Sierra Leone

Exchange rate: US$1.00 equals 3,015 leones.

Old Age, Disability, and Survivors

Regulatory Framework

First and current law: 2001 (social security).

Type of program: Social insurance system.

Coverage

Employees in the public and private sectors.

Voluntary coverage for the self-employed and for insured persons who leave insured employment.

Source of Funds

Insured person: 5% of monthly salary; voluntary contributors pay 15% of monthly income.

Self-employed person: 15% of monthly income.

Employer: 10% of monthly payroll.

Government: 2.5% of monthly income for all employees in recognition of periods of previous service before the introduction of the program in 2001; 10% of monthly income for all civil servants, teachers, and military and police force personnel (plus 2% of monthly income to finance retirement at age 55 for military and police force personnel).

Qualifying Conditions

Old-age pension: Age 60 (men and women) with at least 180 months of contributions. Employment must cease.

Age 55 with at least 180 months of contributions for military and police force personnel.

Early pension: From age 55 with at least 180 months of contributions.

Old-age gratuity: Paid to each person who is entitled to an old-age pension on retirement.

Old-age grant: Paid from age 55 if the insured does not meet the qualifying conditions for an old-age pension.

Old-age benefits are not payable abroad.

Disability pension: The insured is permanently and totally incapable of further employment and younger than age 60 with at least 5 years of contributions, including 12 months of paid contributions in the 3 years before the disability began, or has at least 180 months of contributions.

The insured must be assessed as permanently and totally incapable of further employment by a medical officer certified by the medical board.

Disability grant: The insured is permanently and totally incapable of further employment and does not meet the qualifying conditions for a disability pension.

Disability benefits are not payable abroad.

Survivor pension: The deceased met the qualifying conditions, was receiving an old-age or disability pension, or had at least 5 years of contributions, including 12 months of paid contributions in the 3 years before the date of death.

Eligible survivors are the widow(er), dependent children younger than age 18 (age 23 if a full-time student, no limit if disabled), and parents.

Survivor grant: The deceased did not meet the qualifying conditions for a pension.

Survivor benefits are not payable abroad.

Old-Age Benefits

Old-age pension: The pension is equal to 30% of the insured's average monthly earnings for the first 15 years of coverage, plus 2% of the insured's average monthly earnings for each additional 12-month coverage period.

Average earnings for benefit calculation purposes are average earnings in the best 5 years of contributions.

Public-sector employees employed as of January 1, 2002, are credited for benefit calculation purposes for all periods of public-sector employment before the introduction of the program in 2001.

Private-sector employees employed as of January 1, 2002, who were older than age 30 on that date, are credited for benefit calculation purposes for a period equal to half the difference between their age and age 30 for periods of private-sector employment before the introduction of the program in 2001.

The minimum pension is at least equal to 50% of the national minimum wage.

The maximum pension is equal to 80% of the insured's average monthly earnings.

Early pension: The pension is reduced by 4% for each year that the pension is taken before age 60.

Old-age gratuity: A lump sum equal to 12 months' pension is paid to each old-age pensioner on retirement.

Old-age grant: The grant is equal to 1.5 times the insured's average monthly earnings for each 12-month period of contributions.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted periodically according to changes in wages, depending on the financial resources of the National Social Security and Insurance Trust.

Permanent Disability Benefits

Disability pension: The pension is equal to 30% of the insured's average monthly earnings for the first 15 years of coverage, plus 2% of the insured's average monthly earnings for each additional 12-month period of coverage. A 6-month insurance coverage period is credited for each year that a claim is made before age 60.

The disability pension ceases at age 60 and is replaced by the old-age pension.

The minimum disability pension is equal to at least 50% of the national minimum wage.

Disability grant: The grant is equal to 1.5 times the insured's average monthly earnings for each 12-month period of contributions.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted periodically according to changes in the cost of living, depending on the financial resources of the National Social Security and Insurance Trust.

Survivor Benefits

Survivor pension: 40% of the deceased's pension is paid to a widow(er). If there is more than one widow, the pension is split equally among them.

The survivor pension ceases if a widow(er) remarries or cohabits.

Orphan's pension: A maximum of 60% of the deceased's pension is paid for orphans.

Parent's pension (in the absence of other eligible survivors): A lump sum equal to 12 months' survivor pension is paid to a parent who is employed or receiving a pension; 24 months' survivor pension is paid to a parent who is not employed or receiving a pension.

All survivor pensions combined must not exceed 50% of the deceased's old-age pension or disability pension paid or payable to the deceased at the time of death.

Survivor grant: The grant is equal to 1.5 times the insured's average monthly earnings for each 12-month period of contributions.

Benefit adjustment: Benefits are adjusted periodically according to changes in the cost of living, depending on the financial resources of the National Social Security and Insurance Trust.

Administrative Organization

National Social Security and Insurance Trust (http://www.nassitsl.org) administers the program.

Sickness and Maternity

Regulatory Framework

No statutory benefits are provided.

Employers provide medical care for employees and their dependents through collective agreements.

Work Injury

Regulatory Framework

First law: 1939.

Current law: 1960 (workmen's compensation), with 1962, 1969, and 1971 amendments.

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

Coverage

Employed persons.

Exclusions: Agricultural employees working on plantations with fewer than 25 workers, domestic servants, casual workers, home workers, and family labor.

Source of Funds

Insured person: None.

Self-employed person: Not applicable.

Employer: The total cost is met through direct provision of benefits or the payment of insurance premiums.

Government: An approved annual contribution.

Qualifying Conditions

Work injury benefits: There is no minimum qualifying period.

Temporary Disability Benefits

The benefit is equal to 2/3 of the insured's earnings and is paid after a 3-day waiting period for up to 96 months.

The benefit may be paid as a lump sum, calculated according to the expected duration of entitlement.

Permanent Disability Benefits

If the insured is totally disabled, a lump sum is paid equal to 48 months' earnings.

Constant-attendance allowance: The maximum allowance is equal to 25% of the permanent disability benefit.

Partial disability: A percentage of 56 months' earnings is paid up to a ceiling, according to the assessed degree of disability.

Workers' Medical Benefits

Medical benefits include medical, dental, and surgical care; hospitalization; medicines; appliances; and the cost of transportation, up to a maximum.

Survivor Benefits

Survivor benefit: A lump sum equal to 42 months of the deceased's earnings (minus any disability benefits paid) is paid to the deceased's dependents; partial dependents may receive a reduced benefit.

Funeral grant (in the absence of eligible survivors): A lump sum is paid to cover the cost of the burial, up to a maximum.

Administrative Organization

Ministry of Labor, Industrial Relations, and Social Security and the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender, and Children's Affairs are responsible for the program.

Employers may insure against liability with private insurance companies.