: [www.DesjardinsLifeInsurance.com/Send](http://www.DesjardinsLifeInsurance.com/Send)  
Fax: 1-855-678-8124

**7. What happens after I report that I am ill or injured to my school district?**

An HCMS from Desjardins will contact you, usually within 24 hours, by phone. If you have not been contacted within three (3) business days, please contact your school district, or Desjardins directly at 1-800-263-1810 (option #1, then option #4 for disability). You will need to know your school district number and your policy number: 64090L.

**8. Will my private information be shared with my employer or local union?**

No. Desjardins will not share private information such as your diagnosis or treatment with either your employer or local union.

**9. Will LTD benefits continue if I am already receiving LTD benefits?**

Yes. You will continue to receive LTD benefits provided you continue to satisfy the LTD plan requirements and still meet the definition of disability outlined in the PEBT Core LTD Program Text.

A copy of the Core LTD Program Text can be found at [www.pebt.ca](http://www.pebt.ca) by clicking on the “Learn about the Long Term Disability Benefit” picture and then selecting “Updates and Documents”.

**10. Where can I get more information about my benefits?**

- Information about the K-12 support staff benefits plan through the PEBT can be found at [www.pebt.ca](http://www.pebt.ca). Click on “Login as Employee”, then select your district/union local from the drop-down menu.
- Pacific Blue Cross (PBC) for extended health and dental benefits: [www.pac.bluecross.ca](http://www.pac.bluecross.ca)  
PBC also created an info sheet on COVID-19 with responses to questions about how they are handling claims and benefits. This can be found at [www.pac.bluecross.ca/covid19/](http://www.pac.bluecross.ca/covid19/).

**11. What other supports are available during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The federal and provincial governments have both announced several different income support measures. Up-to-date information can be found on the following government websites:

- <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/department-finance/news/2020/03/canadas-covid-19-economic-response-plan-support-for-canadians-and-businesses.html>