



# Employee Guide to the *MegaFlex* Short-Term Disability and Long-Term Disability Plans

The County of Los Angeles is proud to offer Short-Term Disability (STD) and Long-Term Disability (LTD) plans to its *MegaFlex* participants. These plans offer partial income replacement when you are unable to work for a prolonged period of time.

## SHORT-TERM DISABILITY PLAN

A short-term disability is an illness, injury or pregnancy that prevents you from performing your regular and customary job duties, or any modified job duties, for a period of six months or less.

Here are the key features of STD coverage:

**Core STD Coverage** – All *MegaFlex* participants receive County-paid income replacement equal to 70% of their monthly salary. Benefits may continue for up to 182 days, including the mandatory 14 consecutive calendar day waiting period.

**Additional STD Coverage** – Each year during annual benefits enrollment, you may purchase additional coverage that replaces 100% of your monthly salary for 21 days, after a 7-day waiting period, and 80% thereafter.

**Accessing STD Benefits** – Once you know you have a disability that will go beyond your waiting period, contact the County's Disability Administrator: *Sedgwick* as soon as possible (see box below). To avoid penalties and delays, make sure that you and your doctor contact *Sedgwick* within 29 calendar days of your disability date.

### Additional STD Basics:

- STD payments are taxable and subject to State and Federal withholding.
- To receive STD, you must be on a 5-day/40-hour work schedule (8-hour work day); retroactive to the first approved day of disability.
- STD benefits are paid by the County on regular County paydays, and paid at a daily rate for each day you are entitled to receive benefits.
- If approved by *Sedgwick* and your doctor, you may return to part-time work or to a modified reduced work schedule, following an interactive process meeting with your Department. Your pay will offset your STD benefit.
- If you receive STD while also receiving workers' compensation (WC), your total salary replacement percentage cannot exceed 70%, so your STD benefits will be reduced by your WC amount. Keep in mind that WC is tax free, however STD is taxable income.

## LONG-TERM DISABILITY PLAN

A long-term disability is an illness or injury that completely prevents you from performing the duties of your own County position for longer than a six-month waiting period after disability designation. After the waiting period and first 24 months of disability, the



definition broadens to require that you be deemed "totally disabled" by the Social Security Administration.

**Eligibility** – Members of Los Angeles County

*Employees Retirement Association (LACERA)* plans are eligible to purchase LTD coverage. Plan E members receive a "core" 40% LTD benefit after five years or more of County service. You purchase coverage when you first become eligible for *MegaFlex* or during the County's annual benefits enrollment each October.

**LTD Coverage Levels** – You may elect to buy LTD benefit insurance to cover either 40% or 60% of income replacement; the actual benefit amount will be calculated on the average base salary you received one year (12 months) before you became disabled.

**Accessing LTD Benefits** – If your doctor determines that you will be disabled and unable to perform the duties of your County position for a period longer than six months, contact *Sedgwick* (see box below).

### HOW TO GET MORE INFORMATION AND ACCESS BENEFITS

**For important rules and details on the *MegaFlex* STD and LTD and LTD Health Insurance plans:**

- Go to <http://employee.hr.lacounty.gov/benefits-2/> and look for the *MegaFlex* Summary Plan Description in the *MegaFlex* tab.
- Download the STD or LTD booklets at: <http://employee.hr.lacounty.gov/disability/>

**To contact *Sedgwick* (County Third-Party Administrator) with questions or to file a claim:**

- Call at (800) 786-8600
- File online at: <https://claimlookup.com/LACounty>

– Turn over for more information on LTD plans



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## Learn about the County's *MegaFlex* Short-Term and Long-Term Disability Plans

### See how to:

- File claims
- Contact the County's Disability Administrator
- Find more details

#### **LONG-TERM DISABILITY PLAN** (continued from other side)

**Filing an LTD Claim** – Both you and your doctor must complete the claim process. You will not receive benefits until each portion of the claim is reviewed and approved by *Sedgwick*. An LTD claim must be filed within one year of the first day of absence due to the disability.

**Filing for Social Security Disability** – You must also apply for Social Security Disability (SSD) within 30 days of filing your claim for LTD benefits. Information about SSD is available at [www.socialsecurity.gov](http://www.socialsecurity.gov).

**Paying Medical Premiums with LTD Health Insurance**  
Once approved for LTD, the County will pay 75% of your medical insurance premiums (100% if you enroll at annual benefits enrollment). However, you must pay your medical plan premiums until your LTD coverage is approved.

#### **Additional LTD Basics:**

- You must submit a separate LTD application, regardless of any other disability benefits you may be receiving (e.g., workers' compensation benefits).
- Failure to file within the one-year eligibility window will impact your benefits.

- You may return to work part-time if approved by *Sedgwick* and your doctor, following an interactive process meeting with your Department. Seventy percent (70%) of any of any salary or income you earn will be subtracted from your monthly LTD benefit.
- To continue to receive compensation beyond the initial 24 months of benefit eligibility (up to age 65), you must be deemed "totally disabled" and unable to perform the duties of **any** occupation by the Social Security Administration as defined by the Federal Social Security Act (FSSA):
  - Those deemed totally disabled and in *LACERA* plans A-D and G will need to retire, if eligible.
  - Retirement Plan E members deemed totally disabled should not retire, but will be medically released.
- If you start the LTD waiting period at age 62 or older, your LTD benefits will be limited in duration and will be paid in accordance with a pre-established schedule.