

Disability Plan Comparison - State of Colorado & PERA

Question?	State of Colorado		PERA	
	STD	LTD	STD	Disability Retirement
Who is eligible?	State employees as defined by CRS 24-50-303 (7) To purchase LTD coverage, an eligible employee must work at least 30 hours per week.		Employees who have earned five years of PERA service credit (state troopers, CBI agents and judges are eligible immediately).	
Does the employer pay for the program?	Yes	No, optional coverage available to employees for after-tax premium based on age, salary and PERA vested status	Yes, pre-funded through monthly employer contributions.	
When does coverage begin?	From first day of active employment.	First of the month following approval by Standard Insurance Company	Once an employee becomes vested with PERA.	
How do I apply for disability benefits?	Apply through your agency's payroll or human resources department within 30 days of absence.	Your STD claim serves as your LTD application.	Contact PERA's Customer Service Center to request a Disability Program brochure, which includes an application and a Summary Plan Description.	
What is the benefit waiting period?	30 calendar days. You will not receive STD benefits until you have exhausted sick leave	180 days. Leave payments are considered deductible income, and will reduce your benefits.	60 calendar days. Leave payments are deductible income and will reduce your benefits.	None.
What is the maximum benefit period?	150 days in a consecutive 12-month period (180 days, minus the 30-day waiting period).	To age 65 Longer if disability begins at or after age 62.	Up to the first 22 months after the payment waiting period.	Lifetime, if disability continues.
How is the disability benefit calculated?	60% of predisability earnings based on gross weekly earnings, less deductible income.	60% of predisability earnings based on gross weekly earnings, less deductible income.	60% of pre-disability PERA-includable salary (gross pay minus IRC \$125 deductions), less deductible income.	Usually, 50% of High Average Salary; however, it may be more or less, depending on service credit.
What are the maximum/minimum benefit payments?	Minimum: none Maximum: \$2,310/week, less deductible income.	Minimum: \$100/month Maximum: \$10,000/month, less deductible income.	Calculated benefits may be reduced by certain deductible income.	None.
How is disability defined?	Unable to perform with reasonable continuity the material duties of your own occupation, or you are unable to earn 50% or more of your pre-disability earnings while working in your own occupation.	First 18 months: unable to perform the material duties of your own occupation and have a loss of at least 20% in earnings when working at your own occupation. After 18 months: unable to perform the material duties of any occupation and unable to earn at least 60% of your Indexed Pre-disability Earnings within 12 months following return to work.	Medically incapacitated from performing the essential functions of any job at which you could return to work and earn at least 75% of your predisability earnings, but NOT totally incapacitated from all regular and substantial gainful employment.	Same as STD, except that information must support that the Member is not reasonably expected to recover within the group policy's 22-month Maximum Benefit Period.