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# Longer Absences from Ontario

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*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.*

## Will OHIP cover me during a longer absence?

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care may continue your eligibility for Ontario health insurance (OHIP) coverage when you are absent from Ontario for more than 212 days in a 12 month period, *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 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 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 OHIP office to confirm your eligibility for your longer absence before you leave Ontario. For office locations and hours of operation refer to the ministry website. To call your local OHIP office, refer to the blue government pages of the telephone book under "Health" and then "OHIP".

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## 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 a longer 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 OHIP office.

## Are longer absences permitted for my family?

In most cases, your spouse or same-sex partner and dependent children under nineteen years of age 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 must 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 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](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)