



## Tips from the Disability Benefits Application Process and Employer Responsibilities Webinar

- Encourage the member to apply before their sick leave runs out. The processing time for a typical application is three to five months.
- Applicants who are approved are considered to be on a three- to-five-year leave of absence (LOA). If SERS terminates a disability benefit before the member's leave of absence has expired, the employer is required to return the member to their previous, or similar, position and salary. The requirement applies even if the member resigned from employment after being approved for a disability benefit. The only exception to the requirement is if the member was dismissed, or resigned, for dishonesty, misfeasance, malfeasance, or conviction of a felony. We cannot tell you (when approved) if the member will be on a three or five year LOA. We look at this yearly. You can always call and ask, but keep in mind that this could change with the annual review. All disability recipients have at least a three-year LOA.
- If the member is approved and has sick leave remaining, it is up to the school to determine if they will allow the member to continue using their sick leave. We always encourage the member to use their sick leave because will receive full pay and continuation of their health care benefits.
- If there are any unreported earnings for the member when completing the Wage Certification, these additional deposits

(any **paid** days) are entered in the “Pay Period Certification Details” section.

- Compare what you have reported (especially the days) with what you are entering on the certification. This is especially important when there are less than 120 days.
- Make any needed account adjustments prior to sending in the certification. Also, remember that there is a “Notes” section at the bottom of the certification where you can enter any additional relevant information.