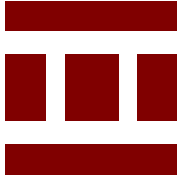


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The Metal and Engineering Industries Permanent Disability Scheme has been in existence since 1994, and is currently providing valuable benefits to members who are permanently disabled and unfit to carry out any occupation in the Industry.

It has come to the attention of the Trustees that both employers and employees are unclear about the procedures and benefits of the Scheme. Therefore, this document is designed to provide you with basic details of the Scheme, and the procedures that you and your employer need to follow in order to claim a disability benefit. In addition, we have provided a few answers to questions that you may have. If you have any further queries with regard to the procedures, benefits, or any of the information contained in this brochure, please contact the Permanent Disability Scheme on (011) 870-2000

The Metal and Engineering Industries Permanent Disability Scheme

What is the Metal and Engineering Industries Permanent Disability Scheme?

Should you become permanently disabled, the Scheme will pay a monthly disability income equal to 75% of your pensionable salary after a six-month waiting period. Please note that no benefits will be paid during the six-month waiting period.

Before you receive any benefits from the Scheme you must ensure that all the procedures, in terms of the Labour Relations Act and the Employment Equity Act have been followed (see below).

While you are receiving the disability benefit, you will remain a contributing member of your Fund (either the Metal Industries Provident Fund or the Engineering Industries Pension Fund) to ensure no loss of benefits upon your eventual retirement or death. Your disability benefit will cease upon recovery of health or upon retirement or death, whichever occurs first.

The Labour Relations Act (LRA) and Employment Equity Act (EEA)

The LRA and EEA set out the procedure that employers need to follow when one of their employees becomes disabled due to ill health or injury.

Should an employee become incapable of doing his/her work, the Acts stipulate that:

- Each case should be thoroughly investigated in a process that is open (transparent) to, and understood by the employee.
- The investigation is done by the employer and is discussed with the employee.
- The employee must be given the opportunity to present his/her case and must be allowed representation.
- Before the employee lodges a claim for disability benefits, the employer must first try to accommodate the employee by either:
 - ▶ adapting the work situation to accommodate the employee's impairment;
 - ▶ providing the employee with alternative employment, even at a lower salary;
 - ▶ if the disability is assessed as being temporary an ex-gratia benefit may be awarded for a limited period. The employer may consider a temporary placement until the employee can return to his/her original position.

Therefore, your employer will first try to accommodate your medical problems and will only start claiming the disability benefit if no alternative employment is available and provided that the provisions of the LRA and EEA have been followed.

Applying for a Permanent Disability Benefit

Should the employee become ill or involved in an accident, the employee and his employer must complete the following steps when applying for a disability benefit. If the employee does not resign as a result of his inability to continue working, employers should ensure that the employee's name is retained on the Sick Pay and Retirement Fund contribution returns, even where no wages are paid during the waiting period. Employers should endeavour not to discharge an employee until advice is received from the Scheme that a permanent disability benefit has either been awarded or rejected.

Step 1: Application for Permanent Disability

- Your medical advisor or doctor should examine you and determine whether you may be eligible for a disability claim. Your employer must agree with the findings of your medical advisor.
- Your employer will investigate whether your work circumstances or duties can be adapted to accommodate your illness or disability in terms of the LRA and EEA. If such alternative work exists, you will return to work. If your employer is unable to accommodate you, the claim process will begin.
- If your disability was caused by an accident at work, a work-related illness or a motor vehicle accident, you should apply for the COIDA or RAF benefit as well as the disability benefit (see Questions & Answers – questions 6,7 and 8).
- An application for permanent disability benefits will be submitted to the Metal and Engineering Industries Permanent Disability Scheme by your employer on your behalf. All medical reports confirming disability, sick leave records, level of education, job description and responsibilities are to be attached to the application.

Step 3: Review by the Claims sub-Committee

- The Claims sub-Committee will review each case on the medical opinions provided. They will also look at your work capabilities to determine whether you can possibly be employed within the Industry, in an alternative capacity.
- If the Claims sub-Committee approves your claim, you and your employer will receive confirmation of your acceptance as a disabled member. You will start receiving the disability payment in the 7th month after your last working day.
- Once in benefit, you could be required to undergo a medical examination once a year at the discretion of the Trustees. If so, the latter part of the procedures in Step 2 will be repeated.
- If the Claims sub-Committee does not accept your claim, you may have a once-off right of appeal and the procedures outlined in Step 4 can be followed.

Step 2: Examination by the Scheme's Specialist

- Your application will be reviewed by the Scheme's medical advisors and admitted as a possible claim for further investigation as per the Rules of the Scheme.
- You will undergo all medical examinations and tests prescribed by the Scheme's medical advisor. The tests/examinations are performed by the Scheme's medical specialists and are paid for by the Scheme.
- The Scheme's medical advisors will examine the reports and results of all the tests/examinations and make recommendations to the Trustees of the Scheme. These recommendations will be reviewed at the monthly meeting of the Claims sub-Committee.

Step 4: Claim not approved by Claims sub-Committee

- The Claims sub-Committee will advise you and your employer if they have rejected your disability claim.
- You may appeal against the decision of the Committee by submitting additional medical opinions within three months of the decision to reject your claim.
- The Scheme's medical advisors will examine the additional reports and results of all the tests /examinations and make recommendations to the Trustees. These recommendations will be reviewed at the monthly meeting of the Claims sub-Committee.
- If the claim is validated then the procedures in Step 3 will be repeated but if the appeal is declined there will be no further right of appeal.



Questions & Answers

We understand that you have many questions about the disability benefit, therefore we have provided a few answers! Should you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Permanent Disability Scheme on (011) 870-2000.

1. *What does it mean to be permanently disabled?*

According to the Scheme's Rules, you are "permanently disabled" if you are unable to work in any position within the Industries.

2. *What benefit does the Disability Scheme provide?*

Should you become permanently disabled and your disability claim is accepted, the Scheme will provide a monthly disability income equal to 75% of your pensionable salary. Members joining the Scheme after age 55 only qualify for a 37,5% benefit.

3. *Does the Disability Scheme provide any cash lump sum benefits?*

No. It is important to note that the Scheme only provides a monthly income and does not pay out any lump sum cash benefits.

4. *When will the monthly disability income begin?*

Your monthly disability income will start after a six-month waiting period following your last day of work. Therefore, no benefits will be payable by the Scheme for the first six months of your disability.

However, the waiting period may be relaxed if a member is suffering from a short terminal disease.

5. *What happens during the six-month waiting period?*

In the six months before your disability income is payable, you and your employer will be following all the claiming procedures outlined in this document. It is important that both you and your employer ensure that all the claim forms are submitted as soon as possible after your last working day.

While your disability claim is being assessed, you will be entitled to claim benefits from the UIF and also from the Sick Pay Fund if you are a member. This will ensure that you still receive an income while you are waiting for your disability claim to be assessed.

6. *What is the COIDA and UIF benefit?*

"COIDA" refers to the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act, 1993. This is a government insurance scheme that provides certain benefits should you become injured at work or should you suffer from a disease related to your work. A benefit is also payable to your family should you die as a result of your work-related injury or disease.

"UIF" refers to the Unemployment Insurance Fund, which is also a government insurance scheme. This Fund provides benefits to persons during the first six months of their unemployment due to ill health.

7. *What is the RAF benefit?*

RAF refers to the Road Accidents Fund. This Fund may pay a benefit should you be seriously injured in a motor vehicle accident.

8. *What happens if I am receiving another source of income?*

If you qualify for any other additional disability payments from an external source, for example, COIDA or RAF, the Permanent Disability Scheme's benefit will be reduced to limit your total income to 75% of your pensionable salary.

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