

Bahamas

Exchange rate: US\$1.00 = 1.00 Bahamian dollar (B\$).

Old Age, Disability, and Survivors

Regulatory Framework

First laws: 1956 (old-age noncontributory pensions) and 1967 (public assistance for disability).

Current law: 1972 (national insurance).

Type of program: Social insurance and social assistance system.

Coverage

Social insurance: Employed persons and self-employed persons.

Voluntary coverage is available.

Social assistance: Residents of the Bahamas.

Source of Funds

Insured person

Social insurance: 3.9% of weekly covered earnings. Voluntarily insured persons contribute 5% of weekly average wages or income, based on the insured's wages or income in the year before registration.

The maximum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$31,200.

The compulsorily insured person's contributions also finance cash sickness, maternity, unemployment, and work injury benefits. The voluntarily insured person's contributions also finance the funeral and maternity grants.

Social assistance: None.

Self-employed person

Social insurance: 6.8% of covered earnings.

The maximum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$31,200.

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

Social assistance: None.

Employer

Social insurance: 5.15% of covered payroll.

The maximum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$31,200.

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

Social assistance: None.

Government

Social insurance: None.

Social assistance: The total cost of all income-tested allowances.

Qualifying Conditions

Social insurance

Retirement pension: Age 65 with at least 500 weeks of paid contributions.

Entitlement ceases if the insured person earns B\$300 or more a week.

Early pension: An early pension may be paid from age 60 to 64.

Deferred pension: The pension may be deferred up to age 69.

The benefit is paid locally for insured persons who live abroad.

Disability pension: Younger than age 65, assessed with a permanent incapacity for any work, and has at least 150 weeks of paid contributions.

Survivor pension: The deceased received or was entitled to receive an old-age or disability pension or had at least 150 weeks of paid contributions at the time of death.

Eligible survivors include a dependent widow(er) who was married to the deceased and was disabled or aged 40 or older and incapable of gainful employment; a dependent widow(er) who was caring for a child younger than age 16 (age 21 if a student, no limit if disabled) at the time of death; a dependent widow who was pregnant with the deceased's child at the time of death; dependent children younger than age 16 (age 21 if a student, no limit if disabled); and dependent parents who are disabled or aged 40 or older and incapable of gainful employment.

Funeral grant: Paid when an insured person or the spouse of an insured person dies if the insured had at least 50 weeks of paid contributions.

Social assistance

Noncontributory old-age pension (income tested): Aged 65 or older, retired, and has less than 500 weeks of paid contributions.

Disability assistance (income tested): Assessed with a disability and has less than 500 weeks of paid contributions.

Survivor assistance (income tested): The deceased had less than 500 weeks of paid contributions.

Old-Age Benefits

Social insurance

Retirement pension: 30% of the insured's covered wage is paid with at least 500 weeks of paid or credited contributions. The pension is increased by 1% of the covered wage for each 50-week period of paid or credited contributions exceeding 500 weeks, up to 60%.

With less than 500 weeks of paid contributions, a lump sum of six times the number of 50-week periods of paid contributions multiplied by the covered wage is paid.

The covered wage is based on the insured's average weekly earnings in the best five years of contributions in which at least 26 contributions were made.

Early pension: The benefit is reduced by 0.58% for each month the insured is younger than age 65.

Deferred pension: The benefit is increased by 0.58% for each month the insured is older than age 65, up to 35%.

The minimum pension is B\$64.33 a week.

Social assistance

Noncontributory old-age pension (income tested): B\$59.18 a week is paid.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Social insurance

Disability pension: 30% of the insured's covered wage is paid with at least 500 weeks of paid or credited contributions; 15% to 28% of covered wage with 150 to 499 weeks. The pension is increased by 1% of the covered wage for each 50-week period of paid or credited contributions exceeding 500 weeks, up to 60%.

The covered wage is based on the insured's average weekly earnings in the best three years of contributions in which at least 26 contributions were made.

The maximum annual wage used to calculate benefits is B\$31,200.

The minimum pension is B\$69.48 a week.

Social assistance

Disability assistance (income tested): B\$59.18 a week is paid.

Survivor Benefits

Social insurance

Spouse's pension: 50% of the retirement or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to an eligible widow(er).

The minimum survivor pension is B\$69.48 a week.

Orphan's pension: 10% of the retirement or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to each eligible child, up to five children (if the widow(er) receives a survivor pension) or 10 children (if the widow(er) does not receive a survivor pension); B\$32.16 a week is paid to each full orphan.

The minimum orphan's pension is B\$28.30 a week.

Other eligible survivors: If there is no eligible widow(er) or orphan, 50% of the retirement or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to an eligible parent.

The minimum survivor pension is B\$69.48 a week.

All survivor benefits combined must not exceed 100% of the retirement or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive.

Funeral grant: A lump sum of up to B\$1,680 is paid to the person who pays for the funeral.

Social assistance

Survivor assistance (income tested): B\$59.18 a week is paid to persons aged 18 or older; B\$23.67 a week to children younger than age 18.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Finance (<http://www.bahamas.gov.bs/finance>) provides general supervision.

National Insurance Board (<http://www.nib-bahamas.com>) administers the program.

Sickness and Maternity

Regulatory Framework

First and current law: 1972 (national insurance).

Type of program: Social insurance system. Cash benefits only.

Coverage

Employed and self-employed persons.

Source of Funds

Insured person: See source of funds under Old Age, Disability, and Survivors.

Self-employed person: See source of funds under Old Age, Disability, and Survivors.

Employer: See source of funds under Old Age, Disability, and Survivors.

Government: None.

Qualifying Conditions

Cash sickness benefits: Must have at least 40 weeks of contributions, including 26 weeks of paid or credited contributions in the year immediately before the incapacity began or in the last contribution year, or 13 weeks of paid or credited contributions in the 26 weeks immediately before the incapacity began.

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Cash maternity benefits: Must have at least 50 weeks of contributions, including 26 weeks of paid or credited contributions in the last year of contributions or in the 40 weeks before the benefit is paid.

Maternity grant: Must have at least 50 weeks of paid contributions.

Funeral benefit: Paid when an insured person or the spouse of an insured person dies if the insured had at least 50 weeks of paid contributions.

Sickness and Maternity Benefits

Sickness benefit: 60% of average weekly covered earnings is paid after a three-day waiting period for up to 26 weeks; may be extended for 14 weeks in certain circumstances.

The minimum benefit is B\$69.42 a week.

Sickness allowance (means tested): B\$59.18 a week is paid for an insured person who does not meet the contribution requirements for the sickness benefit.

Maternity benefit: 66.6% of average weekly covered earnings is paid for 13 weeks beginning no earlier than six weeks before the expected date of childbirth; may be extended for two weeks in certain circumstances.

The minimum benefit is B\$69.48 a week.

Maternity grant: A lump sum of B\$450 is paid for each live birth.

Funeral benefit: A lump sum of B\$1,680 is paid.

Workers' Medical Benefits

No statutory benefits are provided.

Public and private medical care is available at public hospitals and clinics. Government subsidizes the cost for public care patients, children, the elderly, and needy persons.

Dependents' Medical Benefits

No statutory benefits are provided.

Public and private medical care is available at public hospitals and clinics. Government subsidizes the cost for public care patients, children, the elderly, and needy persons.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Finance (<http://www.bahamas.gov.bs/finance>) provides general supervision.

National Insurance Board (<http://www.nib-bahamas.com>) administers the program.

Work Injury

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1943 (workmen's compensation).

Current law: 1972 (national insurance).

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Employed persons and self-employed persons.

Exclusions: Family labor.

Source of Funds

Insured person: None.

Self-employed person: 2% of covered earnings.

The maximum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$31,200.

Employer: 0.75% of covered payroll.

The maximum annual earnings used to calculate contributions are B\$31,200.

Government: None.

Qualifying Conditions

Work injury benefits: There is no minimum qualifying period.

Temporary Disability Benefits

66.6% of average weekly covered earnings is paid after a three-day waiting period for up to 40 weeks.

The minimum benefit is B\$69.48 a week.

The maximum benefit is B\$399.96 a week.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Permanent disability pension: For an assessed degree of disability of 100%, 66.6% of average weekly covered earnings is paid. A lump sum of B\$1,000 is also paid.

The minimum benefit for a total disability is B\$69.48 a week.

The maximum benefit is B\$399.96 a week.

Constant-attendance supplement: If the insured has a 100% disability and requires the constant attendance of others to perform daily functions, 20% of the permanent disability pension is paid.

Partial disability: For an assessed degree of disability of at least 25%, a reduced pension is paid according to the assessed degree of disability. A lump sum of B\$500 is also paid.

The minimum benefit for a partial disability is B\$59.18 a week.

Lump-sum grant: For an assessed degree of disability of 1% to 24%, a lump sum of B\$100 to B\$2,400 is paid according to the assessed degree of disability.

Workers' Medical Benefits

Benefits include hospitalization, general and specialist care, medicine, and transportation, and are paid for up to 40 weeks (for an assessed degree of disability of 25% or less) or two years (for an assessed degree of disability of more than 25%).

Survivor Benefits

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

Orphan's pension: 10% of the temporary disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to each dependent child younger than age 16 (age 21 if a full-time student), up to five children (if the widow(er) receives a survivor pension) or 10 children (if the widow(er) does not receive a survivor pension).

Industrial death benefit: A lump sum of one month of the spouse's or orphan's pension is paid.

Industrial funeral benefit: A lump sum of B\$1,800 is paid to the person who paid for the funeral.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Finance (<http://www.bahamas.gov.bs/finance>) provides general supervision.

National Insurance Board (<http://www.nib-bahamas.com>) administers the program.

Unemployment

Regulatory Framework

First and current law: 2009 (national insurance), implemented in 2009 and 2010.

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Employed persons younger than age 65.

Exclusions: Self-employed persons.

Source of Funds

Insured person: 0.5% of salary.

Self-employed person: Not applicable.

Employer: 0.5% of payroll.

Government: Covers any deficit.

Qualifying Conditions

Unemployment benefit: Must have at least 52 weeks of paid contributions, including 13 weeks of paid or credited contributions in the 26 weeks before unemployment began, and seven weeks of paid or credited contributions in the 13 weeks before unemployment began.

To remain eligible, the insured must register with the labor exchange every four weeks, be available and looking for work, and must accept suitable employment.

Unemployment Benefits

Unemployment benefit: 50% of the insured's average covered weekly earnings is paid after a two-week waiting period for up to 13 weeks (may be extended in certain circumstances) in any 52-week period.

After receiving benefits for 13 weeks in any 52-week period, the insured must wait 52 weeks to be eligible for another claim.

The minimum unemployment benefit is B\$69.48 a week.

The maximum unemployment benefit is B\$300 a week.

Schedule of payments: The benefit is paid biweekly.

Administrative Organization

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