

St. Vincent and the Grenadines

Exchange rate: US\$1.00 = 2.70 East Caribbean dollars (EC\$).

Old Age, Disability, and Survivors

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1970 (provident fund).

Current law: 1986 (social insurance), implemented in 1987.

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Note: The Family Services Division of the Ministry of Social Development administers social assistance cash benefits for needy persons, including needy elderly persons, persons with disabilities, and orphans.

Coverage

Employed and self-employed persons.

Voluntary coverage for citizens of St. Vincent and the Grenadines who are no longer in covered employment or live abroad.

Source of Funds

Insured person: 3.5% of covered earnings; certain government workers contribute 3.29% of covered earnings; voluntarily insured persons contribute 6.84% of declared income.

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are EC\$15.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are EC\$1,000 (EC\$4,333 a month).

The insured person's contributions also finance sickness and maternity benefits.

Self-employed person: 7.5% of declared income, according to eight income categories.

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

Employer: 4.5% of monthly payroll.

The minimum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are EC\$15.

The maximum weekly earnings used to calculate contributions are EC\$1,000 (EC\$4,333 a month).

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

Government: 4.25% or 4.5% of monthly payroll for government workers, depending on the category of work.

Government contributions also finance sickness and maternity benefits.

Qualifying Conditions

Old-age pension: Age 60 with at least 500 weeks of paid or credited contributions, including at least 150 weeks of paid contributions.

Reduced pension: If the insured was aged 37 or older on January 5, 1987, the pension is paid at age 60 with at least 150 weeks of paid contributions, plus an additional 50 weeks of paid or credited contributions for each year the insured was younger than age 50 on January 5, 1987. (The reduced pension no longer applies to insured persons who reached age 60 after 2010.)

Old-age grant: Age 60 with at least 50 weeks of paid contributions but does not meet the contribution requirements for the old-age pension.

Disability pension: Younger than age 60, assessed with a disability, and has at least 150 weeks of paid contributions.

Disability grant: Younger than age 60, assessed with a disability, and has at least 50 weeks but less than 150 weeks of paid contributions.

Survivor pension: The deceased received or was entitled to receive an old-age or disability pension or grant at the time of death.

Eligible survivors include a widow(er) who was married to or lived with the deceased for at least three years, children younger than age 16 (age 18 if a student, no limit if disabled), and dependent parents aged 60 or older.

The widow(er)'s pension ceases on remarriage or cohabitation.

Survivor grant: The deceased did not meet the contribution requirements for an old-age or disability pension but received or was entitled to receive an old-age or disability grant.

Eligible survivors include a widow(er) who was married to or lived with the deceased for at least three years, children younger than age 16 (age 18 if a student, no limit if disabled), and dependent parents aged 60 or older.

Funeral grant: The insured had at least 26 weeks of paid contributions. Paid when the insured, the insured's spouse, or the insured's dependent children younger than age 16 (age 18 if a full-time student, no limit if disabled) dies.

Old-Age Benefits

Old-age pension: The pension is 30% of the insured's average annual earnings with at least 500 weeks of contributions, calculated as the sum of 16% of average annual earnings plus 1% of average annual earnings for each 25-week period of contributions exceeding 150 weeks, up to

500 weeks, plus 0.5% of average annual earnings for each 25-week period of contributions exceeding 500 weeks.

Average annual earnings are based on the insured's earnings in the best three of the last 15 years before the year in which the insured reached age 60. The annual amount is then divided by 52 to determine the weekly pension.

The minimum weekly pension is EC\$70.

The maximum pension is 60% of the insured's average annual earnings.

Reduced pension: Calculated in the same way as the old-age pension.

Old-age grant: A lump sum of six times the insured's average weekly covered earnings is paid for each 50-week period of contributions.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Disability pension: 30% of the insured's average annual earnings with at least 150 weeks of contributions plus 0.5% of average annual earnings for each 25-week period of contributions exceeding 500 weeks is paid.

Average annual earnings are based on the insured's earnings in the best three of the last 15 years. The annual amount is then divided by 52 to determine the weekly pension.

The minimum weekly pension is EC\$70.

The maximum pension is 60% of average earnings.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted for inflation every three years, subject to an actuarial review.

Disability grant: A lump sum of six times the insured's average weekly covered earnings is paid for each 50-week period of contributions.

Survivor Benefits

Spouse's pension: 75% of the old-age or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive at the time of death is paid to the widow(er).

A limited pension is paid for a year to a widow younger than age 50 with no dependent children or to widow(er) younger than age 50 and disabled.

The widow(er)'s pension ceases on remarriage or cohabitation.

Orphan's pension: 25% of the old-age or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to each dependent child younger than age 16 (age 18 if a full-time student, no limit if disabled); 50% to a full orphan.

Dependent parent's pension: If there are no other survivors, up to 50% of the old-age or disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to each eligible parent.

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

Survivor grant: A lump sum of 75% of the old-age or disability grant the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to a widow(er); 25% to an orphan (50% to a full orphan); if there are no other eligible survivors, 50% is paid to each dependent parent.

All survivor grants combined must not exceed 100% of the old-age or disability grant the deceased received or was entitled to receive.

Funeral grant: EC\$4,330 is paid to the person who pays for all or part of the insured's funeral. A reduced grant is paid for the funeral of a spouse or child.

Administrative Organization

National Insurance Board (<http://www.nissvg.org>) administers the program.

Sickness and Maternity

Regulatory Framework

First and current law: 1986 (social insurance), implemented in 1987.

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

Coverage

Employed and self-employed persons.

Special systems for certain categories of civil servants.

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

Qualifying Conditions

Cash sickness benefits: Must be currently employed with at least 26 weeks of paid contributions, including at least eight weeks of paid or credited contributions in the 13-week period immediately before the incapacity began.

Cash maternity benefits: Must have at least 30 weeks of paid or credited contributions, including at least 20 weeks in the 30-week period immediately preceding the week six

weeks before the expected date of childbirth or the week in which the claim is made, whichever is later.

Maternity grant: The insured woman or the insured husband or partner of an uninsured woman must have at least 20 weeks of paid contributions in the 30 weeks immediately before the week of childbirth.

Sickness and Maternity Benefits

Sickness benefit: 65% of the insured's average earnings in the 13 weeks before the incapacity began is paid for up to 26 weeks after a three-day waiting period. No benefits are paid if the insured person is receiving a full salary from his or her employer.

Maternity benefit: 65% of the insured's average earnings in the last 30 weeks of employment is paid for 13 weeks, from up to six weeks before the expected date of childbirth.

Maternity grant: EC\$630 is paid.

Workers' Medical Benefits

No statutory benefits are provided.

Dependents' Medical Benefits

No statutory benefits are provided.

Administrative Organization

National Insurance Board (<http://www.nissvg.org>) administers the program.

Work Injury

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1939.

Current law: 1997 (work injury).

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Employed persons.

Exclusions: Self-employed persons and voluntary contributors.

Source of Funds

Insured person: None.

Self-employed person: Not applicable.

Employer: 0.5% of payroll.

Government: None; contributes as an employer.

Qualifying Conditions

Work injury benefits: The insured must be employed. Benefits are paid for work injuries or prescribed occupational diseases.

Temporary Disability Benefits

70% of average weekly covered earnings is paid after a three-day waiting period for up to 52 weeks.

Average weekly covered earnings are based on the insured's earnings in the last 13 weeks or the total number of weeks of employment before the disability began (whichever is lower).

Permanent Disability Benefits

Permanent disability pension: 70% of average weekly covered earnings multiplied by the assessed degree of disability is paid. The assessed degree of disability must be greater than 30% and the insured must have exhausted entitlement to the temporary disability benefit.

Average weekly covered earnings are based on the insured's earnings in the 13 weeks before the disability began.

Constant-attendance allowance: 50% of the disability pension is paid if the insured requires the constant attendance of others to perform daily functions.

If the assessed degree of disability is 30% or less, a lump sum of 365 times the insured's average weekly covered earnings multiplied by the assessed degree of disability is paid. The insured must have exhausted entitlement to a temporary disability benefit.

Workers' Medical Benefits

Benefits include medical, surgical, and dental treatment; hospitalization; skilled nursing services; medicine; prosthetics; and transportation costs.

Survivor Benefits

Spouse's pension: 75% of the permanent disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive at the time of death is paid to a widow(er) who was married to or lived with the deceased for at least three years.

A limited pension is paid for a year to a widow younger than age 50 with no dependent children or to a widow(er) younger than age 60 and disabled.

The widow(er)'s pension ceases on remarriage or cohabitation.

Orphan's pension: 25% of the permanent disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to each dependent child younger than age 16 (age 18 if a full-time student, no limit if disabled); 50% to a full orphan.

Dependent parent's pension: If there are no other survivors, up to 50% of the permanent disability pension the deceased received or was entitled to receive is paid to each eligible parent.

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

Funeral grant: EC\$4,330 is paid to the person who pays for all or part of the insured's funeral. A reduced grant is paid for the funeral of a spouse or child.

Administrative Organization

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