

November 7, 2017

**To:                   Benefit Administrators / Human Resource Personnel**

**From:               Alana Shearer-Kleefeld**  
**Director, Benefits Administration**

**Re:                   Extension of Benefits During a Leave of Absence to 18 Months**

The 2017 federal budget included an announcement to extend parental leave for up to 18 months. In response to this change, the Employee Benefit Plans will extend benefit coverage for up to 18 months for all leave of absence types. The extension of benefits includes disability, group life, extended health care and dental. This change will take effect on November 16, 2017 and apply to leaves of absence on a go forward basis. It will not apply to any leave of absence that where entered into IHRIS prior to November 16, 2017.

Previously when an employee was on a leave of absence, benefits could be continued for a period of 1 to 3 years depending on the benefit plan and the type of leave of absence.

There is no change to the deemed hours calculation in Batch. The maximum deemed hours will continue to be 12 months. It will be very important to explain deemed hours to other than full-time employees when they are making their decision about their leave of absence because it can have a significant impact to their benefit eligibility in the year following their return to work.

This change will not impact employees on a 3sHealth approved disability claim. Benefits will continue for up to 2 years and 119 days during an approved disability claim.

If you have any questions, please call a 3sHealth Benefit Services Officer at 1.866.278.2301 or email [ebp@3shealth.ca](mailto:ebp@3shealth.ca).