

*This fact sheet provides basic information for health care providers and the public and should not be construed as legal advice.
The authoritative source for OHIP eligibility is the Health Insurance Act and Reg. 552 thereunder.*

LONGER ABSENCES FROM ONTARIO

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Will OHIP cover me during a longer absence?

Your eligibility for Ontario health insurance (OHIP) coverage may continue while you are absent from Ontario for more than 212 days in a 12 month period in certain limited circumstances, *as long as you maintain your permanent and principal home in Ontario.*

Absences Within Canada

If you are already insured by OHIP and choose to travel, work or study outside of Ontario but within Canada, you may be eligible for continuous Ontario health insurance coverage. For more information on absences outside of Ontario, but within Canada, please refer to the fact sheet *OHIP Coverage Across Canada*.

Absences Outside Canada

You may be eligible for continuous OHIP eligibility during a longer absence when you are away for one of the following reasons:

- Study outside of Canada
- Work outside of Canada
- Missionary work outside of Canada

To be entitled to continuous OHIP eligibility during one of these absences, you must first have been physically present in Ontario for at least 153 days in the 12-month period, for 2 consecutive years immediately before the absence.

Other Types of Absences

You may also be eligible for continuous OHIP eligibility during a longer absence when you are away from Ontario for vacation or other reasons.

To be eligible for continuous OHIP eligibility during one of these absences, you must first have been physically present in Ontario for at least 153 days in the 12-month period, for 2 consecutive years before the absence.

To confirm your continuous OHIP eligibility during your longer absence, write or visit the ministry. You will need to show a document explaining the reason for your absence as required by the ministry, for example, a letter from a school, employer or a sponsoring religious organization.

You should contact your local ServiceOntario – Health Card Services – OHIP office to confirm your eligibility during any absence before you leave Ontario.

How long will OHIP provide me with continuous eligibility during an approved absence?

Lengths of extended absences vary depending on the reason for the absence.

| Reason | Continuous OHIP Eligibility |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Study Outside Canada | Duration of a full-time academic program (unlimited) |
| Work Outside Canada | Five-year terms |
| Missionary Work Outside Canada | Duration of missionary activities (unlimited) |
| Vacation/Other Reason | Up to 2 years in a lifetime |

Extended absences are processed for minimum increments of one year.

If you are away for more than 212 days in any 12-month period but do not use the full year provided for your extended absence, the ministry will not add the remaining time to another extended absence.

If I am already on an extended absence, can I now spend more time outside Ontario?

If you are away from Ontario on an extended absence with OHIP coverage, you may be eligible to remain away for a longer period and still maintain OHIP coverage. For more information, contact your local ServiceOntario – Health Card Services – OHIP office.

Are longer absences permitted for my family?

In most cases, your spouse, same-sex partner, or dependent children (under 22 years old or 22 years and over if dependent due to a mental or physical disability) are permitted to be out-of-Ontario to accompany you on your extended absence for study, work, or missionary work, at the same time as you and still maintain OHIP coverage. However, they should notify the ministry separately if the longer absence is for a vacation or any other reason.

Should I obtain additional insurance coverage for my absence from Ontario?

The amount of OHIP coverage for services provided while out of the country is very limited; therefore, you should consider obtaining supplementary insurance from a private insurance company to provide you with additional coverage during your extended absence.

Contact a private insurance company or call the Canadian Life and Health Insurance Association Inc. at 1 800 268-8099. In Toronto, call (416) 777-2344.

For information about which services OHIP will pay while you are out of the country, refer to the fact sheet *Travelling Outside Canada*.

For more information:

- Call the ministry INFOLine at 1 800 664-8988 (toll free in Ontario only).
- In Toronto, call 416 314-5518.
- For TTY service, call 1 800 387-5559.
- Access the ministry website at: www.health.gov.on.ca