

## Job Description

<b>Job Title:</b>	Disability Benefits Specialist
<b>Department:</b>	Human Resources
<b>Reports To:</b>	Benefits Manager
<b>Jobs Reporting:</b>	None
<b>Salary Grade:</b>	USG 8
<b>Effective Date:</b>	March 2022

### **Primary Purpose**

The Disability Benefits Specialist provides leadership in the ongoing management of the University's disability and sick leave programs for managers and employees by providing comprehensive, progressive, and supportive case management for short-term sick leave and long-term disability, including the development of return-to-work plans, attendance management and accommodations.

### **Key Accountabilities**

#### **Remain current and conversant with trends and practices related to areas of responsibility**

- Maintain awareness of best practices related to disability claims management and accommodations
- Maintain general awareness of applicable legislation including Employment Standards Act (ESA), Human Rights Code, Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Workplace Safety Insurance Act, Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA), Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and ensure compliance within area of responsibility
- Participate in professional development in areas of responsibility to aid in ongoing knowledge and skills acquisition

#### **Administration of sick leave and long-term disability claims**

- Support and monitor employees who are absent from work due to non-occupational illness/injury
- Determine eligibility to sick leave salary continuance benefits and long-term disability
- Provide guidance and education to internal HR partners, management, employees, and union representatives on sick leave and claims processes, including short-term sick leave, LTD and accommodations
- Maintain an accurate database of medically verified employee absences, including detailed notes and documentation of communication actions taken on claims utilizing a third-party provider's system (Parklane) and Workday
- Verify disability payments are accurate based on eligibility and entitlement
- Liaise with treatment providers and physicians where necessary to clarify employees' ability to engage in work duties, utilizing partners in Occupational Health and as required, the vendors (Canada Life, LifeWorks) for assessment/adjudication
- Ensure all parties involved with an employee's absence understand the current status including eligibility for benefits, medical documentation requirements, anticipated or planned return to work dates, and any limitations or restrictions
- Facilitate the completion and submission of timely applications for long term disability benefits and submit early referrals to third party LifeWorks for assistance with managing employees' absences
- Produce reports as required and identify areas or processes that could benefit from continuous improvement opportunities based on feedback received or through self-assessment

#### **Develop and maintain current and accurate materials to support effective communication**

- Ensure all disability management materials including guides, forms, template letters are current, accurate and reflect the HR brand
- Ensure related and relevant material on the HR website is kept accurate and current
- Develop and deliver presentations on disability management as required

## Job Description

### **Maintain strong working relationships with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties who support in the administration of employee claims**

- Interact on a regular basis with third party providers (i.e., Canada Life, LifeWorks and Parklane) that aid and support with the disability administration requirements
- Schedule and develop the agenda for required meetings or conference calls with Canada Life and LifeWorks
- Identify and lead the resolution of any service issues or misalignment with the contract for services
- Keep informed of any changes to systems or processes which may have an impact on services available, escalate as necessary

### **Other duties as required, including:**

- Work with Occupational Health, HR Partners, and managers to identify and develop strategies for managing employees who are experiencing frequent or patterned absences
- Assist HR Partners and managers by identifying any potential employment issues related to absences
- Analyze Parklane report information (e.g., incidents, lost time, cost) to identify trends and assist clients with areas of concern.
- Educate and supports supervisory staff as well as employees with attendance support, disability case management procedures and collective agreement provisions pertaining to sick leave absences
- Work collaboratively with Safety Office to ensure efficiency and consistency in the claims management model
- Assist in data collection and analysis for annual post-employment liability reports, auditors, insurance renewals, and presentations to leadership or committees
- Provide information as necessary to employees' legal representation
- As required, represent the University in court to confirm administrative practices for disability benefits

## Required Qualifications

### **Education**

- Three-year college diploma or equivalent experience. Working towards Certified Employee Benefit Specialist (CEBS) and National Institute of Disability Management and Research (NIDMAR) designation would be an asset.

### **Experience**

- 3-5 years of progressive experience managing absences related to disability or sick leave programs in a professional environment.

### **Knowledge/Skills/Abilities**

- Ability to provide exceptional employee support when dealing with very sensitive situations
- The ability to maintain, in strictest confidence, information received concerning confidential matters such as medical, labour relations legal issues, staffing and recruiting, performance management and any other information deemed to be of a confidential nature
- Competencies include interpersonal and communication skills, analytical and problem-solving skills, attention to detail, understanding of benefits landscape and relevant employment legislation.
- The ability to demonstrate strong interpersonal skills in developing and maintaining positive relationships with employees, unions and third-party providers
- Basic skill level of Microsoft Office suite, Human Resources Information Systems, and Case Management systems (Parklane preferred).

## Nature and Scope

- **Contacts:** The incumbent must be a good communicator and consultative in nature. The incumbent has direct contact and interaction with managers and employees. The role interacts regularly with representatives from Human Resources, Occupational Health, and the Safety Office. More occasional but important contacts are representatives from the three main employee groups CUPE, the Staff Association and the Faculty Association as well as the University Colleges. Externally, the role

## Job Description

interacts with vendors, other community, university and college professionals who hold a similar role.

- **Level of Responsibility:** The position is responsible for the service delivery processes and efficiencies, data management related to operations and service delivery, the processes and procedures related to disability claims management, and associated communication strategies.
- **Decision-Making Authority:** This position is expected for the most part to be self-directed in managing sick leave and disability claims process using sound judgment and analytics. Has decision-making authority within the bounds of pre-established guidelines as well as recommendations that are subject to contractual agreements, policies, and established procedures. Raises and escalates issues with Manager, Benefits as appropriate.
- **Physical and Sensory Demands:** Minimal demands typical of an administrative position operating within an office environment.
- **Working Environment:** The position involves exposure to emotionally disturbing experiences and/or interactions with employees who are upset, angry, unstable, or unpredictable due to a variety of medical conditions. The role involves moderate psychological risk and distress resulting from unavoidable exposure to uncomfortable environmental conditions generally associated with normal workplace interpersonal conflict and its resolution and the stresses of change management in a dynamic campus community environment.

## Job Description

