

CHAPTER 8

TEMPORARY DISABILITY INSURANCE

IN GENERAL

Temporary Disability Insurance (TDI) programs are designed to provide wage replacement for nonwork-connected sickness or injury. The TDI program complements the UI program by providing benefits to individuals who do not meet the UI program's "able" to work requirement. Although Federal law does not provide for a federal-state TDI system, the SSA and FUTA both authorize the withdrawal of employee contributions from a state's unemployment fund for payment of TDI.

Six states operate TDI programs. In California, New Jersey, Puerto Rico, and Rhode Island the TDI programs are administered by the state employment security agency. The Hawaii law is administered by the Temporary Disability Income Division of the Department of Labor and Industrial Relations. The New York law is administered by the state's workers' compensation board.

Historical Note: Rhode Island passed the first TDI law in 1942; California followed in 1946, New Jersey in 1948, New York in 1949, Puerto Rico in 1968, and Hawaii in 1969.

DEFINITION OF DISABILITY

The scope of the program depends in part on the type of disabilities compensable. The intent of the laws is to compensate for nonwork-connected sickness or injury. This purpose is achieved through the definition of disability or through other eligibility conditions.

In general, the laws define disability in terms of the inability of an individual to perform the regular or customary work because of the individual's physical or mental condition. California also specifically includes individuals suspected of being infected with a communicable disease, acute alcoholics, and drug addicts undergoing treatment. Hawaii's definition of disability includes organ donation. The Puerto Rico law and two of the special programs for the unemployed who are disabled in New Jersey and New York contain more strict requirements with respect to disability during unemployment. The New Jersey law provides that individuals must be continuously and totally unable to perform the duties of their job. The New York and Puerto Rico laws provide that individuals must be unable to perform any work for which they are reasonably qualified by training and experience.

EXCLUSION FROM DISABILITY PAYMENTS—Hawaii, New Jersey, New York, and Puerto Rico have provisions for excluding payments for disability caused by willful, intentional, or self-inflicted injuries. A disability acquired in the perpetration of an illegal act is excluded in California, Hawaii, New Jersey, New York, and Puerto Rico. California also prohibits payment due to incarceration. New York also excludes disabilities

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resulting from an act of war after June 30, 1950. California and Puerto Rico prohibit payments for any period of confinement in an institution as a drug addict, dipsomaniac, or sexual psychopath. In Puerto Rico, benefits are not payable for disability in cases caused by, or in relation to, abortion performed for medical reasons or in cases where complications have arisen due to abortion.

UNINTERRUPTED PERIOD OF DISABILITY—All states except Rhode Island have defined consecutive periods of disability resulting from the same or related cause or condition.

TABLE 8-1: CONSECUTIVE PERIODS OF DISABILITY	
CA	Consecutive disability periods due to same or related cause and separated by not more than 14 days
HI	Consecutive periods of disability due to same or related cause and not separated by an interval of more than 2 weeks
NJ	Consecutive periods of disability due to same or related cause and separated by not more than 14 days if individual earned wages from his last employer during the 14-day period
NY	Consecutive disability periods caused by same or related injury or sickness if separated by less than 3 months
PR	Consecutive disability periods caused by same or related illness or injury if separated by less than 90 days

COVERAGE

Coverage for the purpose of TDI varies among the six states; therefore, no state TDI coverage provision is the same. Services are covered for TDI if an employer meets the definitions shown in the table below. In all states with TDI laws, under specified conditions, states may allow certain exemptions from coverage and certain elections of coverage.

TABLE 8-2: COVERAGE PROVISIONS	
CA	Employers of one or more workers and \$100 in quarterly payroll, agricultural employees, certain domestic workers who are paid \$1,000 or more, and employees of nonprofit hospitals
HI	Employers of one or more workers
NJ	Employers who paid \$1,000 in any year
NY	Employers of one or more workers on each of at least 30 days and domestic workers who work a minimum of 40 hours and are employed on each of at least 30 days; individuals can elect out on grounds that they are entitled to Old Age and Survivor's Insurance benefits
PR	Employers of one or more workers on any day of current or preceding calendar year
RI	Employers of one or more workers at any time, except that individual workers can elect out on religious grounds

FINANCING

In California and Rhode Island, the benefits and administration of the programs originally were financed wholly or mainly by employee contributions that formerly went to UI. In New Jersey, employers have always contributed substantially (up to 50 percent, historically) for TDI. In addition to providing that current employee contributions are deposited in the disability fund, the legislatures in these states provided for transfer to the disability fund of some or all of the employee contributions collected under the UI law.

TYPE OF FUND—In Rhode Island, all contributions are paid into a pooled state fund and all benefits are paid from that fund. In California, New Jersey, and Puerto Rico, coverage under a private plan (usually with an insurance company) may be substituted for coverage under the state fund if the private plan is approved by the agency as meeting certain requirements of the law. Contributions are then paid into the private plan and benefits are paid by it, generally one plan for disabilities beginning during employment and one plan for disabilities beginning shortly thereafter. In Puerto Rico, benefits under a private plan are paid to individuals for periods of disability that begin during unemployment or while employed in noninsured work.

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The Hawaii and New York laws are similar to an employer liability law in that they require employers to take positive action to provide disability insurance for their workers, with employees contributing to the cost. In New York, the employer may provide the protection through self-insurance, or through buying an insurance contract from either a private insurance company or the state insurance fund, which is a state-operated competitive carrier originally organized for workers' compensation. In New York, employers may purchase Enriched Disability Benefits Insurance coverage to provide benefit levels for employees above the statutory requirements. Also, there is a special fund for disability benefits, operated by the state, for benefits to the unemployed. In Hawaii, employers may provide protection through private plans with an authorized insurance carrier or through approved self-financing. In addition, there is a special state fund for unemployed workers and employees of bankrupt or non-complying employers.

AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTIONS—The TDI contribution rates for both employees and employers vary among the states. All six states require employees to pay contributions to finance TDI. Only four states require employers to pay TDI contributions. The following table shows the amount of TDI contributions required for both employers and employees.

TABLE 8-3: AMOUNT OF CONTRIBUTIONS			
State	Employer Contributions	Employee Contributions	Taxable Wage Base
CA	None; optional; may elect to pay all or part of employee amount	0.1 – 1.5% of TWB ¹	\$118,371
HI	At least ½ plan costs, plus additional costs, plus additional costs not charged to employee	Up to ½ plan costs, but not more than 0.5% of avg. weekly wages	\$1,088.08 weekly
NJ	0.1% - 0.75% of TWB ²	0.19% of TWB	\$34,400
NY	Balance after employee contributions	0.5% of wages paid (up to 60¢ weekly)	None
PR	0.6% of TWB which is shared by employer and employee ³		\$9,000
RI	None	1.1% of TWB	\$69,300

¹ Rate may not decrease from the previous year's rate by more than 1.2%; the 2019 rate is 1.0%.
² Percent of TWB of each employee based on experience rating; rate may decrease to 0.1% or increase to 1.1% on basis of employer's reserve ratio, how long a covered employer, and the status of the state UI fund as a whole.
³ Contributions may or may not be equally shared.

FINANCING BENEFITS FOR DISABILITY DURING UNEMPLOYMENT—In Rhode Island, all benefits are paid from the state fund with no distinction between disabilities beginning during employment and those beginning during unemployment. In California, where contracting out is permitted, there is no distinction between the amount of benefits payable to the employed and the unemployed, but the latter are charged to a special account in the state fund depending on whether the workers were covered by the state plan or a private plan when employed. Each voluntary plan pays 14 percent of the amount due annually for contributions into the state fund to finance benefits to persons who are either unemployed or in noncovered work at the time their period of disability commences. In Puerto Rico, private plans must finance some or all of the disability benefits payable to workers for periods of disability that begin during unemployment or employment in uninsured work.

The separate New Jersey program for disability during unemployment is financed principally by interest on employee contributions withdrawn from the unemployment trust fund. Additional costs of such benefits may be assessed against all employers up to 0.1 percent of taxable wages.

Hawaii levied a temporary contribution rate of 0.2 percent on the taxable wages of subject employers from July to December 1969 to establish the Special Disability Fund from which benefits are paid during unemployment. Additional amounts are assessed against insurance carriers and self-insured employers as needed.

In New York, a temporary contribution from January 1 to July 1, 1950, of 0.1 percent on the first \$60 in weekly wages by both employers and employees (i.e., not more than 60 cents a week each) established the fund from which benefits were first paid for disability during unemployment. This fund has been maintained at \$12

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million (by statute) by interest earned by the fund, by certain fines and penalties, and, when necessary, by an assessment against all carriers including the state fund.

ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS—Administrative costs under five programs are paid from the contributions; in Hawaii, such costs are paid from general revenue. Under the terms of the SSA and FUTA, employee contributions withdrawn from the unemployment trust fund are not available for payment of costs of administration. In New Jersey, 0.01 percent of taxable wages is credited to the administration account. In California and Puerto Rico, necessary administrative expenses, as determined by the State Director of Finance (California) or the Secretary of Labor (Puerto Rico), are withdrawn from the disability fund and each private plan is assessed a share of the total amount expended for added administrative work arising out of the voluntary plans.

New Jersey employers covered by the state fund pay an extra assessment for the costs of maintaining separate accounts for experience-rating purposes. In New Jersey, employers with private plans are assessed the additional administrative costs attributable to private plans in proportion to covered wages, with a maximum annual assessment of 0.5 percent of wages. Included in this assessment is a prorated share of the administrative costs of the system for the unemployed.

In New York, the state insurance fund is limited to 25 percent of contributions for administrative expenses. The administrative costs to the state of the programs for both employed and unemployed workers, not including the expenses of the state fund as a carrier, are assessed against all carriers, including the state fund, in proportion to covered wages, with no limit.

BENEFIT PROVISIONS

The TDI benefit provisions are shown in the tables below. In all states, eligibility for benefits depends on proof of disability and continuation of such disability. Some states also have special provisions for individuals with specific circumstances (e.g. military service, trade affected, unemployed, etc.).

TABLE 8-4: BENEFIT YEAR AND BASE PERIOD			
State	Benefit Formula	Benefit Year	Base Period
CA	Differs from UI	No BY; rights determined with respect to continuous disability period established by valid claim	First 4 of last 5 CQs preceding disability
HI	Differs from UI	1-year period beginning with 1 st week of disability for which valid claim is filed	None; see tables in TDI statute for period used for qualifying employment and WBA
NJ	Differs from UI	No BY but statutory minimum and maximum benefits in any 12-month period	52 calendar weeks immediately preceding calendar week in which disability period began
NY	Differs from UI	No BY; maximum benefits limited in terms of any 52 consecutive weeks	No BP as used in UI; see tables in TDI statute for period used for qualifying employment and WBA
PR	Same as UI for agricultural and nonagricultural workers up to \$64 WBA	No BY; maximum benefit limited in terms of any 52 consecutive weeks	First 4 of last 5 completed CQs immediately preceding 1 st day of disability
RI	Similar to UI	Begins Sunday of calendar week in which individual first became unemployed due to illness and has filed a valid claim for TDI (52 consecutive weeks; 53 if overlaps with any quarter of BP of prior claim)	First 4 of last 5 completed CQs immediately preceding BY or last 4 completed quarters if individual fails to meet qualifying wage requirement

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TABLE 8-5: QUALIFYING WAGES OR EMPLOYMENT

State	Additional Information
CA	Flat \$300 in base period
HI	14 weeks of employment with at least 20 hours in each week and wages of \$400 during the 4 completed CQs-immediately preceding 1 st day of disability
NJ	20 weeks of employment at 20 times the minimum wage during the base year or 1,000 times the minimum wage during the base year; or \$8,500 in earnings for individuals who have not established 20 base weeks; \$172 base week
NY	Employ one or more persons on each of 30 days in a calendar year
PR	Flat \$150 in base period
RI	(1) 200 x minimum hourly wage in 1 quarter and BPW of 1½ x HQ, and BPW must be at least 400 x minimum hourly wage, or (2) paid total BPW of at least 3 x total minimum amount required in (1) above

TABLE 8-6: WEEKLY BENEFIT AMOUNT AND DURATION OF BENEFITS

State	Weekly Benefit Amount	Duration
CA	\$50 - \$1,252	Up to 52 weeks
HI	\$1 - \$632	Up to 26 weeks in BY
NJ	\$10 - \$650	Up to 26 weeks or period necessary for benefits to equal ⅓ of total wages in base year
NY	\$20 - \$170 ¹	Uniform potential 26 weeks in any 52 consecutive weeks or for any single period of disability
PR	Non-agricultural workers: \$12 - \$113 Agricultural workers: \$12 - \$64	Uniform potential 26 weeks in any 52 consecutive weeks
RI	\$98 - \$852 plus dependents' allowance (equal to the greater of \$10 or 7% of the individual's benefit rate for each dependent, up to 5 dependents)	1 - 30 weeks

TABLE 8-7: WAITING PERIOD

State	Additional Information
CA	7 consecutive days of disability at the beginning of each period of disability
HI	7 consecutive days of disability at the beginning of each period of disability
NJ	7 consecutive days of disability commencing with the Sunday of the week in which the claim is filed; becomes compensable after benefits have been paid for all or some part of each of the 3 weeks immediately following the waiting week
NY	7 consecutive days of disability at the beginning of each period of disability
PR	7 consecutive days of disability at the beginning of each period of disability; no waiting period for agricultural workers who become disabled during continuous period of unemployment; no waiting period required for regular benefits for hospitalized individual or for individual unemployed and disabled for more than 14 days
RI	Waiting week eliminated 7/1/2012; as a condition of eligibility, an individual must have been unemployed due to nonjob-related injury or sickness for at least 7 consecutive days

PARTIAL WEEKS OF DISABILITY—In the temporary disability programs, benefits are paid for partial weeks on a different basis from partial unemployment (except in the New Jersey program) for compensating disability during employment.

TABLE 8-8: PARTIAL WEEKS OF DISABILITY

State	Additional Information
CA	Benefits payable for less than 1 week will be paid in increments of 1/7 WBA
HI	Benefits payable for less than 1 week will be paid in increments of 1/5 WBA

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TABLE 8-8: PARTIAL WEEKS OF DISABILITY

State	Additional Information
NJ	Benefits payable for less than 1 week will be paid in increments of 1/7 WBA; payment for part week rounded to next higher dollar
NY	Benefits payable for less than 1 week will be paid in increments of the WBA divided by the number of the employee's normal workdays per week (daily benefits computed on basis of normal number of workdays per week)
PR	Benefits payable for less than 1 week will be paid in increments of 1/7 WBA rounded to higher dollar
RI	For each day of qualifying unemployment, worker receives benefits at the rate of 1/5 WBA for each workday up to 4/5 WBA rounded to next higher dollar

BENEFITS UNDER PRIVATE PLANS—The California law requires that private plans provide benefit rights greater than those under the state plan in all respects. In Hawaii, New Jersey, and Puerto Rico, private plan benefits must be at least as favorable to workers as those under the state plans. Hawaii permits deviations from statutory benefits if the benefits provided under the private plan are actuarially equal or better. In New York, adherence to a statutory formula is not required whether workers are insured with the state fund or with a private carrier. Benefits must be actuarially equivalent to the statutory formula. Cash benefits in the formula in table 8-4 may be reduced if the plan of insurance includes a shorter waiting period or other benefits, such as hospitalization benefits; weekly benefits may be less than 50 percent of wages if maximum duration is more than 26 weeks. Employees may be required to contribute more than 0.5 percent of wages paid if additional benefits warrant the extra cost.

SURVIVORS' BENEFITS—In California and New Jersey, if a claim for disability benefits was not filed by an otherwise eligible individual prior to his death, a claim may be filed by a person who legally would be entitled to such benefits. Puerto Rico provides a lump sum death benefit of \$4,000 to dependents of workers. Death benefits are payable upon the sudden death of an insured worker from injuries or an accident compensable under the law, or death resulting within 52 weeks of an onset of a disability because of sickness or injury. However, benefits may not be paid for death or injury caused by an automobile accident that is covered under the Automobile Accident Social Protection Act.

DISQUALIFICATION AND NONMONETARY ELIGIBILITY PROVISIONS

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS IN ADDITION TO WAGES—Under all the programs, for TDI eligibility, individuals must be in a nonwork status because of disability, and they may be declared ineligible if they withdrew from the labor force for reasons other than disability. A California claimant who has been disqualified from UI is presumed to be disqualified from disability benefits for such weeks unless the claimant establishes that he/she is suffering a bona fide illness or injury, and the agency finds that there is good cause for paying such benefits. However, a claimant who is otherwise eligible for disability benefits is not disqualified from receiving those benefits because of a labor dispute disqualification for UI.

A disability claimant in Hawaii must be in current employment; i.e., an individual who was performing regular service prior to the onset of the disability and who would have continued in employment but for the disability. In addition, a disability claimant is ineligible for benefits during any period in which the claimant would be disqualified for UI because of a labor dispute or during any period in which the claimant performed work for remuneration, was unemployed because of an intentional self-inflicted injury, or attempted to obtain benefits through fraud, or failure to file a claim for disability benefits within 90 days after the commencement of the period of disability or as soon as was reasonably possible.

In New Jersey, a covered governmental employee must exhaust all sick leave before becoming eligible for disability benefits. New Jersey claimants for disability benefits beginning during employment also are ineligible if they would be disqualified for UI benefits because of a labor dispute, unless the disability began before the disqualification. New Jersey claimants must be under the medical care of a legally licensed physician or other qualifying medical personnel.

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In Hawaii and New Jersey, claimants for disability during unemployment must meet all the requirements for UI except ability to work; they are not eligible for disability benefits for any week of disability more than 26 weeks after the last week of covered employment. Although the benefit formula in New York is not related to the benefit formula for UI, individuals who are or would be disqualified from UI benefits are disqualified from disability insurance benefits.

RELATIONSHIP TO WORKERS' COMPENSATION—None of the TDI laws is intended to replace workers' compensation, although the relationship between the two programs differs among states.

In California, a claimant who is receiving or is entitled to receive workers' compensation for the same temporary disability is not eligible for disability benefits unless the disability benefit is higher than the weekly workers' compensation payment; in that case, the claimant is entitled to the difference from the disability fund. If the claimant's eligibility for workers' compensation has not been determined, he/she may receive disability benefits subject to reimbursement from any workers' compensation benefits subsequently awarded for that week. Full benefits are payable irrespective of cash payments under a workers' compensation law for permanent disability.

Hawaii does not permit duplication of benefits unless a claimant is receiving workers' compensation payments for permanent partial or total disability previously incurred. However, if a claimant's right to benefits under workers' compensation is disputed, the individual may receive disability benefits until his disability becomes compensable under workers' compensation. If a claimant subsequently receives workers' compensation payments, these payments are proportionately allocated among employers or insurers according to the amount of disability benefits paid by them.

In New Jersey, both the definition of disability and the eligibility conditions exclude disability benefits for any week for which workers' compensation, other than for permanent total or partial disability, is payable. However, if a claim for workers' compensation is contested, temporary disability benefits may be paid to an otherwise eligible claimant until his/her disability becomes compensable under the workers' compensation law.

The New York law defines disability to exclude illnesses or accidents arising out of or in the course of employment, whether or not worker's compensation is payable. It further provides that no benefits are payable for any period with respect to which workers' compensation, other than permanent partial benefits for a prior disability is paid. In Puerto Rico and Rhode Island, a claimant may receive disability benefits if there is doubt as to his eligibility for workers' compensation. If the claimant later receives such benefits, he/she is liable for repayment of the disability benefits. Puerto Rico limits the maximum weekly benefit amount payable while a claim for workers' compensation is under dispute to \$65. However, if the claimant is later found eligible for disability benefits, the claim will be recomputed. In addition, in Puerto Rico, no disqualification is applicable if the worker's compensation payment was made on account of partial permanent disability occurring prior to the disability for which disability benefits are claimed.

EFFECT OF OTHER TYPES OF INCOME ON ELIGIBILITY—Other types of income that affect eligibility include wages, employer pensions, old-age benefits, and survivors' insurance benefits.

In Rhode Island, claimants collecting TDI who return to work on a partial basis lose their TDI benefits. A claimant who earns less than the weekly benefit rate would be entitled to a partial UI payment. The partial payment allows a person to earn and keep the first 20 percent of the weekly benefit amount without any penalty. After earning more than 20 percent of the weekly benefit amount, the benefits are reduced dollar for dollar. All earnings are taken into consideration in offsetting the partial benefits. New Jersey and Puerto Rico take such wages into account and limit the total of wages and benefits to the claimant's weekly wages immediately prior to the disability. In Puerto Rico, a pregnant worker may not be paid during any period in which she is receiving benefits under the Act to Protect Working Mothers unless such benefits are less than her weekly disability benefit amount, in which case she may receive the difference. California provides that the daily combination of such wages and disability benefits shall not exceed one-seventh of the claimant's weekly wage, excluding overtime pay, immediately prior to the disability. Also in California, individuals are entitled to receive, for any

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day, if otherwise eligible, disability benefits reduced by the amount of a permanent disability indemnity if the permanent disability indemnity is less than the amount the individual would otherwise receive as disability benefits under the law.

New York deducts from the benefits any payment from the employer or from a fund to which the employer contributes, except supplementary benefits paid pursuant to a collective bargaining agreement. New Jersey applies the UI formula for partial benefits to claimants receiving disability benefits during unemployment. Also, a claimant's disability benefit is reduced by the amount of any pension plan to which his most recent employer has contributed. In Puerto Rico, any claimant receiving any pension payments or retirement income is denied benefits unless, subsequent to receipt of the pension or retirement payment, he/she has performed services in insured work for at least 15 weeks immediately preceding the disability.

ADMINISTRATION

The systems of disability insurance coordinated with UI use the same wage record procedures for both programs. Claims procedures, however, necessarily differ for UI claimants and for claimants who are not able to work. Disability claims are filed by mail. The first claim or notice of disability is normally filed after the end of the first week of disability. All claims are sent to the central office in both New Jersey and Rhode Island. In California, both the initial and continued claims are sent directly to one of the field offices. In New York, employed workers file claims with their employers, and unemployed workers with the workers' compensation board.

Under all the laws, medical certification of disability in connection with claims is required from the claimant's attending doctor, with minor differences in the types of medical personnel permitted to certify. California, Hawaii, and New York accept certifications from an authorized religious practitioner with respect to the illness of a member of his/her group. All state laws give the agency authority to require that claimants, without cost to themselves, submit to examination by a designated licensed physician.

Individuals who are dissatisfied with determinations on their disability claims have the right to appeal under all state laws. In states with disability and UI coordinated, the appeal is to the UI appeal bodies; in New York, to the workers' compensation board; and in Hawaii, to the referee for temporary disability benefits. In the states with private plans, a private-plan claimant may also appeal to the state's unemployment appeal tribunal.