

Barbados

Exchange rate: US\$1.00 =
2.02 Barbadian dollars (B\$).

Old Age, Disability, and Survivors

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1969 (social assistance).

Current laws: 1966 (social insurance), 1969 (social assistance), and 2007 (catastrophe fund).

Type of program: Social insurance and social assistance system.

Coverage

Social insurance: Employed and self-employed persons, including public-sector employees, residing in Barbados.

Voluntary coverage is available.

Exclusions: Unpaid family labor.

Social assistance: Resident citizens of Barbados.

Source of Funds

Insured person

Social insurance: 6.75% of weekly covered earnings (6.2% for permanent government employees; 5.93% for foreign service help; 8.3% for the voluntarily insured) plus 0.1% for the catastrophe fund.

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$21; the minimum monthly earnings are B\$91.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings are B\$4,820.

The insured person's contributions also finance cash sickness and maternity benefits.

The catastrophe fund provides financial aid to low-income earners whose houses are damaged or destroyed by a catastrophe.

Social assistance: 2% of weekly covered earnings.

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$21; the minimum monthly earnings are B\$91.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings are B\$4,820.

Self-employed person

Social insurance: 13.5% of monthly covered earnings plus 0.1% for the catastrophe fund.

The minimum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,092.

The maximum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$57,840.

The self-employed person's contributions also finance cash sickness and maternity benefits.

The catastrophe fund provides financial aid to low-income earners whose houses are damaged or destroyed by a catastrophe.

Social assistance: 2% of monthly covered earnings.

The minimum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,092.

The maximum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$57,840.

Employer

Social insurance: 6.75% of weekly covered earnings (6.2% for permanent government employees; 5.93% for foreign service help).

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$21; the minimum monthly earnings are B\$91.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings are B\$4,820.

The employer's contributions also finance cash sickness and maternity benefits.

Social assistance: 2% of weekly covered payroll.

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$21; the minimum monthly earnings are B\$91.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings are B\$4,820.

Government

Social insurance: None; contributes as an employer.

Social assistance: Any deficit.

Qualifying Conditions

Old-age pension (social insurance): Age 67 with at least 500 weeks of paid or credited contributions, including at least 150 weeks of paid contributions.

Contributions are credited for each complete contributory week the insured received cash sickness, maternity, or work injury benefits, and during the three-day waiting period for a sickness benefit if the related claim period lasts at least two weeks.

Early pension: Age 60 with at least 500 weeks of paid or credited contributions, including at least 150 weeks of paid contributions, and no longer employed or self-employed.

Deferred pension: The pension may be deferred until age 70.

The old-age pension is payable abroad.

Old-age grant (social insurance): Age 67 with at least 50 weeks but less than 500 weeks of paid or credited contributions.

Contributions are credited for each complete contributory week the insured received cash sickness, maternity, or work injury benefits, and during the three-day waiting period for a sickness benefit if the related claim period lasts at least two weeks.

The old-age grant is payable abroad.

Noncontributory old-age pension (social assistance, income tested): Age 67, a resident of Barbados for at least 12 years (citizens) or 15 years (permanent residents) since age 40 or a total of 20 years since age 18 (citizens or permanent residents), and does not qualify for the social insurance old-age pension or an old-age pension from a foreign government or international organization.

The noncontributory old-age pension is not payable abroad.

Disability pension (social insurance): Must be younger than the normal retirement age, be incapable of any work, and have at least 150 weeks of paid contributions.

The disability pension is not payable abroad.

Disability grant (social insurance): Must be younger than the normal retirement age, be incapable of any work, and have at least 50 weeks of paid or credited contributions but less than 150 weeks of paid contributions.

Contributions are credited for each complete contributory week the insured received cash sickness, maternity, or work injury benefits, and during the three-day waiting period for a sickness benefit if the related claim period lasts at least two weeks.

The disability grant is not payable abroad.

Noncontributory disability pension (social assistance, income tested): Must be aged 18 or older; be assessed with an incapacity for work as the result of a serious problem with eyesight, or hearing and speech; and not qualify for the social insurance disability pension or a disability pension from a foreign government or international organization.

Income test: Weekly earnings must not exceed B\$30.

The noncontributory disability pension is not payable abroad.

Survivor pension (social insurance): The deceased received or was entitled to receive a social insurance old-age or disability pension at the time of death.

Eligible survivors include a widow(er) and orphans younger than age 16 (age 25 if a student; no limit if disabled) who were living with or totally dependent on the deceased.

The widow(er)'s pension ceases upon remarriage or cohabitation.

The survivor pension is payable abroad.

Funeral grant (social insurance): The deceased or his or her spouse received or was entitled to receive social insurance old-age, disability, sickness, maternity, or unemployment benefits.

The funeral grant is payable abroad.

Old-Age Benefits

Old-age pension (social insurance): If the insured was aged 56 or older on December 31, 2002, the pension is 40% of the insured's average annual earnings plus 1% of the insured's total covered earnings in the contributory weeks after the first 500 weeks.

If the insured was younger than age 47 on December 31, 2002, the pension is 2% of the insured's average annual earnings for the first 20 years of contributions plus 1.25% of average annual earnings for each year of contributions exceeding 20 years.

If the insured was aged 47 to 55 on December 31, 2002, 50% of the pension is based on the first method of calculation and 50% on the second.

Average annual earnings are based on the insured's covered earnings in the best five years of contributions; if the number of years worked is less than 15 years, the average is based on the insured's total covered earnings.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate benefits are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings used to calculate benefits are B\$4,820.

The minimum weekly old-age pension is B\$239.

The maximum weekly old-age pension is 60% of the insured's average covered earnings, up to B\$658.14.

Early pension: A reduced pension is paid.

Deferred pension: An increased pension is paid.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually based on changes in the cost of living.

Old-age grant (social insurance): A lump sum of six weeks of the insured's average annual earnings is paid for every 50 weeks of paid or credited contributions.

Average annual earnings are based on the insured's covered earnings in the best five years of contributions; if the number of years worked is less than 15 years, the average is based on the insured's total covered earnings.

Noncontributory old age pension (social assistance, income tested): B\$225 a week is paid.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually based on changes in the cost of living.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Disability pension (social insurance): 40% of the insured's average annual earnings plus 1% of the insured's total covered earnings in the contributory weeks after the first 500 weeks is paid.

Average annual earnings are based on the insured's covered earnings in the best three years of contributions; if the number of years worked is less than 15 years, the average is based on the insured's total covered earnings.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate benefits are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings used to calculate benefits are B\$4,820.

The minimum weekly disability pension is B\$239.

The maximum weekly disability pension is 60% of the insured's average covered earnings, up to B\$658.14.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually based on changes in the cost of living.

Disability grant (social insurance): A lump sum of six weeks of the insured's average annual earnings for every 50 weeks of paid or credited contributions is paid.

Average annual earnings are based on the insured's covered earnings in the best three years of contributions; if the number of years worked is less than 15 years, the average is based on the insured's total covered earnings.

Noncontributory disability pension (social assistance, income tested): B\$225 a week is paid.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually based on changes in the cost of living.

Survivor Benefits

Survivor pension (social insurance)

Spouse's pension: 50% of the social insurance old-age or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to a widow(er) aged 50 or older (any age if disabled) who was married to the deceased for at least three years; 33% to a widow(er) aged 45 to 49. A limited pension is paid for 12 months to a widow(er) younger than age 50 or a widow who was married to the deceased for less than three years.

The maximum weekly spouse's pension is 50% of the maximum weekly old-age or disability pension.

The maximum weekly old-age or disability pension is B\$658.14.

Orphan's pension: 16.67% of the social insurance old-age or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to each orphan younger than age 16 (age 25 if a student); 33.3% if a full orphan or disabled.

The maximum weekly orphan's pension is 33.3% of the maximum weekly old-age or disability pension.

The maximum weekly old-age or disability pension is B\$658.14.

The maximum combined survivor pension is 100% of the social insurance old-age or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive at the time of death.

Funeral grant (social insurance): A lump sum of B\$2,150 is paid to the person who pays for the funeral.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually based on changes in the cost of living.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs and Investment (<https://www.gov.bb/Ministries/finance-economic-affairs/>) is responsible for policy.

National Insurance Office (<https://www.nis.gov.bb/>), directed by a tripartite board, collects contributions and administers the programs.

Sickness and Maternity

Regulatory Framework

First and current laws: 1966 (social insurance); 1969 (medical care); and 1980 (medicine), implemented in 1983.

Type of program: Universal (medical benefits) and social insurance (cash benefits) system.

Coverage

Universal (medical benefits): Residents of Barbados.

Social insurance (cash benefits): Employed persons and self-employed citizens of Barbados. Permanent government employees are covered for cash maternity benefits only.

Exclusions: Unpaid family labor.

Source of Funds

Insured person

Universal (medical benefits): 1% of weekly covered earnings.

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$21; the minimum monthly earnings are B\$91.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings are B\$4,820.

Social insurance (cash benefits): See source of funds under Old Age, Disability, and Survivors.

Self-employed person

Universal (medical benefits): 1% of monthly covered earnings.

The minimum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,092.

The maximum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$57,840.

Social insurance (cash benefits): See source of funds under Old Age, Disability, and Survivors.

Employer

Universal (medical benefits): 1.5% of weekly covered earnings.

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$21; the minimum monthly earnings are B\$91.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings are B\$4,820.

Social insurance (cash benefits): See source of funds under Old Age, Disability, and Survivors.

Government

Universal (medical benefits): Provides subsidies as needed.

Social insurance (cash benefits): None; contributes as an employer.

Qualifying Conditions

Cash sickness benefit: Must be aged 16 or older but younger than the normal retirement age, have been employed immediately before the incapacity began, and have at least seven weeks of paid contributions in the second to last quarter before the incapacity began. Insured persons who were on leave or unemployed at the time the incapacity began must have an additional 39 weeks of paid or credited contributions in the four consecutive quarters ending in the second to last quarter before the incapacity began.

Contributions are credited for each complete contributory week the insured received cash sickness, maternity, or work injury benefits, and during the three-day waiting period for a sickness benefit if the related claim period lasts at least two weeks.

The cash sickness benefit is payable abroad only in cases where the insured has left temporarily to receive medical treatment.

Cash maternity benefit: Paid to employed women with at least 26 weeks of contributions, including 16 weeks of paid contributions in the two consecutive quarters ending in the second to last quarter before the benefit is paid.

Self-employed women must have at least 39 weeks of paid or credited contributions in the four consecutive quarters ending in the second to last quarter before the benefit is paid; and 16 weeks of paid contributions in the two consecutive quarters ending in the second to last quarter before the benefit is paid.

Contributions are credited for each complete contributory week the insured received cash sickness, maternity, or work injury benefits, and during the three-day waiting period for

a sickness benefit if the related claim period lasts at least two weeks.

The cash maternity benefit is payable abroad only in cases where the insured has left temporarily to receive medical treatment.

Cash maternity grant: Paid for an uninsured woman or an insured woman who does not qualify for cash maternity benefits but whose spouse qualifies.

The cash maternity grant is payable abroad only in cases where the insured has left temporarily to receive medical treatment.

Sickness and Maternity Benefits

Sickness benefit: 66.67% of the insured's average weekly earnings is paid after a three-day waiting period for up to 26 weeks; may be extended for an additional 26 weeks if the insured has at least 150 weeks of paid contributions, including 75 weeks of contributions in the three years before the year the incapacity began. The waiting period is waived if the incapacity lasts at least 14 days.

Average weekly earnings are based on the insured's covered earnings in the contribution period used to qualify for the sickness benefit; special rules apply when periods of incapacity are separated by 13 or fewer weeks.

The maximum weekly sickness benefit is B\$741.33.

Maternity benefit: 100% of the insured's average weekly earnings is paid for up to six weeks before and six weeks after the expected date of childbirth.

Average weekly earnings are based on the insured's covered earnings in the contribution period used to qualify for the maternity benefit.

The maximum weekly maternity benefit is B\$1,112.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually based on actuarial recommendations.

Maternity grant: A lump sum of B\$1,240 is paid.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits may be adjusted annually based on the three-year average change in the consumer price index or average national wages, whichever is lower, depending on the financial health of the system.

Workers' Medical Benefits

Free medical care is available in public hospitals and health centers. Benefits include general practitioner services; maternity, dental, and eye care; HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care; mental health services; geriatric care; nutrition services; and acute and emergency care.

The Barbados Drug Service provides free medicine to persons suffering from certain chronic conditions (hypertension, diabetes, cancer, epilepsy, glaucoma, and asthma), persons aged 65 or older; children younger than age 16; and certain persons aged 16 to 64. A dispensing fee may be charged in private pharmacies.

Dependents' Medical Benefits

Benefits for dependents are the same as those for workers.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs and Investment (<https://www.gov.bb/Ministries/finance-economic-affairs/>) is responsible for policy for the social insurance program.

National Insurance Office (<https://www.nis.gov.bb/>), directed by a tripartite board, collects contributions and administers the social insurance program.

Ministry of Health and Wellness (<https://www.gov.bb/Ministries/health/>) is responsible for policy and delivers medical benefits.

Work Injury

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1916 (workmen's compensation).

Current law: 1966 (social insurance), implemented in 1971.

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Public- and private-sector employees, including some categories of fishermen, residing in Barbados.

Voluntary coverage is not available.

Exclusions: Self-employed persons and unpaid family labor.

Source of Funds

Insured person: None.

Self-employed person: Not applicable.

Employer: 0.75% of weekly covered payroll.

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$21; the minimum monthly earnings are B\$91.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings are B\$4,820.

Government: None; contributes as an employer.

Qualifying Conditions

Must be assessed with a work injury or occupational disease.

Temporary Disability Benefits

90% of the insured's average weekly earnings is paid after a three-day waiting period for up to 52 weeks. The waiting period is waived if the disability lasts at least 14 days.

Average weekly earnings are based on the insured's covered earnings in the second to last quarter or last quarter before the disability began; the average weekly earnings of workers in similar employment may be used under certain conditions.

The maximum weekly temporary disability benefit is 90% of the maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually based on actuarial recommendations.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Permanent disability pension: For a total (100%) permanent disability, 90% of the insured's average weekly earnings is paid. The insured must have exhausted entitlement to the temporary disability benefit.

Average weekly earnings are based on the insured's covered earnings in the second to last quarter or last quarter before the disability began; the average weekly earnings of workers in similar employment may be used under certain conditions.

The maximum weekly permanent disability pension is 90% of the maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112.

Partial disability: For an assessed degree of disability of at least 30% but less than 100%, a percentage of the full permanent disability pension is paid based on the assessed degree of disability; a lump sum is paid if the assessed degree of disability is less than 30%. The insured must have exhausted entitlement to the temporary disability benefit.

Constant-attendance supplement: 50% of the permanent disability pension for a total or partial disability is paid if the insured requires the constant attendance of others to perform daily functions.

The insured's doctor assesses the degree of disability, which may be reviewed by National Insurance Office doctors.

The permanent disability pension ceases at the normal retirement age and is replaced by the old-age pension.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually based on actuarial recommendations.

Workers' Medical Benefits

Benefits include reimbursement of expenses for medical, surgical, dental, and hospital treatment; nursing care; medicine; appliances; and transportation.

Survivor Benefits

Survivor pension

Spouse's pension: 50% of the temporary disability benefit the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to a dependent spouse.

The spouse's pension ceases upon remarriage or cohabitation.

Remarriage settlement: A lump sum of one year of the spouse's pension is paid upon remarriage or cohabitation.

Orphan's pension: 16.6% of the temporary disability benefit the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to each orphan younger than age 16 (age 25 if a student); 33.3% if a full orphan or disabled.

The maximum combined survivor pension is 100% of the temporary disability benefit the deceased received or was entitled to receive.

The survivor pension is payable abroad under bilateral or multilateral agreements.

Funeral grant: A lump sum of B\$2,150 is paid to the person who pays for the insured's funeral.

The funeral grant is payable abroad under some bilateral agreements.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted annually based on actuarial recommendations.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs and Investment (<https://www.gov.bb/Ministries/finance-economic-affairs/>) is responsible for policy.

National Insurance Office (<https://www.nis.gov.bb/>), directed by a tripartite board, collects contributions and administers the program.

Unemployment

Regulatory Framework

First and current law: 1981 (social insurance).

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Employed persons, including temporary public-sector employees residing in Barbados.

Voluntary coverage is not available.

Exclusions: Self-employed persons, family labor, and permanent public-sector employees.

Source of Funds

Insured person: 0.75% of weekly covered earnings plus 0.5% for the training levy.

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$21; the minimum monthly earnings are B\$91.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings are B\$4,820.

Self-employed person: Not applicable. The self-employed pay 0.5% of monthly declared income for the training levy.

Employer: 1% of weekly covered payroll plus 0.5% for the training levy. Private-sector employers pay an additional 0.75% to the severance fund.

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$21; the minimum monthly earnings are B\$91.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$1,112; the maximum monthly earnings are B\$4,820.

Government: None; contributes as an employer.

Qualifying Conditions

Must be younger than the normal retirement age with at least 52 weeks of paid or credited contributions, including at least 20 weeks of paid or credited contributions in the three consecutive quarters ending in the second to last quarter before the unemployment began and at least seven weeks of paid or credited contributions in the second to last quarter.

Contributions are credited for each complete contributory week the insured received cash sickness, maternity, or work injury benefits, and during the three-day waiting period for a sickness benefit if the related claim period lasts at least two weeks.

Unemployment Benefits

60% of the insured's average weekly earnings is paid after a three-day waiting period for up to 26 weeks in any 52-week period. The waiting period is waived if the insured is unemployed for at least 21 days.

Average weekly earnings are based on the insured's covered earnings in the contribution period used to qualify for the unemployment benefit.

The maximum weekly unemployment benefit is B\$667.20.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs and Investment (<https://www.gov.bb/Ministries/finance-economic-affairs/>) is responsible for policy.

National Insurance Office (<https://www.nis.gov.bb/>), directed by a tripartite board, collects contributions and administers the program.

Family Allowances

Regulatory Framework

Current law: 1969 (national assistance).

Type of program: Social assistance system.

Coverage

Needy resident citizens of Barbados.

Source of Funds

Insured person: None.

Self-employed person: None.

Employer: None.

Government: The total cost.

Qualifying Conditions

National assistance grant: Must be unable to work due to a disability, or have no resources and be unable to find work.

Family Allowance Benefits

National assistance grant: B\$25 a week is paid for a child younger than age 16; B\$28 a week for an able-bodied adult; up to B\$33 a week if younger than age 55 with a disability; up to B\$38 a week if aged 55 or older with a disability and not receiving an old-age or disability pension. The benefit is paid for up to 26 weeks.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs and Investment (<https://www.gov.bb/Ministries/finance-economic-affairs/>) provides general supervision.

Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs (<https://www.gov.bb/Ministries/social-care/>) administers the program.