

Samoa

Exchange rate: US\$1.00 = 2.50 tala.

Old Age, Disability, and Survivors

Regulatory Framework

First and current law: 1972 (national provident fund).

Type of program: Universal and provident fund system.

Coverage

Universal: Citizens and lifelong residents of Samoa.

Provident fund: Employed persons, including household workers.

Voluntary coverage for self-employed and unemployed persons.

Source of Funds

Insured person

Universal: None.

Provident fund: 7% of gross monthly earnings. Additional voluntary contributions of up to 2,000 a month are possible.

Self-employed person

Universal: None.

Provident fund: Pays 100 to 2,000 tala a month.

Employer

Universal: None.

Provident fund: 7% of gross monthly payroll.

Government

Universal: The total cost.

Provident fund: None; contributes as an employer.

Qualifying Conditions

Old-age pension (Senior Citizens Benefit Scheme, universal): Age 65 with at least 90 days of continuous residence immediately before the date of application.

Old-age pension (provident fund): Age 55; age 50 if unemployed for at least five years; at any age if emigrating permanently, medically incapacitated, or entering theological seminary or the clergy.

If covered employment continues after age 55, the fund member must continue to make contributions to the fund. If employment continues or new employment begins after funds are withdrawn at age 55, the fund member must

contribute for at least 12 months before withdrawing funds again.

Partial withdrawal: Must be younger than age 55.

Loan program: Loans are provided from the fund member's account to help finance the cost of housing, land, vehicles, or other short-term expenditures. Must have a minimum balance of 500 tala.

Disability pension (provident fund): Must be assessed with a total incapacity for work in covered employment.

A general medical practitioner assesses the loss of work capacity.

Survivor pension (provident fund): Paid when a fund member dies.

Eligible survivors include persons named by the deceased, or if there are no named survivors, the deceased's spouse, children, or other dependents.

Death benefit (provident fund): Paid when a fund member with at least one month of contributions dies. If the deceased previously withdrew funds, he or she must have contributed for at least 24 months since the last withdrawal.

Old-Age Benefits

Old-age pension (Senior Citizens Benefit Scheme, universal): 135 tala a month is paid.

Additional benefits: Old-age pensioners also receive free health care in public hospitals and free inter-island travel on public seagoing vessels.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted periodically.

Old-age pension (provident fund): The fund member has three options: purchase an annuity with the total employee and employer contributions plus accrued interest minus partial withdrawals; purchase an annuity with 75% of the total employee and employer contributions plus accrued interest minus partial withdrawals, with the remaining 25% paid as a lump sum; or receive a lump sum of the total employee and employer contributions plus accrued interest minus partial withdrawals taken at age 55.

Annuities are paid every two weeks.

The minimum interest rate is 4% a year.

Partial withdrawal: Up to 20% of the total employee and employer contributions may be withdrawn for necessary medical expenses. Partial withdrawal of an unspecified amount to meet relocation costs is also possible for temporary employment abroad that is expected to last at least three years.

Loan program: Up to 60% of the total employee and employer contributions may be withdrawn and repaid at an annual interest rate that varies depending on the type of loan.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted every three years based on an actuarial review.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Disability pension (provident fund): The fund member has three options: purchase an annuity with the total employee and employer contributions plus accrued interest minus partial withdrawals; purchase an annuity with 75% of the total employee and employer contributions plus accrued interest minus partial withdrawals, with the remaining 25% paid as a lump sum; or receive a lump sum of the balance of the total employee and employer contributions plus accrued interest minus partial withdrawals taken at age 55.

The minimum interest rate is 4% a year.

Annuities are paid every two weeks.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted every three years based on an actuarial review.

Survivor Benefits

Survivor pension (provident fund): The total employee and employer contributions plus accrued interest minus partial withdrawals is split among named survivors based on proportions stated by the deceased. If the deceased was receiving an annuity, 50% of the deceased's annuity is paid for up to 10 years.

The minimum interest rate is 4% a year.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted every three years based on an actuarial review.

Death benefit (provident fund): A lump sum of 5,000 tala is paid.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted based on the financial health of the fund.

Administrative Organization

Senior Citizens Benefit Scheme Department of the Samoa National Provident Fund administers the universal program.

Samoa National Provident Fund managed by a tripartite board, administers the provident fund program and collects contributions.

Sickness and Maternity

Regulatory Framework

First and current law: 2013 (labor code).

Type of program: Employer-liability (cash benefits only) system.

Note: Additional cash benefits for temporary and permanent disability are provided for nonwork-related injuries under Work Injury. Some medical services are provided free of charge to the population through government health centers. Other hospital and medical services are provided

under the senior citizen benefit scheme and the work injury program.

Coverage

Employed persons.

Exclusions: Self-employed persons, police personnel, and certain agricultural workers.

Source of Funds

Insured person: None.

Self-employed person: Not applicable.

Employer: The total cost (provides benefits directly to employees).

Government: None; contributes as an employer.

Qualifying Conditions

Cash sickness benefit: For full-time employees, must have at least 12 months of continuous employment with the same employer; for part-time employees, the qualifying conditions are applied on a pro-rata basis. A medical certificate is required for an illness that lasts for at least three days.

Cash maternity benefit: For full-time employees, must have at least 12 months of continuous employment with the same employer; for part-time employees, the qualifying conditions are applied on a pro-rata basis. The employee must notify the employer in writing of the expected dates of departure and return from maternity leave.

Cash paternity benefit: For full-time employees, must have at least 12 months of continuous employment with the same employer; for part-time employees, the qualifying conditions are applied on a pro-rata basis. The employee must notify the employer in writing of the expected date of childbirth and present a written request from the employee's wife or partner.

Sickness and Maternity Benefits

Sickness benefit: 100% of the employee's normal earnings is paid.

Workers are entitled to at least 10 days of sick leave each year.

Maternity benefit: The employee has two payment options: receive 100% of normal earnings for four weeks plus two weeks of unpaid leave; or 66.67% of normal earnings for six weeks.

Paternity benefit: 100% of the employee's normal earnings is paid for five days.

Workers' Medical Benefits

Some medical services are provided free of charge through government health centers.

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Other hospital and medical services are provided under the senior citizen benefit scheme and the work injury program.

Dependents' Medical Benefits

Medical benefits for dependents are the same as those for the insured.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Labour (<https://www.mcil.gov.ws/>) administers the program.

Work Injury

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1960.

Current laws: 1978 and 1989 (accident compensation).

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Employed persons.

Exclusions: Self-employed persons.

The program also covers all residents of Samoa for injuries and deaths resulting from motor vehicle and boat accidents.

Source of Funds

Insured person

Work injuries and occupational disease: None.

Motor vehicle and boat accidents: 1% of earnings.

Self-employed person

Work injuries and occupational disease: Not applicable.

Motor vehicle and boat accidents: No information available.

Employer

Work injuries and occupational disease: None.

Motor vehicle and boat accidents: 1% of payroll.

Government

Work injuries and occupational disease: None.

Motor vehicle and boat accidents: An earmarked tax of 0.05 tala per gallon of motor fuel finances benefits for victims of motor vehicle and boat accidents.

Qualifying Conditions

Must be assessed with a work injury or occupational disease, or an injury resulting from a motor vehicle or boat accident.

Temporary Disability Benefits

Up to 70% of the insured's earnings is paid after a five-day waiting period for up to five years (may be extended).

The maximum weekly temporary disability benefit is 1,000 tala.

Permanent Disability Benefits

If the assessed degree of disability is at least 80%, the weekly benefit is 70% of the insured's last earnings multiplied by the assessed degree of disability. The benefit is paid until rehabilitation or death.

The maximum weekly permanent disability benefit is 1,000 tala.

A mobility allowance and a living allowance, both 60% of the minimum wage, are paid.

Partial disability: If the assessed degree of disability is less than 80% and the insured returns to work before the period of entitlement to temporary disability benefits ceases, a lump sum is paid based on the assessed degree of disability.

The maximum partial disability benefit is 8,000 tala.

Workers' Medical Benefits

Benefits include reasonable medical expenses; up to 150,000 tala is paid for artificial limbs or aids and for treatment abroad.

Survivor Benefits

Survivor grant: A lump sum of 16,000 to 20,000 tala, plus up to 1,000 tala a week for up to five years, is paid to eligible dependents.

Funeral grant: A lump sum of 4,000 tala is paid for a death.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Commerce, Industry, and Labour (<https://www.mcil.gov.ws/>) provides general supervision.

Accident Compensation Corporation (<https://www.acc.gov.ws/>) administers the program.