



**POLICY TITLE:**                    **Short-Term Disability**

**POLICY NO.:**                    **EB-4**

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**I.     PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy is to set forth guidelines under which short-term disability benefits are provided to full-time employees of the Board of County Commissioners for income continuation in the event of a non-work related illness or injury.

**II.    ELIGIBILITY**

All regular full-time employees of the Board of County Commissioners are eligible to request short-term disability benefits under the conditions set forth in this Policy.

**III.   CONDITIONS**

- A.    When an employee's sick leave is likely to be exhausted and short-term disability benefits may be needed, the employee is required to have his or her health care provider complete the short-term disability application form and return it to the Department of Human Resources prior to the start of benefits. Short-term disability benefits will be delayed if the form is not submitted to the Department of Human Resources prior to the established benefit commencement date. The short-term disability benefits form is available online at the County's website, [www.washco-md.net](http://www.washco-md.net), or upon request from the Department of Human Resources.
- B.    The employee's disability must require treatment by a licensed health care provider.
- C.    An employee must exhaust all available sick leave before beginning short-term disability. A fifteen (15) calendar day waiting period, beginning the first full day off sick, must be met before benefits are paid. If an employee has insufficient sick leave to cover the fifteen (15) day waiting period, the employee will be put on leave without pay for the balance of the fifteen (15) days. The employee may voluntarily use personal and vacation leave to cover the fifteen (15) day waiting period when the employee has insufficient sick leave available.
- D.    After the fifteen (15) calendar day waiting period, the employee will receive seventy percent (70%) of his or her biweekly gross salary, less deductions, not to exceed One Thousand Six Hundred Dollars (\$1,600.00) biweekly for up to a maximum of thirteen (13) weeks. The length of the benefit period is based on the physician's statement.

- E. Short-term disability benefits are based on seven (7) days per week. Each day will be paid one-seventh (1/7) of the weekly benefits.
- F. A return-to-work slip must be provided to the Department of Human Resources when the employee returns to work.
- G. For the safety of the employee, co-workers, and the public, the County reserves the right to require the employee to submit to an independent medical examination by a health care provider of the County's choosing prior to the employee's return to work.
- H. If an employee receives a settlement resulting from an accident or injury, the employee is responsible for reimbursing the County for the amount paid as short-term disability, based on the portion of the settlement that represents lost earnings/wages.
- I. If a workers' compensation award is made to the employee that covers the same injury or illness for the same time period during which the employee received short-term disability, the employee must repay all short-term disability payments upon receipt of the workers' compensation payments.
- J. An employee may not work a modified schedule and continue to receive short-term disability.
- K. Short-term disability benefits are paid for up to thirteen (13) weeks annually and may include multiple disability absences. A benefit is paid for up to the maximum period of payment for any one period of disability. This may include more than one disability absence. More than one disability absence will be part of the same period of disability if it is due to the same or a related cause and is separated by less than two (2) consecutive weeks of full-time work. An employee will be eligible for a new maximum period of payment if a new disability absence is due to a cause different from that of any prior disability and the new disability absence is separated from the prior disability absence by at least one (1) day of full-time active work.
- L. An employee who has an illness which is expected to continue beyond the short-term disability period may be eligible for benefits under the County's long-term disability plan. Employees are encouraged to keep the Department of Human Resources informed if they believe that they may require long-term disability.

**IV. EXCLUSIONS**

Short-term disability benefits will not be paid for a disability caused by or resulting from the following:

- A. Attempted suicide or intentionally self-inflicted injuries;
- B. War or acts of war, whether or not declared;
- C. Active duty in any Armed Forces;
- D. Injury or sickness which is work-related;
- E. Injury or sickness occurring while an employee is not covered by the County's short-term disability plan.

**Policy Actions**

<b>Action Taken</b>	<b>Approval Date</b>	<b>Effective Date</b>
Adoption	November 1975	November 1975, as amended through July 1, 1986
Revision	July 1, 2005	July 1, 2005
Revision	October 22, 2009	October 22, 2009
Content affirmed and renewed	November 28, 2017	November 28, 2017