

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) UPDATE AND INQUIRY INFORMATION

At Morel Benefits, we are actively monitoring global developments related to COVID-19 closely and want to ensure everyone is informed as situations evolve.

Here at Morel Benefits Consulting, we are operating under business as usual standards. We are here for you and your employees for any regular and COVID-19 enquiries.

Travel Plans?

As of today, insurers have advised that Members under the Benefit Program should avoid any *non-essential travel* and should visit the Government of Canada Travel website / Public Health Agency of Canada website for updates.

Resources for Coronavirus Information and Travel Advisories:

- Government of Canada – [Travel Advice and Advisories](#)
- Government of Canada – [Travel Health Notices](#)
- Public Health Agency of Canada – [Coronavirus disease \(COVID-19\): Travel advice](#)
- Learn about how the Ministry of Health is preparing for the 2019 novel coronavirus in Ontario – <https://www.ontario.ca/page/2019-novel-coronavirus>

Morel Benefits is connecting daily with partner carriers regarding their position on the COVID-19 pandemic and the impact on group benefits (if any). We will provide the updates to keep you informed. Insurers are also releasing updates on their websites and online portals regularly

All health plan coverage remains the same, as documented within the current policy. *Employees should continue to monitor their insurer sites for updates on coverage and advisories.*

Medical Alternatives

If seeking an alternative to visiting your doctor or walk-in clinic in person, there are many Virtual Doctor platforms available where patients can be assessed by physicians online for visits such as prescription refill. Some are Medeo Virtual Care, Maple, Babylon Health and MedHouseCall. A virtual provider that Morel Benefits is familiar with is Maple.

- Website: <https://www.getmaple.ca/>
- Fees as noted on their website (Per consultation: \$49 Weekdays / \$79 weekends / \$99 overnight)
- Registration is free. Only pay for the visits you need.
- Each visit is for one issue and there's no time limit.
- Get a diagnosis, prescription, or sick note in minutes.

Mental Health & Well-Being in a Global Pandemic

As the world navigates through this pandemic, we wanted to highlight a resource for employees to use should the concern around COVID-19 impact their mental health would be the Employee Assistance Program, if included under the Group Benefit Program.

Please connect with your Morel Benefits team regarding information from our partners at Ceridian, Compsych, Aspira and Homewood, who are assisting individuals through any experienced increase in anxiety and stress at a time of such uncertainty.

Employment Insurance (EI) Benefits

As indicated on the government site, Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits provide up to 15 weeks of income replacement and is available to eligible claimants who are unable to work because of *illness, injury or quarantine*, to allow them time to restore their health and return to work. Canadians quarantined can apply for Employment Insurance (EI) sickness benefits.

Service Canada is ready to support Canadians affected by COVID-19 and placed in quarantine, with the following support actions:

- The one-week waiting period for EI sickness benefits will be waived for new claimants who are quarantined so they can be paid for the first week of their claim.
- Establishing a new dedicated toll-free phone number to support enquiries related to waiving the EI sickness benefits waiting period.
- Priority EI application processing for EI sickness claims for clients under quarantine.
- Contact the new dedicated toll-free phone number if you are in quarantine and seeking to waive the one-week EI sickness benefits waiting period so you can be paid for the first week of your claim:
 - Telephone: 1-833-381-2725 (toll-free)
 - Teletypewriter (TTY): 1-800-529-3742

<https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/corporate/notices/coronavirus.html>

For any questions or concerns, connect with your dedicated Morel Benefits Team

We continue to be available to you Via Telephone, Email and Online Meetings.

Please note, all non-essential face to face client meetings and/or employee meetings will be placed on hold until further notice. We will offer Zoom video meetings and conference calls as alternatives.

We hope everyone stays safe and healthy. We will provide regular updates as more information becomes available.

- Sincerely, Your Morel Benefits Team