

## Solomon Islands

Exchange rate: US\$1.00 = 6.76 Solomon Islands dollars (SI\$).

### Old Age, Disability, and Survivors

#### Regulatory Framework

**First and current law:** 1973 (provident fund), implemented in 1976.

**Type of program:** Provident fund system.

#### Coverage

All employed workers aged 14 or older, including household workers, members of cooperatives, and casual workers who earn at least SI\$20 a month and work at least six days a month.

Exclusions: Prisoners and persons in medical institutions.

Employees covered by equivalent private plans may contract out.

Voluntary coverage for unemployed and self-employed persons aged 16 to 35 and former employees who have at least 12 consecutive months of previous contributions, regardless of age.

Special system for public-sector employees.

#### Source of Funds

**Insured person:** 5% of monthly earnings.

Additional voluntary contributions are permitted.

SI\$5 is deducted annually from the member's provident fund account to finance death benefits.

**Self-employed person:** Voluntary contributions only.

**Employer:** 7.5% of monthly payroll.

**Government:** None.

#### Qualifying Conditions

**Old-age benefit:** Age 50, regardless of employment status; at any age if emigrating permanently.

The member must continue to make contributions if he or she continues in covered employment after age 50.

Early withdrawal: Age 40 if permanently retired from covered employment.

Drawdown payment: In cases of unfair dismissal or if laid off, unemployed fund members may withdraw funds from their individual account after three months of continuous unemployment (see Unemployment).

**Disability benefit:** Must be assessed with a permanent physical or mental incapacity for work.

**Survivor benefit:** Paid to the next-of-kin or to one or more named survivors when the fund member dies before retirement.

#### Old-Age Benefits

**Old-age benefit:** A lump sum of total employee and employer contributions plus interest is paid.

If the member makes a withdrawal at age 50 and continues to make contributions from employment, no further withdrawal can be made for five years.

Drawdown payment: The value of drawdown payments depends on the value of employee and employer contributions in the individual account plus accumulated interest (see Unemployment).

Interest rate adjustment: The National Provident Fund Board sets the interest rate at the end of each fiscal year.

#### Permanent Disability Benefits

**Disability benefit:** A lump sum of total employee and employer contributions plus interest is paid.

Interest rate adjustment: The National Provident Fund Board sets the interest rate at the end of each fiscal year.

#### Survivor Benefits

**Survivor benefit:** A lump sum of total employee and employer contributions plus interest is paid.

Interest rate adjustment: The National Provident Fund Board sets the interest rate at the end of each fiscal year.

**Death benefit:** Up to SI\$6,000 is paid.

#### Administrative Organization

National Provident Fund Board (<http://www.sinpf.org.sb>) administers the program. The Board is an independent tripartite body appointed by the Minister of Finance and made up of two representatives each from government, employers, and employees, and two representatives chosen at the Minister's discretion.

#### Sickness and Maternity

##### Regulatory Framework

No statutory sickness and maternity benefits are provided.

The Labor Act requires employers to provide up to 12 weeks of maternity leave to female employees (including up to at least six weeks after childbirth).

## Work Injury

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### Regulatory Framework

**First and current laws:** 1952 (workmen's compensation) and 1981 (employment).

**Type of program:** Employer-liability system, involving compulsory insurance with a private carrier.

### Coverage

Employed persons, including public-sector employees, earning SI\$4,000 a year or less; and casual workers under certain circumstances.

Exclusions: Self-employed persons.

### Source of Funds

**Insured person:** None.

**Self-employed person:** Not applicable.

**Employer:** The total cost.

**Government:** None.

### Qualifying Conditions

**Work injury benefits:** There is no minimum qualifying period. All absences of three or more days from work must be reported. Entitlement is based on an assessment of the injury and the resulting disability. No benefit is paid if the incapacity or death occurs more than a year after the worker ceases employment.

### Temporary Disability Benefits

50% to 100% of earnings is paid, according to the insured's monthly earnings and the assessed degree of disability. If the incapacity lasts for more than three days, the benefit is paid from the first day until recovery or certification of permanent disability.

The maximum monthly benefit is SI\$160.

Workers with a temporary disability may undergo periodic medical examination by a doctor chosen and paid for by the employer.

### Permanent Disability Benefits

**Permanent disability benefit:** A lump sum of 48 months of earnings is paid.

The maximum lump sum is SI\$9,000.

Partial disability: A percentage of the full permanent disability benefit is paid as a lump sum according to the

assessed degree of disability. In cases of multiple injuries, individual benefits may be aggregated but must not exceed the full permanent disability benefit.

### Workers' Medical Benefits

Medical benefits include care, medicine, and appliances.

Appliances that benefit the earning capacity of an injured worker, including artificial prostheses, are provided at the employer's expense. In such cases, the benefit is subject to an earnings test.

### Survivor Benefits

**Survivor benefit:** A lump sum is paid based on 36 months of earnings minus any permanent disability benefits already paid to the deceased.

The maximum lump sum is SI\$9,000 when the disability benefit is also paid.

The maximum lump sum for a fatal work injury is SI\$80,000.

Eligible survivors include family members living with the deceased at the time of death who were totally or mainly dependent on the deceased's earnings. The courts determine how the survivor benefit is split among survivors.

**Funeral grant:** If there are no dependents, the grant covers reasonable burial expenses on a case by case basis.

The maximum funeral grant is SI\$30.

### Administrative Organization

Labor Division of the Ministry of Commerce, Industries, Labor and Immigration (<http://www.commerce.gov.sb>) administers the program.

## Unemployment

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### Regulatory Framework

Under the National Provident Fund Act, unemployed fund members may drawdown up to 30% of savings in case of unfair dismissal or if laid off, provided the member's savings in the fund are greater than SI\$10,000 and he or she is not reemployed within three months after dismissal. The remaining amount can also be withdrawn later under certain provisions.

Employers are required to pay a dismissal benefit of two weeks of earnings for each year of employment, if the employee has been in continuous employment with the same employer for at least 26 weeks or more and is younger than age 50.