

period for up to 51 weeks; up to 15 weeks for sickness and maternity; and three weeks without the two-week waiting period for persons retiring from the labour force.

#### *Workmen's compensation*

In each province a workmen's compensation act protects workers who are affected by work-connected disabilities or diseases. While there is some variation by province, the legislation applies to most industries and occupations. Major groups of workers not covered are farm-workers (except in Ontario), domestic servants, casual workers, employees of most financial, insurance and professional undertakings, and employees of certain service industries in some provinces. Compensation benefits include cash awards, all necessary medical aid, hospital care, physical restoration services, and vocational services, to widows or dependants in case of fatal accidents or disease. Benefits for disability are based on 75 per cent of average weekly earnings, subject to an annual ceiling. Costs are met from employers' contributions to accident funds at rates that are established by the workmen's compensation board according to the hazards in each class of industry.

#### *Social assistance*

Financial aid is provided through provincial or municipal departments of welfare to persons in need, including needy mothers with dependent children, disabled persons, elderly persons, widows, unemployed persons and persons whose income from other sources is not adequate to meet their needs. Aid is also provided through institutional care for the elderly or infirm who do not require hospital care but who are unable to care for themselves; these are operated under provincial, municipal or voluntary auspices. Counselling, homemaker and other services are provided as necessary.

The Federal Government shares in the cost of social assistance and services administered by the provinces under the Canada Assistance Plan on a 50:50 basis. Shareable costs include social-assistance payments, maintenance payments for needy persons in homes for the aged and other welfare institutions, child-welfare maintenance payments, health-care costs for needy persons, and the costs of certain welfare services. The only criterion of eligibility specified in the Plan is need, irrespective of its cause. Rates of assistance and conditions of aid are set by the provinces.

The provinces also administer the federal-provincial disabled persons' allowances and blind persons' allowances. The federal contribution may not exceed 50 per cent of \$75 a month or of the allowance paid, whichever is less, for disabled persons allowances, or 75 per cent of \$75 a month or of the allowance paid, whichever is less, for blind persons' allowances. To be eligible for an allowance under either of these programs, an applicant must meet a ten-years' residence requirement and the income requirements. Seven provinces have now merged disabled-persons' allowances with their general social-assistance programs; four of these provinces have, similarly, merged blind persons' allowances. In these provinces, allowances to the needy blind or disabled are determined, as for other social-assistance recipients, on the basis of need.