

TEXAS INCOME PROTECTION PLANSM USER'S GUIDE



Stay Up-to-Date

Visit the TIPP website at www.texasincomeprotectionplan.com to get the latest information about your TIPP benefits, including frequently asked questions, plan highlights, and more.

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WHEN YOU ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS



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Pre-existing Conditions

You cannot submit a disability claim for a medical condition for which you received medical treatment, advice, or services, or prescription drugs or medicine in the three months prior to the date your disability coverage started. After six months, you may submit a disability claim for that condition.

Limitations and Exclusions

TIPP has certain limitations and exclusions, or rules, when disability benefits wouldn't be payable. Some of the TIPP limitations and exclusions are listed below. Visit the ERS website and see the Master Benefit Plan Document for the complete list.

- TIPP will not pay benefits if you are working or employed in any capacity or if you are receiving sick leave, extended sick leave, or sick leave pool.
- TIPP will not pay benefits if you are not under the regular care of an approved practitioner or if you were not making required premium payments at the time your total disability commenced.
- Certain disabilities are not covered by TIPP, such as any total disability:
 1. during which you are not under the regular care and attendance of an approved practitioner, or you are not following the treatment plan prescribed by an approved practitioner which would be expected to result in your ability to engage in compensated employment;
 2. resulting from acts of war, declared or undeclared;
 3. resulting from injuries sustained or sickness occurring while you are in the service of the armed forces of any country or international authority;
 4. resulting from intentionally self-inflicted injury, whether you are sane or insane;
 5. in excess of five months for short-term disability coverage and twenty-four months for long-term disability coverage for nervous or mental diseases or disorders unless you are totally disabled and you are under an approved practitioner's regular care, and you are confined in a hospital or institution specializing in the treatment you require in which case benefits will continue until release from such hospital or institution, subject to the maximum benefit period;

WHEN YOU ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR BENEFITS (CONTINUED)

Limitations and Exclusions (continued)

6. if you had not applied for coverage or were not making the required premium contributions at the time of your total disability;
7. caused by, resulting from, or contributed to by any sickness or injury which occurs while you are engaged in, or which results from, arises out of, or is related to, any type of felonious activity. Conviction of a felony is not necessary for the determination of loss resulting from felonious activity.
8. caused by, resulting from, or substantially contributed to by your being intoxicated by reason of alcohol or drug use, or a combination thereof. "Intoxication" shall have the meaning assigned in Section 49.01, Texas Penal Code, as may be amended. Conviction of a crime related to intoxication is not necessary for the determination of total disability resulting from intoxication. This exclusion is applicable whether or not the total disability is related to the operation of a motor vehicle.
9. resulting from sickness or injury which results from your being an organ donor; or
10. that was caused or contributed to, by, or is a consequence of a pre-existing condition and, your total disability begun within the first six months of your coverage. This exclusion does not apply after either:
 - a. you have been actively at work for six complete and consecutive months from the date your coverage became effective;
 - b. your coverage has been continuously in force for 12 months; or
 - c. your coverage has been reinstated after a Leave Without Pay status, providing that immediately prior to your Leave Without Pay, a. or b. above was true.

Other limitations and exclusions may apply. Please refer to the Master Benefit Plan Document for more information.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Texas Income Protection PlanSM (TIPP) offers short-term and long-term disability coverage. TIPP pays you a percentage of your paycheck if you become disabled and cannot work due to illness, injury, or pregnancy. The third-party administrator for TIPP is ReedGroup. Review the frequently asked questions below to learn more. For additional information, go to www.texasincomeprotectionplan.com or call **TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup** toll-free at (855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711), Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. CT.

Enrollment and Coverage FAQs

1. Do I have to enroll in both short-term and long-term disability coverage?

No, you can enroll in either or both plans.

2. When can I get TIPP disability coverage?

You can enroll within 31 days after your hire date. In this case, you don't need to submit evidence of insurability (EOI).

After 31 days, you can apply for coverage during Summer Enrollment or if you have a qualifying life event (QLE) such as marriage or the birth of a child. To apply, you will need to provide EOI.

Apply by logging in to your ERS account and submitting EOI to Guardian Life Insurance Company, the underwriter for TIPP benefits.

3. Who is Guardian Life Insurance?

Guardian Life Insurance, an affiliate of Securian Financial Group, Inc., is the underwriter for TIPP. If you are required to submit evidence of insurability (EOI) to apply for coverage, your application must be approved by Guardian Life Insurance Company before coverage can start.

4. What is “total disability”?

During the first 24 months of a disability claim, “total disability” refers to a participant who can't do his or her job due to a disability that has been certified by an approved practitioner. After the first 24 months, this definition changes.

5. Are there pre-existing condition limitations after my disability coverage starts?

Yes. You cannot submit a disability claim for a medical condition for which you had medical treatment, advice, or services, or prescription drugs or medicine in the three months prior to the date your disability coverage started.

After six months of coverage, you may submit a disability claim for that condition.

6. Is pregnancy or childbirth covered under my short-term and/or long-term disability coverage?

Yes, provided your pregnancy did not begin prior to the effective date of your coverage. Call **TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup** toll-free at (855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711) for information about your particular situation.

7. Is my disability benefit taxable?

Most participants have disability premiums deducted from their paycheck on an after-tax basis. Then, any disability payments you receive are not taxable.

If your employer pays your short-term and/or long-term disability premiums, disability payments are taxable income. If your employer pays a percentage of your disability premiums, then the same percentage of any disability payments you receive are taxable income.

8. What if my employer pays all or a part of my disability premiums?

Your premiums are taxed if your employer pays all or a percentage of your premiums. Call **TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup** toll-free at (855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711) and request that taxes be withheld from your disability payments. Contact your benefits coordinator if you have questions about whether your premiums are deducted before or after taxes.

FAQS (CONTINUED)

Short-term Disability FAQs

9. When am I eligible to receive short-term disability payments?

Before you can get benefit payments, you must meet all of the following requirements:

- You must be certified as totally disabled by a physician.
- Your claim must be approved.
- Once you become disabled, you must be totally disabled for 30 consecutive days and use all of your sick leave entitlements before you can get benefit payments. The waiting period may be extended beyond 30 days, if you have more than 30 days of sick leave, extended sick leave, or sick leave pool.

10. How do I file a short-term disability claim?

You have two ways to file a claim:

1. Use the online self-service feature accessible from www.texasincomeprotectionplan.com to file a claim anytime. The first time you use the site you will select “Are you a new user?” and follow the instructions to create your User ID and password. After you log in the first time, if you forget your User ID and/or password, select “Forgot User ID or Password” on the self-service login page. Enter the requested information to retrieve your User ID. To retrieve your password, select “Forgot Password.” You will need to enter the last four digits of your Social Security number plus your date of birth. Next, select from the options and follow the prompts.
2. Call **TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup** toll-free at **(855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711)**, Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. CT.

Within 24 hours after you file a claim (online or by phone), a Claim Manager will contact you to obtain additional information.

11. How can I check the status of my claim?

You can check the status of your claim by using the self-service feature accessible from the TIPP website. You can use self-service regardless of whether you initiate your claim online or by phone. The first time you use the site you will select “Are you a new user?” and follow the instructions to create your User ID and password. After you log in the first time, if you forget your User ID and/or password, select “Forgot User ID or Password” on the self-service login page. Enter the requested information to retrieve your User ID. To retrieve your password, select “Forgot Password.” You will need to enter the last four digits of your Social Security number plus your date of birth. Next, select from the options and follow the prompts.

You can also call **TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup** toll-free at **(855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711)**, Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. CT.

12. What is my monthly TIPP benefit payment?

Once approved, your benefit is 66% of your insured monthly salary. Here’s an example of how this works.

Insured monthly salary	\$3,200
% of salary provided	× 66%
Your TIPP monthly short-term disability payment	\$2,112

Your monthly payments are less if you get benefit payments from other sources like:

- Workers’ Compensation,
- Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS) disability retirement benefits,
- Teacher Retirement System (TRS) of Texas disability retirement benefits, or
- other disability payments.

13. When do I get my TIPP disability payments?

The date of your first payment depends on when you complete the waiting period. After the first payment, all other payments are issued the first of the month.

14. How do I get my TIPP disability payments?

The safest and quickest way to get your disability payments is with direct deposit. To set up direct deposit, use the Direct Deposit Form on the TIPP website.

You can also have your payment mailed to your home or call **TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup** toll-free at **(855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711)**.

15. What's a waiting period?

Your waiting period is the time you wait before you can get disability benefits. For short-term disability, the waiting period is 30 days.

You also must use all your sick leave (including donated sick leave, extended sick leave and sick leave pool). So if you have more than 30 days of sick leave, benefits are not payable until all of your sick leave is used. You are not required to use your vacation or other annual leave.

16. What if my short-term disability claim is denied?

If your disability claim is denied, you may file an appeal. Here's how the appeals process works.

1	SUBMIT APPEAL Call TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup toll-free at (855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711) , Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. CT.
2	RECEIVE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT LETTER ReedGroup will mail you an acknowledgement letter within 48 business hours after receiving your appeal.
3	RECEIVE DECISION AFTER APPEAL REVIEW Your ReedGroup Claim Manager will call and inform you of the decision within 48 business hours after a decision is made.

Long-term Disability FAQs

17. When am I eligible to receive long-term disability payments?

Before you can get benefit payments, you must meet all of the following requirements:

- You must be certified as totally disabled by a physician.
- Your claim must be approved.
- Once you become disabled, you must be totally disabled for 180 consecutive days and use all of your sick leave entitlements before you can get benefit payments. The waiting period may be extended beyond 180 days, if you have more than 180 days of sick leave, donated sick leave, extended sick leave or sick leave pool

18. How do I file a long-term disability claim?

You have two ways to file a claim:

1. Use the online self-service feature accessible from **www.texasincomeprotectionplan.com** to file a claim anytime. To log in to self-service for the first time, select “Are you a new user?” and follow the instructions to create your User ID and password. After you log in the first time, if you forget your User ID and/or password, select “Forgot User ID or Password” on the self-service login page. Enter the requested information to retrieve your User ID. To retrieve your password, select “Forgot Password.” You will need to enter the last four digits of your Social Security number plus your date of birth. Next, select from the options and follow the prompts.
2. Call **TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup** toll-free at **(855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711)**, Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. CT.

Within 24 hours after you file a claim (online or by phone), a Claim Manager will contact you to obtain additional information.

FAQs (CONTINUED)

19. How can I check the status of my claim?

You can check the status of your claim by using the self-service feature accessible from the TIPP website. You can use self-service regardless of whether you initiate your claim online or by phone. The first time you use the site, select “Are you a new user?” and follow the instructions to create your User ID and password. After you log in the first time, if you forget your User ID and/or password, select “Forgot User ID or Password” on the self-service login page. Enter the requested information to retrieve your User ID. To retrieve your password, select “Forgot Password.” You will need to enter the last four digits of your Social Security number plus your date of birth. Next, select from the options and follow the prompts.

You can also call **TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup** toll-free at **(855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711)**, Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. CT.

20. What is my monthly TIPP benefit payment?

Once approved, your benefit is 60% of your insured monthly salary. Here’s an example of how this works.

Insured monthly salary	\$3,200
% of salary provided	× 60%
Your TIPP monthly long-term disability payment	\$1,920

Your monthly payments are less if you get benefit payments from other sources like:

- Social Security disability payments (applies to long-term disability only),
- Workers’ Compensation,
- Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS) disability retirement benefits,
- Teacher Retirement System (TRS) of Texas disability retirement benefits, or
- Other disability payments, including TIPP disability benefits if paid concurrently.

21. When do I get my TIPP disability payments?

The date of your first payment depends on when you complete the waiting period. After the first payment, all other payments are issued the first of the month.

22. How do I get my TIPP disability payments?

The safest and quickest way to get your disability payments is with direct deposit. To set up direct deposit, use the Direct Deposit Form on the TIPP website or call **TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup** toll-free at **(855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711)**.

You can also have your payment mailed to your home.

23. What’s a waiting period?

Your waiting period is the time you wait before you can get disability benefits. For long-term disability, the waiting period is 180 days.

You also must use all your sick leave (including extended sick leave and sick leave pool). So if you have more than 180 days of sick leave, benefits are not payable until all of your sick leave is used. You are not required to use your vacation or other annual leave.

24. What if my long-term disability claim is denied?

If your disability claim is denied, you may file an appeal. Here’s how the appeals process works.

1	SUBMIT APPEAL Call TIPP Customer Care at ReedGroup toll-free at (855) 604-6230 (TDD - 711) , Monday – Friday, 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. CT.
2	RECEIVE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT LETTER ReedGroup will mail you an acknowledgement letter within 48 business hours after receiving your appeal.
3	RECEIVE DECISION AFTER APPEAL REVIEW Your ReedGroup Claim Manager will call and inform you of the decision within 48 business hours after a decision is made.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



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This is only a partial list of terms and definitions. Visit the ERS website and see the Master Benefit Plan Document for the complete list.

Integration of benefits

This applies if you are receiving benefits from another source, such as Workers' Compensation. Those additional benefits offset the amount of the TIPP benefit and typically reduce your TIPP payment by the amount of the other source.

Limitations and exclusions

Restrictions that prevent participants from receiving benefit payments. Visit the ERS website and see the Master Benefit Plan Document for more information.

Master Benefit Plan Document

Legal document describing the rules of the benefit plan. Visit the ERS website to review the Master Benefit Plan Document.

Pre-existing conditions

Medical conditions that existed within the three months prior to the date disability coverage started. Participants cannot file disability claims for pre-existing conditions until six months after the date disability coverage started.

Sickness

Illness (including maternity), disease, or mental infirmity, which causes a total disability that begins while both the Master Benefit Plan Document and the employee coverage are effective. This definition applies to the employee whose sickness is the basis of a claim, except as limited or excluded by the Master Benefit Plan Document provisions.

Texas Employees Group Benefits Program (GBP)

The employees group benefits program referenced in Chapter 1551 of the Texas Insurance Code.

Texas Income Protection Plan (TIPP)

This program offers both the short-term and long-term disability coverage for benefits eligible employees. Part of the GBP provided through Employees Retirement System of Texas (ERS) and administered by ReedGroup.

Total disability

During the first 24 months on disability, "total disability" refers to an employee who can't do his or her job due to a disability that has been certified by an approved practitioner.

After the first 24 months, this definition changes. Please refer to the Master Benefit Plan Document for more information.

Waiting period

Once you become disabled, you must be totally disabled for a specified consecutive number of days and use all of your sick leave entitlements before you can get benefit payments. This period of time is called a waiting period. See page 4 (short-term disability) or page 7 (long-term disability) for more information.



Disclaimer

This ERS **Texas Income Protection PlanSM (TIPP)** document highlights disability benefit provisions offered to participants in the Texas Employees Group Benefits Program (GBP). This document doesn't imply eligibility or participation in the disability benefit plans, and it is not intended to affect the plans' eligibility rules, benefits, conditions, or limitations. It doesn't cover every detail, and it's not a contract between you and ERS.

The **Master Benefit Plan Document (MBPD PY 2017—Effective 9/1/2016)** supersedes all other print and electronic documentation about the TIPP disability program. If the content of this website differs from the plan documents, the terms of the plan documents will control. We expect to continue to provide the benefits described; however, ERS reserves the right to modify, amend, suspend, or terminate these benefits at any time.