

# Permanent SGEU Employees Benefits Information Guide

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*Saskatchewan* 

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## Introduction

The information provided in this document is in summary form and was created by the Total Rewards, Compensation Branch, Saskatchewan Public Service Commission. Information in this document will be updated by the Compensation Branch as required.

## Pension

All employees of the public service employed since October 1, 1977 participate in a defined contribution (money purchase) pension plan called the Public Employees Pension Plan (PEPP). The purpose of PEPP is to provide retirement assets to its members. Assets and expenses of the plan are managed solely in the best interests of the members.

Members of the Saskatchewan General Employees Union (SGEU) contribute 8.6% of salary to the Public Employees' Pension Plan (PEPP). Employees in Correctional Facilities contribute 9% of salary. These contributions are matched by the employer. The employee contributions are deducted automatically from your paycheque.

For employees in the Public Superannuation Plan (PSSP), the employee and employer contribution rate is 3.6%. In 1977, with the inception of the Public Employees Pension Plan (PEPP), this defined benefit plan became closed to new members. As a result of the closed status, the PSSP pension plan is commonly referred to as the "old plan".

Employees can make additional or voluntary contributions, subject to Canada Revenue Agency limits. A voluntary contribution is additional money that employees choose to contribute to PEPP to help build retirement income. These contributions are not matched by the employer.

If an employee was a member of another registered employer-sponsored pension plan, it may be possible to transfer monies and/ or pensionable service to PEPP, in accordance with a portability agreement. For more information, refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 711- Transferring Pension Through a Portability Agreement](#).

The plan provides significant flexibility through a number of investment options to reflect an individual's tolerance for risk including conservative, moderate, balanced, and growth portfolios, as well as a bond fund.

Detailed information is available on the PEBA website.

<http://www.peba.gov.sk.ca/pensions/pepp/home.html>

## Insured Benefit Programs

The Government of Saskatchewan provides its employees with a variety of insured benefit programs to help protect their financial and health care security and that of their families.

## Group Life

The group life plan provides life insurance benefits at a more affordable rate than individual life insurance policies.

Basic life insurance coverage is two times annual salary and there is no waiting period. Premiums for the first \$25,000 of coverage are paid by the employer and the remaining premiums are paid by the employee through payroll deduction. Employees have flexibility to purchase optional insurance (up to \$500,000 basic plus optional combined).

Detailed information regarding the Group Life Insurance Plan is available on the PEBA website.  
<http://www.peba.gov.sk.ca/benefits/group-life-insurance-plan.html>

## Disability

The disability plan provides partial income replacement if the employee is disabled for a prolonged illness or disability as well as supportive rehabilitation services to assist return to work.

Members of SGEU pay their premiums and are insured under the SGEU Long Term Disability Plan.

Information regarding the insurance plan is available by contacting the SGEU.  
[www.sgeu.org/content/long-term-disability](http://www.sgeu.org/content/long-term-disability)

## Dental Benefits

The Public Employees Dental Plan provides coverage for employees and their dependents for all preventative, routine, and major restorative dental services. Coverage is 100% reimbursable based on the Maximum Reimbursement Schedule. There is no cost to the employee to participate in the Dental Plan.

There is also up to \$1500 coverage for orthodontics per person (dependents under age 19) per year with a lifetime maximum of \$3000.

The premiums are employer paid, therefore, there is no cost to the employee. There is a six (6) month waiting period but once served, costs incurred in the first six months are eligible for reimbursement. Employees working less than full time must work a minimum of 37.5% of full-time hours to be eligible to participate in the plan and qualify for dental benefits.

Detailed information regarding the Public Employees Dental Plan is available on the PEBA website.  
<http://www.peba.gov.sk.ca/benefits/dental-plan.html>

## Health Benefits

The Public Employees Extended Health Care Plan provides coverage for employees and their dependents for certain medical services and supplies given or ordered by a physician not reimbursed from the provincial medical plan. There is no cost to the employee to participate in the Extended Health Care Plan.

The premiums are employer paid, therefore, there is no cost to the employee. There is a six (6) month waiting period. Employees working less than full time must work a minimum of 37.5% of full-time hours to participate in the plan and qualify for Extended Health Care benefits. Upon written request, the waiting period may be waived if the employee comes from a similar plan with an eligible employer. The plan provides for coordination with spouse's plans where they exist.

Some benefits are:

Health Practitioners (e.g. Chiropractic, Acupuncturist, Physiotherapy, Podiatrist, Speech Therapist)	Up to \$400 per person, per year for each specialty
Prescription Drugs	Formulary drugs are fully covered; employees will receive a pay direct drug card and eligible claims will be submitted electronically for payment.
Out of Canada Coverage	\$3,000,000 per person per lifetime
Road Ambulance	Unlimited
Air Ambulance	\$4,000 per person per policy year
Massage Therapy	Maximum \$200 per person, per year
Vision	Eye examination every two (2) years; dependents under 21 once a year; glasses and contact lenses \$300 per person per two (2) policy years

A comprehensive list of the benefits is available on PEBA's website.

[http://www.peba.gov.sk.ca/sites/default/files/fileadmin/storage/peba/benefits/EHCP/employees/publications/booklets/gwl is booklet.pdf](http://www.peba.gov.sk.ca/sites/default/files/fileadmin/storage/peba/benefits/EHCP/employees/publications/booklets/gwl%20is%20booklet.pdf)

## Other Benefits

### Sick Leave

Sick leave is available for short term illnesses and may assist in bridging employees through the

waiting period for the disability plan. Sick leave is earned on the basis of 1-1/4 days for each full time month worked. Unused sick leave credits accumulate and there is no limit to the accumulation. Under certain circumstances, employees may borrow up to 30 days of sick leave if their sick leave credits are exhausted. For more information on drawing on future sick leave credits refer to the [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#).

## **Pressing Necessity/ Family Leave**

If an emergency arises, an employee may request leave for pressing necessity. If an employee has non-emergency family obligations, upon prior approval, an employee may take a paid or unpaid leave from work to meet these commitments. Based on the sick leave balance, up to five (5) days per year for an SGEU member may be approved for personal or family responsibility. Approved leave with pay will be deducted from available sick leave credits.

For more information refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 702-1 – Pressing Necessity](#).

## **Increments**

Employees are eligible for an annual pay increase of four (4%) within the pay range of their classification level subject to range maximum.

## **Salary on Promotion**

Permanent employees that qualify for a promotion within Executive government are provided with a salary increase of up to eight (8%) of salary subject to the minimum and maximum of the higher salary range.

## **Professional Fees**

Where employees are required by legislation or by their employing ministry to be a member of a professional association their professional fees will be reimbursed up to the amounts as per the [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#).

## **Earned Days Off**

Unionized employees receive one unpaid day off without pay every two or three weeks based on assigned hours of work.

## **Vacation Leave**

Permanent full-time employees are entitled to vacation leave based on eligible years of service. Less than full-time employee's vacation entitlement is pro-rated based on time worked.

<b>Years of Service</b>	<b>Vacation Entitlement (pro-rated for partial years worked)</b>
Up to 7	15 days
8 to 14	20 days
15 to 21	25 days
22 or more	30 days

Service with other specified employers counts toward eligible years of service for calculation of vacation leave, for example, service with Government of Saskatchewan, Crown Corporations of the Government, Regional Health Authorities and Affiliates, all SGEU Bargaining Units, and service as a paid staff member of the SGEU can be used as eligible service. In addition, SGEU employees receive credit for service with Saskatchewan Boards of Education, Saskatchewan Universities and Saskatchewan Association of Health Care Organizations (SAHO).

For more information on vacation leave refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 701-1 In-Scope Employees Vacation Leave Provisions](#) or the [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#).

## Designated Holidays

There are twelve (12) designated holidays annually - New Year's Day, Family Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Saskatchewan Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Remembrance Day, Christmas Day, Boxing Day and one additional day each year designated by the Chair of the Public Service Commission.

For a complete listing of the designated holidays refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 709 Designated Holidays](#).

## Flexible Hours of Work Arrangements

Subject to operational requirements, flexible hours of work arrangements may be approved. Flexible work hours allow permanent full-time employees to balance work and home life and still retain their permanent status. This enables employees to address issues such as child/elder care or provides the opportunity to volunteer. This can be accomplished through:

- Job Sharing and Variable Hours where the hours of work per day can be reduced or less days are worked during the week. For example, working 8am to 3pm and receiving 75% pay. For more information refer to the [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#) or the [Job-Share/ Variable Hours Form](#).
- Leave with Income Averaging (SGEU only) which allows an employee to work full time

and take a period of time off with reduced pay for a specified period. For example, work nine (9) months and take three (3) months off while receiving 75% pay for 12 months. For more information, refer to the [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#) or the [Income Averaging Application Form](#).

- Flexible stop and start times.

## Deferred Salary Leave Plan (DSLPL)

This plan allows employees to finance a leave of absence (six to 12 months) by deferring salary prior to the leave of absence.

Detailed information regarding the Public Employees Deferred Salary Leave Plan is available on the PEBA website. <http://www.peba.gov.sk.ca/benefits/deferred-salary-leave-plan.html>

## Employee and Family Assistance Plan (EFAP)

The Employee and Family Assistance Program offers a wide range of confidential personal counselling services for employees and their dependents. For more information refer to:

[Employee Family Assistance Program](#)

## Learning and Development

### Tuition and Books

Up to 100% education allowance can be advanced to employees prior to commencement of approved courses. For more information refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 901-1 Tuition & Book Education Allowance Program Policy](#)

### Education Leave

Employees may be eligible for a percentage of salary to assist with learning related expenses. For more information refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 901-2 Education Leave Program Policy](#).

### Other Learning Opportunities

Employees approved to attend conferences and other learning opportunities are provided time to attend and are reimbursed for related travel expenses.



## Maternity/Parental/Adoption Leave and Top up

SGEU members who have worked at least 13 consecutive weeks are eligible for up to 24 months of leave for maternity, parental or adoption reasons.

SGEU members who are in receipt of Employment Insurance benefits for maternity/parental/adoption leave will have their income topped up to 95 per cent of their regular salary for the first 17 weeks of the EI period (including the one-week waiting period). If EI waives the one-week waiting period, the employee is eligible for 16 weeks of SUB program benefits (top-up).

For more information about salary top-up refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 702-4 Maternity/Legal/Adoption Leave Supplement to Employment Insurance \(EI\) Benefit \(SUB\) Program - In-Scope Employees](#).

## Telework

Where practicable, approval may be provided for Telework arrangements.

For more information refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 1104: Telework](#).

## Travel on Government Business

Employees are reimbursed for travel, accommodation and meals in accordance with approved rates when traveling on government business.

- In province travel information refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 601-2 Travel Allowances - In Province Vehicle, Lodging, Meals and General Expenses](#).
- Out of province travel information refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 601-3 Out-of-Province Travel Expenses \(Travel, Lodging, Meals, General\)](#).

When traveling out of country employees have out of country medical insurance provided by their Extended Health Care plan.

## Relocation Expenses

Upon initial hire, promotion, or transfer involving a physical relocation, an employee may be eligible for assistance with relocation expenses relating to the sale of a primary residence (real estate and legal fees), search for accommodation costs, in-transit insurance and other incidental expenses such as water and telephone hookup.

For more information refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 706 Relocation Expenses](#)

## Retention Payments

In geographic areas where there are difficulties recruiting and retaining SGEU employees, a retention payment may be available.

For more information refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 606 Retention Payments for Select Locations and Occupations](#)

## Northern Benefits

Employees working in designated Northern Communities in the Northern Administrative District receive the following additional compensation:

- Depending on work location, employees receive a Northern District Allowance (NDA) in addition to their regular salary. Employees working less than full time receive a pro-rated amount. More information on NDA rates can be found in the [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#).
- Employees who complete one year of service, in the benefit area, and are entitled to Northern District Allowance benefits shall be entitled to an extra week's vacation known as the Special Northern Leave. For more information refer to the [Collective Bargaining Agreement](#).
- Where medical attention is not available at the employee's headquarters, travel assistance is available for medical and dental leave. For more information refer to Human Resource Manual: [Section 707-2 Northern Employment Medical/Dental Leave](#).
- If employees work in a fly in location, once a year the employee and family will be provided assistance for a scheduled return air flight. For more information refer to the Human Resource Manual: [Section 707-1 Northern Employment Vacation Expenses](#).