



Unemployed Worker's Handbook

A Guide to Unemployment Benefits




Employment Security Department
WASHINGTON STATE

October 2025

This handbook is informational only. If there is a conflict between this handbook and current Washington state law, the law prevails.

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Support information in many languages

Please take the time to read this handbook. It explains your rights and responsibilities if you apply for and receive benefits. For free help in Spanish, call 800-318-6022. For free help in other languages, call 800-410-0758. If you have a hearing or speech disability, dial 711 to reach the Washington Relay.

እባክዎን ይህንን የእጅ መጽሐፍ ለማንበብ ጊዜውን ይውሰዱ። ጥቅማ ጥቅሞችን ለማግኘት ከመለከቱ እና ወሰደው ከሆነ ያልዎትን መብቶች እና ግዴታዎች ያብራራል። ነጻ እገዛ በእስፓኒሽ ቋንቋ ለማግኘት፣ ወደዚህ 800-318-6022 ይደውሉ። በሌሎች ቋንቋ ነጻ እገዛ ለማግኘት ከፈለጉ፣ ወደ 800-410-0758 ይደውሉ። የመስማት እና የመናገር እክል ካለብዎት፣ የWashington ሪሌይን ለማነጋገር ወደ 711 ይደውሉ።

يرجى أخذ الوقت لقراءة هذا الكتيب. فهو يشرح حقوقك ومسؤولياتك إذا تقدمت بطلب للحصول على إعانات وتلقيتها. للحصول على مساعدة مجانية باللغة الإسبانية، اتصل بالرقم 800-318-6022. للحصول على مساعدة مجانية بلغات أخرى، اتصل بالرقم 800-410-0758. إذا كنت تعاني من إعاقة في السمع أو النطق، فاتصل بالرقم 711 للوصول إلى خدمة Washington للتحويل الهاتفي

ဤလက်စွဲစာအုပ်ကို အချိန်ပေး၍ ဖတ်ရှုပေးပါ။ သင်က အကျိုးခံစားခွင့်များအတွက် လျှောက်ထားပြီး ၎င်းတို့ကို ရရှိနေသူဖြစ်လျှင် သင့်အခွင့်အရေးများနှင့် တာဝန်ဝတ္တရားများကို ၎င်းတွင် ရှင်းလင်းဖော်ပြထားပါသည်။ စပိန်ဘာသာဖြင့် အခမဲ့အကူအညီရယူရန် 800-318-6022 ကို ဖုန်းဆက်ပါ။ အခြားဘာသာစကားများဖြင့် အခမဲ့အကူအညီရယူရန် 800-410-0758 ကို ဖုန်းဆက်ပါ။ ကြားနိုင်စွမ်း သို့မဟုတ် စကားပြောဆိုနိုင်စွမ်းတွင် အခက်အခဲရှိပါက 711 ကိုနှိပ်၍ Washington ဆွံ့အနားမကြားသူ ဖုန်းလိုင်းသို့ ဆက်သွယ်ပါ။

请仔细阅读本手册。本手册解释了如果申请并获得福利，您的权利和责任。如需西班牙语的免费帮助，请致电 800-318-6022。如需其他语言的免费帮助，请致电 800-410-0758。如果您有听力或语言障碍，请拨打 711 联系 Washington Relay

請花時間閱讀本手冊。本手冊解釋了如果申請並獲得福利，您的權利和責任。如需西班牙語的免費幫助，請致電 800-318-6022。如需其他語言的免費幫助，請致電 800-410-0758。如果您有聽力或語言障礙，請撥打 711 聯繫 Washington Relay。

Kose mochen awora eom fansoun eom kopwe aneani ewe puukena annuk. A kan aweweni eom pung kena me pwan met kopwe forori kena ika pwe ka aeoeo ren me pwan angei aninis kena. Ren aninis kena ese wor momon non fosun Spein, kori 800-318-6022. Ren aninis kena ese wor momon non pwan ekkoch fosun fonu kena, kori 800-410-0758. Ika pwe a wor ew eom teririn rongorong ika kapas, dialeni 711 ren eom kopwe tori ewe Washington Relay.

لطفاً برای مطالعه این کتابچه راهنما وقت بگذارید. در صورت درخواست و دریافت مزایا، حقوق و مسئولیت‌های شما را شرح می‌دهد. برای دریافت کمک به زبان اسپانیایی، با شماره 800-318-6022 تماس بگیرید. برای دریافت کمک به سایر زبان‌ها، با شماره 800-410-0758 تماس بگیرید. اگر معلولیت شنوایی یا گفتاری دارید، برای تماس با رله 711 Washington را شماره گیری کنید

Veillez lire attentivement le présent manuel. Vous y trouverez des explications sur vos droits et vos responsabilités si vous déposez une demande de prestations et si vous en bénéficiez. Si vous souhaitez obtenir une assistance gratuite en espagnol, veuillez appeler le 800-318-6022. Si vous souhaitez obtenir une assistance gratuite dans une autre langue, veuillez appeler le 800-410-0758. Si vous êtes malentendant ou avez des difficultés d'élocution, veuillez composer le 711 pour joindre le service de relais de Washington

Bitte nehmen Sie sich die Zeit, dieses Handbuch zu lesen. Es erklärt Ihre Rechte und Pflichten, wenn Sie Leistungen beantragen und erhalten. Kostenfreie Hilfe auf Spanisch erhalten Sie unter 800-318-6022. Kostenfreie Hilfe in anderen Sprachen erhalten Sie unter 800-410-0758. Wenn Sie eine Hör- oder Sprachbehinderung haben, wählen Sie 711, um die Zentrale in Washington zu erreichen.

Prenditi il tempo necessario per leggere questo manuale. Spiega quali sono i tuoi diritti e le tue responsabilità se ti registri e quali benefici riceverai. Per ricevere aiuto in spagnolo, chiama il numero 800-318-6022. Per ricevere aiuto in altre lingue, chiama il numero 800-410-0758. Se possiedi una disabilità uditiva o vocale, Digita 711 per contattare il servizio di assistenza telefonica di Washington.

このハンドブックをしっかりとお読みください。このハンドブックはあなたが給付金を申請し、受給する場合の権利と責任について説明しています。スペイン語での無料のヘルプは、800-318-6022 までお電話ください。その他の言語による無料のヘルプは、800-410-0758 までお電話ください。聴くことや話すことが困難な方は、711 をダイヤルして Washington リレーにご連絡ください。

សូមចំណាយពេលវេលាអានសៀវភៅណែនាំនេះ។ សៀវភៅនេះពន្យល់អំពីសិទ្ធិ និងទំនួលខុសត្រូវរបស់អ្នក ប្រសិនបើអ្នកដាក់ពាក្យសុំ និងទទួលបានអត្ថប្រយោជន៍។ សម្រាប់ជំនួយដោយឥតគិតថ្លៃជាភាសាអេស្ប៉ាញ សូមហៅទូរសព្ទទៅលេខ 800-318-6022។ សម្រាប់ជំនួយឥតគិតថ្លៃជាភាសាផ្សេងទៀត សូមហៅទូរសព្ទទៅលេខ 800-410-0758។ ប្រសិនបើអ្នកមានពិការភាពនៃការស្តាប់ ឬនិយាយ សូមហៅទូរសព្ទទៅលេខ 711 ដើម្បីទាក់ទងសេវាបញ្ជូនបន្តរបស់រដ្ឋ Washington។

이 핸드북을 읽어보시기 바랍니다. 혜택을 신청하고 받는 경우 자신의 권리와 책임에 대해 설명해 드립니다. 스페인어로 무료 도움을 받으려면 800-318-6022 로 전화하세요. 다른 언어로 무료 도움을 받으려면 800-410-0758 로 전화하세요. 청각 또는 언어 장애가 있는 경우 711 번으로 전화하여 Washington 릴레이에 연결하세요.

ກະລຸນາເສຍສະຫຼະເວລາອ່ານປຶ້ມຄູ່ມືເຫຼົ່ານີ້. ອະທິບາຍສິດທິ ແລະ ຄວາມຮັບຜິດຊອບຂອງທ່ານຖ້າວ່າທ່ານສະໝັກ ແລະ ຮັບສະຫວັດດີການ. ສໍາລັບການຄວາມຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອພຣີ ເບັບພາສາສະເປນ, ໂທ 800-318-6022. ສໍາລັບການຄວາມຊ່ວຍເຫຼືອພຣີ ເບັບພາສາອື່ນໆ, ໂທ 800-410-0758. ຖ້າວ່າທ່ານມີຄວາມພິການທາງດ້ານການໄດ້ຍິນ ຫຼື ການປາກເວົ້າ, ກົດໂທ 711 ເພື່ອຕິດຕໍ່ Washington Relay (ວໍຊິງຕັນ ຣີເລ).

Maaloo yeroo fudhadhaatii kitaaba qajeelchaa kana dubbisaa. Kaffaltii beenyaa/faayidaaleedhaaf yoo iyyattanii fi argattan mirgaa fi itti gaafatamummaa keessan ni ibsa. Gargaarsa bilisaa afaan Ispeeniin argachuudhaaf, 800-318-6022 irratti bilbilaa. Gargaarsa bilisaa afaanota birootiin argachuuf, 800-410-0758 irratti bilbilaa. Rakkoo dhageettii ykn dubbachuu yoo qabaattan, 711 irratti bilbiluun tajaajila ergaa daddabarsuu qaama miidhamtootaa Washington argadhaa.

ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਕਿਤਾਬ 'ਤੇ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਲਈ ਸਮਾਂ ਕੱਢੋ। ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਲਾਭਾਂ ਲਈ ਅਰਜ਼ੀ ਦਿੰਦੇ ਹੋ ਅਤੇ ਉਹਨਾਂ ਨੂੰ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਕਰ ਲੈਂਦੇ ਹੋ ਤਾਂ ਇਹ ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਅਧਿਕਾਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਜ਼ਿੰਮੇਵਾਰੀਆਂ ਬਾਰੇ ਦੱਸਦਾ ਹੈ। ਸਪੈਨਿਸ਼ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੁਫਤ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਲਈ, 800-318-6022 'ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ। ਦੂਜੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਮੁਫਤ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਲਈ, 800-410-0758 'ਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰੋ। ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਸੁਣਨ ਜਾਂ ਬੋਲਣ ਤੋਂ ਅਪਾਹਜ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ Washington ਰੀਲੇਅ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ 711 ਨੂੰ ਡਾਇਲ ਕਰੋ।

Пожалуйста, найдите время, чтобы прочитать это руководство. В нем объясняются ваши права и обязанности, если вы подаете заявление на получение пособия и получаете его. Чтобы получить бесплатную помощь на испанском языке, позвоните по телефону 800-318-6022. Для получения бесплатной помощи на других языках звоните по телефону 800-410-0758. Если у вас проблемы со слухом или речью, наберите 711, чтобы связаться с ретрансляционной службой штата Washington.

Fa'amolemole faaalu se taimi e faitau ai lenei tusi taulima. O lo o fa'amatala mai ai au aia tatau ma matafaioi pe a e talosaga mo le mauaina o fa'amanuiaga. Mo se fesoasoani maua fua i le faa-Sipaniolo, valaau le 800-318-6022. Mo se fesoasoani maua fua i isi gagana, valaau le 800-410-0758. Afai e le atoatoa lau fa'alogo po o le tautala, vili le 711 mo le Taavale Washington.

Fadlan wakhti u samee akhrinta buugan. Waxa uu sharaxayaa xuquuqdaada iyo masuuliyadahaaga hadii aad dalbanayso oo aad qaadato gunooyinka. Wixii kaalmada bilaashka ah ee Isbaanishka ah, la hadal 800-318-6022. Wixii kaalmada ah bilaash ah ee luuqadaha kale ah, la hadal 800-410-0758. Hadii aad qabto laxaad la'aan maqalka ama hadalka ah, garaac 711 si aad ula xidhiidho Gudbinta Washington.

Por favor, tómese el tiempo para leer este manual. Este explica sus derechos y responsabilidades si solicita y recibe beneficios. Para recibir ayuda gratuita en español, llame al 800-318-6022. Para recibir ayuda gratuita en otros idiomas, llame al 800-410-0758. Si tiene una discapacidad auditiva o del habla, marque el 711 para comunicarse con el Servicio de Retransmisión de Washington.

በጃኹም ግዜ ወሲድኩም ነዚ መምርሒ መጽሓፍ ኣንብብዎ። እዚ ንመሰላትን ሓላፍነታትንኩም የረድእ፣ እንተደኣ ሓገዝ ሓቲትኩምን ተቐቢልኩምን ። ብቋንቋ ስፕሲሽ ብናጻ ሓገዝ እንተ ደሊኹም፣ ናብ 800-318-6022 ደውሉ። ብኻልጵ ቋንቋታት ብናጻ ሓገዝ እንተ ደሊኹም፣ ናብ 800-410-0758 ደውሉ። ናይ ምስማዕ ወይ ናይ ምዝራብ ጸገም ምስ ዝህልዎኩም፣ ናብ Washington ሪሌይ ንምብጻሕ ናብ 711 ደውሉ።

Mangyaring maglaan ng oras upang basahin ang handbook na ito. Ipinaliliwanag nito ang iyong mga karapatan at pananagutan kung mag-aaplay ka at makakatanggap ng mga benepisyo. Para sa libreng tulong sa wikang Spanish, tumawag sa 800-318-6022. Para sa libreng tulong sa ibang wika, tumawag sa 800-410-0758. Kung mayroon kang kapansanan sa pandinig o pagsasalita, i-dial ang 711 upang makontak ang Washington Relay

Будь ласка, знайдіть час, щоб прочитати цей посібник. У ньому пояснюються ваші права та обов'язки, якщо ви подаєте заяву на отримання виплат і отримуєте їх. Для отримання безкоштовної допомоги іспанською мовою зателефонуйте за номером 800-318-6022. Для отримання безкоштовної допомоги іншими мовами зателефонуйте за номером 800-410-0758. Якщо у вас є проблеми зі слухом або мовленням, наберіть 711, щоб подзвонити до ретрансляційної служби штату Washington.


Vui lòng dành thời gian đọc sổ tay này. Sổ tay này giải thích các quyền và trách nhiệm của quý vị nếu quý vị nộp đơn xin và nhận trợ cấp. Để được trợ giúp miễn phí bằng tiếng Tây Ban Nha, hãy gọi 800-318-6022. Để được trợ giúp miễn phí bằng các ngôn ngữ khác, hãy gọi 800-410-0758. Nếu quý vị bị khiếm thính hoặc khiếm ngôn, hãy gọi 711 để liên hệ với Dịch Vụ Chuyển Tiếp Viễn Thông Washington.


Important

The Employment Security Department is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. We provide free help in many languages. If you have a hearing or speech disability, dial 711 for the Washington Relay.

You can get a copy of this handbook at your local WorkSource center. Or you can request a copy by calling the Employment Security Department at [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022) (Washington Relay 711). To request the information in the handbook in another language, call [800-410-0758](tel:800-410-0758).

About this handbook

This handbook provides important information about unemployment [benefits](#) , including your rights and your responsibilities. Please make sure to read and understand this information to help you successfully apply for benefits.

Words that are underlined and followed by a book icon  are defined in the glossary. The glossary is in Appendix B, near the end of the handbook. You can find definitions for more terms on the Employment Security website at esd.wa.gov/about-us/definitions-terms.

If you still have questions or need help, please contact the Washington State Employment Security Department (ESD). You can reach us several ways.

Find more information



Find us online

Visit esd.wa.gov.



Call us

For current Claims Center hours, please check our website at esd.wa.gov/contact.

Call [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022) for English or Spanish.

If you have a hearing or speech disability, dial 711 for the Washington Relay.

Call [800-410-0758](tel:800-410-0758) for languages other than English and Spanish.



Visit a WorkSource center

For help with your job search, training opportunities, basic information about unemployment benefits and access to secure computers.

To find a center near you, visit Worksourcewa.com.

Accommodations

If you have a disability or circumstances that make it difficult to apply by phone or online, or if you need this handbook in an alternate format, contact us:

- Email ESDGPUIAccomms@esd.wa.gov.
- Call [844-395-6698](tel:844-395-6698) (Washington Relay 711).

Unemployment Insurance overview

About the program

Unemployment benefits provide temporary income when you lose your job, or have your hours reduced, through no fault of your own. These benefits can help support you while you look for work. Benefits are not based on your financial need.

Funding for the program

Our state unemployment insurance program is funded through taxes paid by employers. No money is deducted from your paycheck to pay for benefits.

For fastest service, go online

You can apply for benefits, file your weekly claim, check the status of your claim, request information and more through our safe and secure website. It's called eServices. Log into eServices at secure.esd.wa.gov 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

We are here to help you

Getting you benefits quickly and accurately is our top priority. We may need more information to process your application or weekly claims. Please respond quickly to any request for information.

You need to:

- Provide accurate information.
- Frequently check your mail, email and eServices notifications.
- Complete all requirements to stay eligible for benefits, as outlined in this handbook.
- Keep your contact information up to date.

Important

If you change your address, phone number or email, let us know as soon as possible. Otherwise, your benefits may be delayed or denied. The easiest way to **update your information** is online. Visit secure.esd.wa.gov to log into your eServices account.


Eligibility

Qualifying for unemployment benefits

The best way to find out if you are eligible for benefits is to apply. Our agency reviews each claim individually to determine if you qualify. We look at these 3 things:



How much did you work in the 18 months before applying for benefits?

- You need to have worked at least 680 hours in your [base year](#) .
- You need to have earned at least some of your wages in Washington state.

If you are not sure whether you have enough hours, apply so we can review for you.



Why are you no longer working for your past employer?

We will ask you why you are no longer employed or why your employer reduced your hours. This will help us to decide if you qualify for benefits.


People have many reasons to leave or quit a job. Depending on your reason, you might qualify for unemployment benefits.

Find out more about job separation and eligibility on our website. Go to esd.wa.gov/eligibility and scroll down to the “Reason you separated from your job” section.



Are you able and available to work?

To qualify for benefits you need to be:

- Actively looking for [suitable work](#) , unless we have told you otherwise.
- Mentally and physically able to work.
- Legally authorized to work in the United States.
- Available to accept new work. For example, you do not have personal responsibilities that would keep you from working.

Your base year

When you apply for benefits, we look at the number of hours you worked in your base year.

You need to have worked 680 hours in [covered employment](#) during your base year to be eligible for unemployment benefits.

Every calendar year is divided into 4 quarters.


Quarter 1	January 1 through March 31
Quarter 2	April 1 through June 30
Quarter 3	July 1 through September 30
Quarter 4	October 1 through December 31

Your [base year](#) is the first 4 of the last 5 completed quarters before the week that your claim starts.

For example, this table shows what your base year would be if you start your claim during a specific quarter.

If your claim starts between January and March 2025	Your base year would be October 2023 through September 2024
If your claim starts between April and June 2025	Your base year would be January through December 2024
If your claim starts between July and September 2025	Your base year would be April 2024 through March 2025
If your claim starts between October and December 2025	Your base year would be July 2024 through June 2025

Alternate base year (ABY)

If you did not work 680 hours during the regular base year, you may request to use an [alternate base year](#) . In Washington state, an **alternate base year is the last 4 completed quarters** before the week your claim starts.

For example, this table shows what your alternate base year would be if you start your claim during a specific quarter.

If your claim starts between January and March 2025	Your base year would be January through December 2024
If your claim starts between April and June 2025	Your base year would be April 2024 through March 2025
If your claim starts between July and September 2025	Your base year would be July 2024 through June 2025
If your claim starts between October and December 2025	Your base year would be October 2024 through September 2025

You can find additional details about your base year at esd.wa.gov/base-year.

Special circumstances

You should still apply if you are in one or both situations below:

- You have a medical condition that affects the kind of work you can do.
- Your work hours are limited because you are caring for someone.

We will review your situation to see if you qualify.

If one of these situations applies to you, you might qualify for Paid Family and Medical Leave (Paid Leave) instead. Learn more on paidleave.wa.gov.


You cannot collect both unemployment and Paid Leave benefits at the same time. If you receive benefits for both at the same time you may need to repay the unemployment benefits.

Apply for benefits

The first step in the process is to apply for benefits. Employment Security will review the details you provide in your application. We will determine whether you are eligible for benefits and how much you are eligible to receive.

Applying for benefits is always free. If anyone tries to charge you to apply, say no! It's a scam.

Your benefit year

Your [benefit year](#) , also called claim year, is the 52-week period when you may qualify to receive benefits on your claim. It usually begins the Sunday of the week you first apply for benefits.

You will usually get up to 26 weeks of regular benefits during your benefit year.

If you need to correct your application

If you apply online and want to make changes to your application, you need to do that before you submit it. To make changes after you submit your application, you need to call the Unemployment Claims Center at [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022). We need accurate information to determine your eligibility.

Important

To be eligible for weekly benefit payments, you need to also:

- Fulfill your weekly job search requirements, as directed.
- Submit your weekly claims.

Find more details in the “File weekly claims” section of this handbook.

Information you need to apply for benefits

Before you apply, have the following information ready:



Your personal information

- Full name, exactly as it appears on your Social Security card.
- Birthdate.
- Social Security number.
- Citizenship status. If you are not a U.S. citizen, you will need your most recent work authorization information. You need information from the front and back of your work authorization card.
 - Find information about documentation accepted at esd.wa.gov/citizenship.
- Your contact information.
 - Mailing address.
 - Phone number.
 - Email address.
- Your bank or credit union account and routing numbers, if you want to get your benefits by direct deposit. Direct deposit option is only available online.
 - Read more about how to sign up for direct deposit at esd.wa.gov/debit-card-info.
- Washington state driver’s license or ID. You do not need to have either. But if you do, provide the information.

Important

Provide your name exactly as it appears on your Social Security card.

For example, if your Social Security card shows Robert T Smith, use that name on your application. Do not use Robert Smith or Bob Smith.


If you got married or changed your legal name but have not updated it with the Social Security Administration, use the name on your identification document.



Your work history for the last 18 months

- The names and mailing addresses of all your employers from the past 18 months, including part-time and temporary jobs.
 - The dates you worked for each employer in the last 18 months. If you do not have exact dates, use your best guess.
 - If you are still working, use the most recent date you worked before you apply for benefits.
- **If you were in the military** in the last 18 months, you will need information from your DD-214.
- **If you were a federal employee** in the last 18 months, you will need
 - Your Standard Form 8 (SF8), "Notice to Federal Employees About Unemployment Insurance"
 - Standard Form 50 (SF50)
 - Leave and Earnings Statements
 - Your W-2 form
- **If you normally get your work through a full-referral union**, provide the name and local number of your union.

Reasons you are no longer employed

When you apply, we will ask you why you are no longer employed. It is important that you choose the correct reason for your job [separation](#) . Some common reasons include:

Reason	Your situation
Quit	You made the final decision to separate from (leave) your job.
Fired or discharged	There is work available, but your employer removed or dismissed you from your job for reasons other than lack of work.
Laid off or lack of work	Your employer had no work available for you, your job was eliminated or the business you were working for closed.
Strike	You are unemployed because you are a member of a union, and you are on strike.
Moved from full time to part time	Your hours were reduced to less than your normal full-time hours with your regular employer. In this case, you will have wages to report each week. But you may still qualify for benefits.
Leave of absence	You requested a leave of absence, and you will return to work when it ends.

Apply online

For the fastest service, we recommend applying online.

It's best to use a laptop or desktop computer. The online form does not work well on mobile devices.

Set up your online account

If you have not used Washington state online services before, you need to create a SecureAccess Washington (SAW) account.

Important: Do not create another account if you already have one. Having more than one SAW account can cause delays with your application and receiving benefits.

To create an account, go to secure.esd.wa.gov. Scroll to the "Need an account" section.

Once you set up your account, you can use it to securely manage your benefits application, weekly claims and more.

For more information on creating your SAW account, or if you have forgotten your username or password for an existing account, visit the technical support page on our website at esd.wa.gov/technical-support.

File your application

You can apply online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at secure.esd.wa.gov.

1. Sign in with your SAW account.
2. Follow the link to apply for unemployment benefits.
3. Follow the steps to complete your application.
4. If you provide an email address, you will get a confirmation email.

Find more details at esd.wa.gov/how-to-apply.

Apply by phone

If you prefer to apply by phone, call us at [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022). If you have a hearing or speech disability, dial 711 for the Washington Relay.

For current Claims Center hours, check our website at esd.wa.gov/contact.

Important

If you do not have a phone or computer, you can use one for free at any WorkSource center. To find the center closest to you, use the WorkSource locator at WorkSourceWA.com.

Options for getting paid

If you are eligible for benefits, you can get paid:



Through direct deposit

This option puts money directly into your checking account.

- You need your bank or credit union account and routing numbers to sign up. You can find these numbers on your paper checks or ask your financial institution.
- You need to sign up online using eServices to be paid through direct deposit. **We cannot do this for you by phone.**



On a debit card

This option gives you a debit card.

- We add your benefits to the card each week you submit a claim and are eligible.
- It works like other debit cards. You can make purchases, get cash and pay bills with it.
- This debit card is not connected to your bank account.

If you do not choose direct deposit, we will send you a debit card after you apply. We will not put money on the card until we approve your claim. For details, visit esd.wa.gov/debit-card-info.

After you apply for benefits

After we get your application, we will send you several messages. Check your U.S. mail regularly during this time. If you have an eServices account, also check it regularly. We will send you:

- Your Unemployment Claim Determination: This will give details about the weekly amount that you may be eligible to receive if we have no questions about your application. In eServices, this letter is called a “[monetary determination](#).”
- Your Benefit Rights and Responsibilities: This will include information about your application and what to do while waiting for it to be processed.
- What’s Next: This letter will explain what to do after submitting your application.

If we have questions about your application

Request for information: We may contact you or your employer for more information. We might:

- Send questions using eServices or U.S. mail.
- Call or email to request information.
- Contact your former or current employer(s).

It is important that you respond quickly because we need this information to determine your eligibility. If you do not reply to a request for information, you may not be eligible for benefits.

Determination letter: After you reply to our request for information and we have made a decision to allow or deny benefits, we send a determination letter.

Note: You or your employer have the right to appeal our decisions if you disagree. See the Appeals section in this handbook.

Search for a job and file weekly claims

Start your job search the same week you want to begin receiving benefits.

File your first weekly claim on the Sunday after you apply for benefits, even if you are still waiting to hear from us.

File each week to avoid delays in getting paid. Not filing while your application is being reviewed may lead to delays in getting approved.

You will get paid for weeks you submit a claim and are eligible, except for your waiting week. Read more about your waiting week in the “File a weekly claim” section of this handbook.

Important


Unless we tell you otherwise, you must complete required job search activities each week to be eligible for benefits. Read more in the “Job search” section of this handbook.

Reemployment services appointment

After applying for benefits, you might be selected to attend a reemployment services appointment. This is a meeting with one of our WorkSource staff members to help you with your return-to-work plan.

Not everyone is selected for this appointment. But if you are selected, you need to attend. If you do not attend, you may be denied benefits.

Standby

You may be eligible for unemployment benefits if your employer temporarily laid you off or reduced your hours. You may qualify for [standby](#) , or we may consider you partially employed. If so, you do not have to meet the job search requirements to get benefits each week.

Employment Security — not your employer — approves or denies all requests for standby. We send you a letter to let you know if the request is approved. The law allows a maximum of 8 standby weeks in a benefit year.

We approve standby applications if you are in one or more of these situations:

- You worked for your employer in the last 8 weeks. And you told us you will return to work within the next 4 weeks.
- You worked for your employer in the last 8 weeks. And your employer told us that you will return to work within the next 8 weeks. Employers need to request standby in this example.
- You expect to start working full time with any previous employer within the next 2 weeks, and more than 8 weeks have passed since you last worked for that employer.
- You expect to start working full time with a new employer within the next 2 weeks. A return-to-work date or the start date for your new employer must be provided and be within the requested standby timeframe.

Learn more at esd.wa.gov/temporary-layoffs-and-furloughs.

Amount of benefits

After you apply for benefits, you will get an Unemployment Claim Determination by U.S. mail. If you choose eServices as your preferred communication method, you will also find it in the Notices/letters section of your eServices account. It will be called a “monetary determination.” The letter explains:

- The amount of benefits you may be eligible to get if your claim is approved.
- How we calculated that amount.
- Information about how to file an appeal or request a redetermination if you disagree with our decision.

Read more on the ESD website about how we calculate your benefit amount. Go to esd.wa.gov/calculate-your-benefit. Then look for the link “Estimate your benefit.”

Deductions

We sometimes need to reduce your weekly benefits. Here are some of the reasons.


Money earned

If you are working part time, you may still be eligible for benefits. Be sure to report earnings from part-time work in your weekly claim. We may adjust your weekly benefit amount by deducting part of your earnings. By reporting all your earnings, you avoid having to pay back benefits later.

You must report earnings each week you work, even if you have not been paid yet. See the “Report earnings” section in this handbook for more information.

Money owed

Some or all benefits may be reduced if you:

- Owe court-ordered child support.
- Owe any money that was withheld from your benefits for income tax and sent to the Internal Revenue Service.
- Previously received unemployment benefits that you were not entitled to, and did not repay the [overpayment](#) . This includes any amount withheld for taxes.

Taxes

Your benefits are taxable by the federal government. Washington state does not have state income tax. If you live in another state, you may be liable for that state’s income tax.

You can choose to have 10% of your payment withheld from your weekly benefits for income tax purposes. If you elect not to have taxes withheld, you will be responsible for the full taxable amount at the end of the year. We cannot refund any tax withheld.

If you have an eServices account, you can update your tax withholding choice at any time. Sign into your account and choose the “Change federal withholding preference” option.

If you have questions about taxes on benefits, contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) at the [irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov) website or talk with your tax professional.

By the end of January each year, Employment Security will provide you with IRS form 1099-G. This shows the amount of benefits you were paid and any income tax withheld. If you do not receive your 1099-G form, you can request one by:


- Signing in to eServices and choosing the 1099 forms tab.
- Emailing UI1099@esd.wa.gov.
- Calling the Unemployment Claims Center at [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022).
 - If you have a hearing or speech disability, dial 711 for the Washington Relay.

Visit esd.wa.gov/income-taxes to learn more about paying income taxes on benefits.

Retirement income

If you get paid from a retirement plan that your employer or union contributed to, part of that payment may reduce your benefits.

You must tell us if you receive, or apply to receive, monthly payments from your retirement plan. If you are not getting paid from the plan, then it will not affect your benefit amount.

Social Security payments or survivor benefits, including Social Security disability payments, do not need to be reported and will not affect your [weekly benefit amount \(WBA\)](#) .

Separation payments

A severance package or these payments from your employer may affect the amount of your unemployment benefits:

- Pay in lieu of notice
If your job is terminated without notice, your employer may pay you the money you would have earned during the notice period.
- Termination pay
If you receive payment for a period after your last day of work, and your employer requires you to be on call for that period and if payment would stop if you got a new job.
- Severance pay
This is payment you may receive as part of your job separation, that is connected to work done before the separation.

You need to report any separation payments when you file your weekly claim. We may contact you for more information to determine if your separation payment is deductible from your weekly benefits.

File your weekly claim

Every week that you claim benefits, you must be able and available for work and complete the following 3 tasks to remain eligible:

- Search for a job unless we tell you otherwise.
- File a weekly claim.
- Report earnings. Report any money you earned in the week you are filing for, even if you have not been paid yet.

If you fail to complete any of these tasks, you may not be eligible for benefits for that week.

Search for a job

Unless we tell you otherwise, you are required to actively search for suitable work every week you want to receive benefits. You need to complete at least 3 approved job search activities. Here are examples of what qualifies and what does not.

Qualifying Work Search Activities	Invalid Work Search Activities
Apply for a job that fits your skills and qualifications.	Applying for a job that you are not qualified for.
Interview for a job.	Viewing job leads without applying.
Report to a union hiring hall or be on the out of work list for full-referral union, if you are a registered member of that union.	Not applying for a job in the manner directed by an employer (e.g., failing to submit an online application when an employer tells you to apply online).
Participate in reemployment services at your local WorkSource center.	

To find all approved job search activities, visit esd.wa.gov/eligibility, then select “Job search requirements.”

Keep a job search log

You need to document all job search activities. We may ask you to provide your job search log. See Appendix C for a sample job search log.

Keep your job search log for at least 30 days after the end of your [benefit year](#)  or when you receive your last payment on a [benefit extension](#) , whichever is later.

File a weekly claim

To get your weekly benefits, you need to file a weekly claim. When you file your claim, we will ask you a series of questions. These questions help us determine if you are eligible to get benefits for that week. For example, we will ask if you:

- Were able and available to accept work.
- Completed approved job search activities.
- Refused any jobs or offers of work.
- Worked any hours, and if so, how much money you earned.
- Received any holiday, vacation or sick pay for any time during that week, and if so, how much money you will be paid.

Reasons benefits could be denied

We may deny your benefits if you report untrue or inaccurate information (either intentionally or unintentionally) such as employment history, reasons you were separated from work, earnings (for covered or non-covered work), job search activities or not being able or available to work.

When to file your weekly claim

Claim weeks begin on Sunday and end on Saturday. The Sunday after you first apply for benefits is the first day that you can file a weekly claim.

Always file your claim for the week that just ended. Times you can file are:

- Online: Sunday, 12:01 a.m. – Saturday, 11:59 p.m.
- By phone: Sunday, 12:01 a.m. – Friday, 4 p.m.

Example:

Week 1

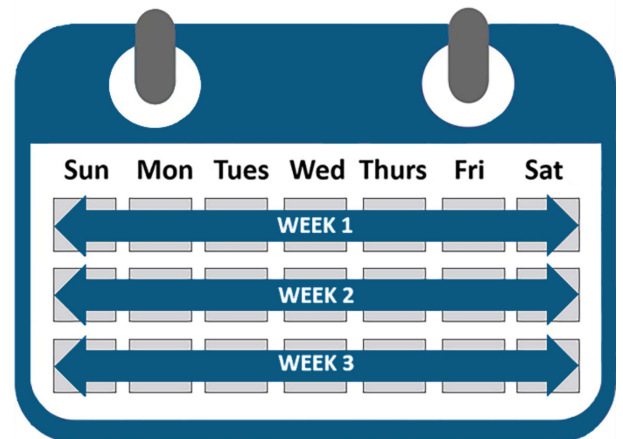
- Complete job search requirements.

Week 2

- File your weekly claim for week 1.
- Complete job search requirements for week 2.

Week 3

- File your weekly claim for week 2.
- Complete job search requirements for week 3.



Continue to file your weekly claims

You should file a claim each week that you want to receive benefits, even if:

- You are waiting to find out if you qualify for benefits.
- You worked part time during your claim week.
- You were denied benefits and have filed an appeal.

If you do not file a weekly claim, you cannot receive benefits for that week.

Waiting week

The first week you are eligible for benefits is your waiting week. You will not be paid for this week. You must still meet all eligibility requirements during this week and file a weekly claim.

Note: There is only one waiting week during a [benefit year](#). If you stop filing weekly and then restart your claim in the same benefit year, you will not have another waiting week.

Example

Week 1 (Waiting week)

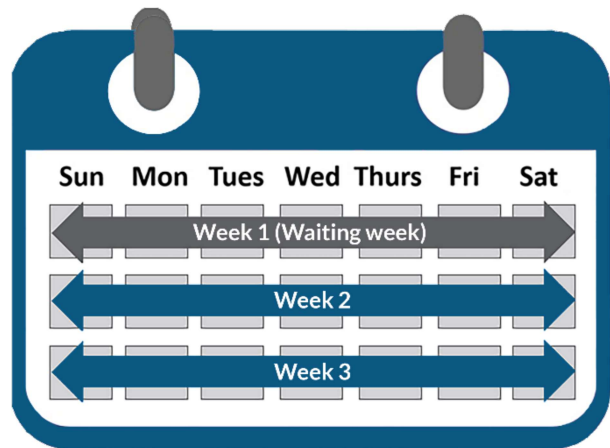
- John lost his job and applied for benefits.
- He starts his job search activities.
- This is his waiting week.

Week 2

- John files his weekly claim for week 1. Since week 1 is John's waiting week, he will not receive payment.

Week 3

- John files his weekly claim for week 2.
- If he has met all eligibility requirements for week 2, John will receive his first payment.



Ways to file your weekly claim



Online

For fastest service, use your SAW account to log into secure.esd.wa.gov.

This option is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week.

If you have problems logging in, call [855-682-0785](tel:855-682-0785) for help.



By phone

Call [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022) to file a claim.

- Use the automated phone system. Available from 12:01 a.m. Sunday through 4 p.m. Friday.
- Speak with a claims agent. For current Claims Center hours, please check our website at esd.wa.gov/contact.

Report earnings

We adjust your weekly benefit amount by deducting part of your earnings. By reporting all of your earnings, you will avoid having to pay back benefits later. Sometimes your unemployment benefits are reduced or denied because of the earnings you reported on your weekly claim. This can happen if:

- You worked and earned money during the week, and
- Your earnings were too high to receive full or partial benefits.

In these cases, you won't get a separate written decision in the mail. This is allowed under state law (WAC 192-140-200). Even though we don't send a formal letter, it's still considered a denial or reduction of your benefits for that week.

If you believe your claim was denied or reduced incorrectly, call the claims center at [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022).

You can find the latest earnings deduction chart at: esd.wa.gov/media/pdf/1046/esd-earnings-deduction-chart.pdf.

Use your gross earnings (before deductions) when providing this information.



When to report earnings

Report earnings each week when filing your claim for the previous week, even if you have not been paid yet.



What earnings to report

- Earnings from regular employment.
- Net income from your own business (self-employed).
- In-kind payments. Example: if your employer provides room and board as part of your payment.
- Bonuses for that week's work.
- Any earnings from commission-based work.
- Tips in any form.
- Paid vacation, holiday or sick leave, unless it is a cash-out of unused leave.
- Military Reserve/National Guard pay, if you worked more than 72 consecutive hours.
- Pay for jury duty or earnings from state work-study.
- Any earnings from casual labor or day labor.



How to calculate gross earnings

- Number of hours worked during week x rate of pay = gross earnings.
- For example, if you worked 30 hours in a week and are paid \$20 per hour, you would report \$600 in gross earnings for the week (30 hours x \$20 per hour).

Important

If you are working while claiming benefits, you still need to complete 3 approved job search activities for every week you file a claim.

Getting you back to work

WorkSource offers free programs and services — including job leads and career resources — to help you find a job faster.

Job search requirements

If you live in Washington, you need to set up an account in the WorkSourceWA.com system. To get support in doing this, visit the [WorkSourceWA.com](https://www.worksourcewa.com) website to find your nearest WorkSource center. If you live outside of Washington, you need to be signed up with your local employment center.

Reemployment services

WorkSource centers

Along with job search help, WorkSource can help you with resume writing, interviewing skills, labor market information and more.

WorkSource can also help connect you with workshops and hiring events in your area, provide links to job boards and access to statewide training resources.

Your local WorkSource center may also provide training programs. Ask at your local center.

Visit [WorkSourceWA.com](https://www.worksourcewa.com) to get details on services at each location.

More services for you

Training programs

You can enroll in a training or education program and continue to receive unemployment benefits, as long as you remain eligible for benefits each week. Training programs to consider include:

- Commissioner Approved Training (CAT): Removes the job search requirements while in an approved training or education program.
- Training Benefits (TB): Gives you additional weeks of unemployment benefits while in acceptable training or education program.
- Self-Employment Assistance Program (SEAP): Offers self-employment training and business counseling while you receive unemployment benefits.

Each of these programs requires prior approval from Employment Security and some have deadlines. For example, you have 90 days after applying for benefits to apply for Training Benefits and 120 days to enroll in an eligible training program.

We recommend you work with your education provider or WorkSource to help you complete the application for these programs.

Visit esd.wa.gov/jobs-and-training/job-training-support to learn more about available programs and if you qualify.

Registered apprenticeships

If you are in a registered apprenticeship program, benefits may be available while you are receiving classroom training and not earning wages from an employer.

Learn more at: esd.wa.gov/apprentice.

Help for veterans

We have employment programs specifically designed for veterans or the spouse of a veteran. If you are a veteran or their spouse, you can get started at esd.wa.gov/jobs-and-training/find-job, then choose “Services for veterans and military spouses.”

Migrant seasonal farmworkers


Visit esd.wa.gov/jobs-and-training/farmworker-services to find services for farmworkers.

Free or low-cost health coverage


As an unemployed worker, you and your family may qualify for free or low-cost health coverage. To see if you are eligible or how to apply, visit wahealthplanfinder.org.

When you find a new job

Full-time work

When you return to [full-time work](#) , you do not need to tell us you have a new job. Simply stop submitting your weekly claims when you start your new job, even if you will not be paid for a week or more. If you claim benefits after you start a job, you must report your earnings even if you have not been paid yet.

Standby

If you have a new full-time job with a new employer and your expected start date is within 2 weeks, you can request to be put on [standby](#) . If we approve standby, you may receive payment without having to complete your job search activities. You can request standby through eServices or by calling and talking to a claims agent.

If we deny your request to be put on standby, it will not stop your benefits. Standby only waives the job search requirements to remain eligible for benefits.

You should continue job search activities until you receive a letter approving standby.

To find more details, go to esd.wa.gov/temporary-layoffs-and-furloughs.

Part-time work

If you find part-time work, you may still be eligible for partial benefit payments. Be sure to report any earnings from part-time work. See the “Reporting earnings” section in this handbook for more information.

Restarting your claim

This is also called “reopening your claim.” If you become unemployed again or have your hours reduced, you can restart your claim if you:

- Did not use all your benefits for your current benefit year.
- Have not filed a claim for 5 or more weeks in a row.

When to restart your claim

You should restart as soon as you are no longer working, have had your hours reduced, or want to begin receiving benefits again.

If you have missed less than 5 weeks in a row you do not need to restart your claim. In this case you will be able to start filing your weekly claims right away.

How to restart your claim

You can restart your claim in any of the following ways:

Online

1. Go to secure.esd.wa.gov and log in with your SAW account.
2. Select “Apply for unemployment benefits or manage your current and past claims.”
3. Select “Manage my active claim.”
4. Select “Restart my claim” to begin filing again.

If you are planning to file for more than the current week, it is important to file in order. Start with the oldest week.

By automated phone system

1. Call the automated phone system at [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022) from 12 a.m. Sunday to 4 p.m. Friday, unless Friday is a holiday.
2. Choose the option to “reopen” your claim. Reopen means the same as restart.

If you have a hearing or speech disability, dial 711 for the Washington Relay.

Talk to a claims agent

Use this option if you want to:

- File a claim for some, but not every, missed week.
- File claims for past weeks that you cannot access in eServices or through the automated phone system.

Call [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022). For current Claims Center hours, please check our website at esd.wa.gov/contact.

If you have a hearing or speech disability, dial 711 for the Washington Relay.

Important

If you want to claim for past weeks that you missed, you cannot use the automated phone service. You need to talk to a claims agent directly or use your eServices account.


If you do not see the weeks you want to claim for in your eServices account, you should call an agent directly.

After you restart your claim

After you restart your claim, you must also file your weekly claims and meet all eligibility requirements for each week you want to receive benefits.

Visit esd.wa.gov/restart-your-claim to learn more.

Appeal rights

If you or your employer disagrees with a decision, you each have the right to [appeal](#) . Appeals must be submitted within 30 days from the date the determination letter was mailed.

If you do not file on time, you will be asked to explain why you were late, and it could impact the outcome of your appeal.

Visit esd.wa.gov/appeal-info to read details about appealing a decision.

How to submit an appeal



Online

Go to secure.esd.wa.gov and sign in with your SAW account.

1. Choose your “Active UI Claim” or “Expired UI Claim” on the home screen.
2. Choose the “Decision Status” tab to find the decision you want to appeal.
3. In the “Action” column, you can choose “File an appeal.”
4. Follow instructions to file your appeal.

You can only file an appeal online prior to the deadline in the determination letter. After that deadline, you need to file an appeal by mail or fax.



By mail

Mail appeal to:
Claims Center Appeals
P.O. Box 19018
Olympia, WA 98507-0018



By fax

Fax your appeal to [800-301-1795](tel:800-301-1795).
You can get free access to a computer or fax at your local WorkSource center. Visit WorkSourceWA.com, and use the WorkSource locator.

Information you need for your appeal

If you complete your appeal online through your eServices account, the system will prompt you to submit all required information.

If you submit your appeal by mail or fax, you must include the following information:

- Your name.
- Your Social Security number or Claim ID.
- Which decision you are appealing.
- The Letter ID that is on the decision letter you received.
- The date on the decision letter that you are appealing.
- Why you disagree with the decision.
- Copies of records or documents you think we should consider for your appeal.
- Names of witnesses you would like to have present for your hearing.
- If you need an interpreter, let us know which language you use. This includes American Sign Language.
- If your appeal is late, explain why it is late.
- Your signature.


Prepare your appeal documents

Before including documents with your appeal:

- Remove any personal information that is not relevant to your appeal, including:
 - Bank account and medical record numbers.
 - Addresses, birthdates and Social Security numbers of other people.
- Make sure your documents are not password-protected or otherwise inaccessible.
- If sending by mail or fax, include your full name and Claim ID or Social Security number on each page.

After you file an appeal

We will review your appeal once we receive it. If we need more information, we will contact you. Sometimes new information you provide can change the decision. If this happens, we will inform you in writing.

If we cannot resolve your appeal, we will send it to the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH). OAH will mail you a Notice of Hearing to the address you have on file with us. The notice will explain next steps for the [appeal hearing](#) . If your address changes, make sure to update both OAH and Employment Security.

You need to take part in your hearing to protect your benefit rights. An impartial hearing officer is responsible for the appeal hearing.

You can find additional details at oah.wa.gov.

After the hearing

The hearing officer will issue a written decision called an Initial Order. If you disagree with the initial order decision, you can appeal it. You will see instructions for appealing in the Initial Order.

Employment Security will also receive a copy of the Initial Order and update your claim with the decision.

Getting legal help

You can hire a lawyer to help with your appeal if needed. If you cannot afford a lawyer, you may be able to get free or low-cost legal help. Resources include:

- Office of Civil Legal Aid online at ocla.wa.gov.
- UnemploymentLawProject.org or call [888-441-9178](tel:888-441-9178).
- CLEAR (part of the Northwest Justice Project) - nwjustice.org/get-legal-help or call [888-201-1014](tel:888-201-1014).
- Your local county bar association may be able to help.

Stay eligible during your appeal

To stay eligible for benefits during your appeal, make sure you:

- File your weekly claims.
- Continue your job search activities.
- Report any earnings you receive.
- Are able and available to work.

If the appeal is decided in your favor, we will pay benefits for the weeks you met eligibility requirements and filed a weekly claim.

For more information about appeals, visit esd.wa.gov/appeal-info.

Benefits fraud

Fraud is a serious crime. Detecting and preventing unemployment benefits fraud is a priority. We review claims regularly to ensure benefits are paid according to state and federal law.

Examples of benefits fraud

- Not reporting money you earned while receiving benefits.
- Not being truthful about why you are no longer working for a previous employer.
- Saying you are able and available when you are sick, traveling or otherwise unable or unavailable to work.
- Reporting that you looked for work when you did not complete approved job search activities.
- Stealing another person's identity to file for unemployment benefits in their name.

How to avoid committing benefits fraud

The most important thing is to be honest. If you knowingly try to get benefits by making a statement or giving us information that is false, you are committing fraud.


If you are unsure about what information to report or if you do not know what you are supposed to do, call [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022) for clarification. We are here to help.

Penalties for benefits fraud

Penalties for benefits fraud can include:

- Repayment of all benefits that you were not eligible to receive.
- A penalty of between 15% and 50% on top of the benefits you should not have received.
- Disqualification from receiving future benefits for 26 weeks and up to 104 weeks.
- Being convicted of a crime in state and/or federal court.

What we do to stop benefits fraud

Some of the ways we identify fraud include:	Report suspected fraud
Reviewing claims.	Online at esd.wa.gov/fraud .
Comparing earnings reported by workers and their employers.	Through our toll-free Fraud Hotline at 800-246-9763 .
Checking state and national databases of recently hired individuals to make sure people are not collecting benefits after they start working.	Tips about possible fraud are pursued by our team of investigators.
Verifying job search contacts.	
Reviewing union attached  status.	

Appendix

Appendix A – Legal disclosures

The Employment Security Department receives federal funding. In the following statement, please note that the word “recipient” applies to Employment Security.

Equal opportunity is the law

It is against the law for this recipient of federal financial assistance to discriminate on the following bases:

- Against any individual in the United States, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions, sex stereotyping, transgender status, and gender identity), national origin (including limited English proficiency), age, disability, or political affiliation or belief, or;
- Against any beneficiary of, applicant to, or participant in programs financially assisted under Title I of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, on the basis of the individual’s citizenship status or participation in any WIOA Title-I financially assisted program or activity.

The recipient must not discriminate in any of the following areas:

- Deciding who will be admitted, or have access to, any WIOA Title I-financially assisted program or activity;
- Providing opportunities in, or treating any person with regard to, such a program or activity; or
- Making employment decisions in the administration of, or in connection with, such a program or activity.

Recipients of federal financial assistance must take reasonable steps to ensure that communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as communications with others. This means that, upon request and at no cost to the individual, recipients are required to provide appropriate auxiliary aids and services to qualified individuals with disabilities.

What to do if you believe you have experienced discrimination

If you think that you have been subjected to discrimination under a WIOA Title I–financially assisted program or activity, you may file a complaint within 180 days from the date of the alleged violation.



To file a complaint by phone

Call Employment Security’s Equal Opportunity Office at [855-836-5598](tel:855-836-5598). If you have a hearing or speech impairment, dial 711 to reach the Washington Relay.



To file a complaint by email

Email Employment Security’s Equal Opportunity Office at esdgpeo@esd.wa.gov.



To file a complaint by mail

Employment Security Department
Equal Opportunity Office
PO Box 9046
Olympia, WA 98507

Or send to:

The Director - Civil Rights Center (CRC)
U.S. Department of Labor
200 Constitution Avenue, NW., Room, N-4123
Washington, DC 20210



To file a complaint online

Follow directions on the Department of Labor Civil Rights Center website. Go to dol.gov/crc.

If you file your complaint with the recipient, you must wait until the recipient issues a written Notice of Final Action, or until 90 days pass (whichever is sooner), before filing with the Civil Rights Center (see address above).

If the recipient does not give you a written Notice of Final Action within 90 days of the day on which you filed your complaint, you may file a complaint with CRC before receiving that Notice. However, you must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the 90-day deadline (in other words, within 120 days after the day on which you filed your complaint with the recipient).

If the recipient does give you a written Notice of Final Action on your complaint, but you are dissatisfied with the decision or resolution, you may file a complaint with CRC. You must file your CRC complaint within 30 days of the date on which you received the Notice of Final Action.

Accommodations for individuals with disabilities

We will make accommodations to allow your participation in all Employment Security programs, activities and services. To request an accommodation for a disability, please call [844-395-6698](tel:844-395-6698) or email ESDGPUIAccomms@esd.wa.gov.

Your privacy matters to us

We follow all state and federal laws that protect your private information. To help connect you with programs designed to get you back to work, we share some of your information with our partners, such as WorkSource, and they are not allowed to share it with anyone else. We may provide:

- Contact information.
- Employment and job search history.
- Demographics, such as age or gender.

Your previous employers and other state or local government agencies may release to our agency any information, including your Social Security number, required for the proper administration of your claim. We also use your Social Security number to report the amount of benefits you receive to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as taxable income.

Appendix B – Glossary

This section defines commonly used terms and acronyms. You can find more definitions of terms at esd.wa.gov/about-us/definitions-terms.

Alternate base year (ABY) - In Washington state, a claimant's alternate base year is the last 4 calendar quarters completed at the time you apply for benefits. If you did not work 680 hours in your regular base year, you may be able to file a claim using your alternate base year.

Appeal - If claimants or employers disagree with our decision about an unemployment claim, they can ask for an appeal. An appeal is a request for a hearing about our decision.

Appeal hearing - A meeting to consider a benefit appeal. Each party (you and the employer, in most cases) can tell an impartial hearing officer what they believe the relevant facts are related to the issue on appeal. You may have witnesses testify. You may ask questions of the other party. All testimony is given under oath.

Base year - In Washington state, a claimant's base year is the first 4 of the last 5 calendar quarters completed at the time you apply for benefits. You must have worked 680 hours in covered employment during your regular base year to qualify for unemployment benefits.

Benefit extension - Benefit extensions, when available, let you get additional benefits after you are no longer eligible to receive regular unemployment benefits.

Benefit week - Begins on Sunday and ends at midnight the following Saturday.

Benefit year - The 52-week period when you can receive unemployment benefits on a claim. A benefit year begins on the Sunday of the week a claimant applies for benefits.

Benefits - The money given to eligible individuals.

Claim - An application for unemployment benefits.

Claim effective date - The Sunday of the week in which your initial claim for benefits started.

Claim end date - Also referred to as a benefit year end (BYE), this is the last Saturday of a benefit year. This falls on a Saturday, 52 weeks after the claim effective date.

Covered employment - A job covered by unemployment insurance. A job is covered if the employer is required by law to report their employees' wages and hours to Employment Security, another state or to the federal government.

Fraud - Giving false information, misrepresenting or knowingly withholding information.

Full-time work - Working 40 or more hours per week.

Gross earnings – The amount of money you get for work before taxes and deductions.

Maximum benefit amount (MBA) – The maximum amount of benefits you may receive during a benefit year. In Washington, your MBA is 26 times your weekly benefit amount or 1/3 of your base-year wages, whichever is less.

Monetary determination – A letter mailed to you after you file a claim for benefits. It explains if you are eligible, how much your payment will be each week, the maximum benefit amount (MBA), and other details for your claim year. This includes all employers you worked for during the base year and the wages each employer reported. Be sure to check it for accuracy and contact the Claims Center at [800-318-6022](tel:800-318-6022) to correct any errors.

Net earnings – Your take-home pay, after taxes and deductions.

Overpayment – Benefits we paid you before we found you were not eligible to receive them.

Partial benefits – If you are working and filing weekly claims, you may qualify for partial payment. You must report your gross earnings for the week you're claiming, even if you have not been paid yet.

Separation – When you or your employer end the working relationship. This can be due to a quit, discharge (fired), leave of absence, suspension or layoff (lack of work).

Standby - During a temporary layoff, when an employer plans to rehire one or more laid-off employees within a certain time, Employment Security may approve a request to place the workers on standby. Approved workers do not need to look for work while they are collecting unemployment benefits during the approved standby period.


Suitable work – A job that aligns with your skills, experience, or training and meets typical pay and conditions in your area. If you have a disability, including temporary health restrictions, the work must also be safe for you to perform.

Union attached – An active full referral union member who gets work through a union hiring hall. If you are on the out-of-work list, as verified by your union, you may be eligible for benefits by remaining available for work through your union.

Weekly benefit amount (WBA) – Amount you are eligible to receive before any deductions.

Appendix C – Weekly job search log

Track your job search activities with a weekly job search log. Include the details of each activity (what, when, where and with whom). If possible, save proof, such as a screenshot or email confirmation. Download a log at esd.wa.gov/job-search-log or copy the one in this handbook.

Keep your job search log for at least 30 days after the end of your [benefit year](#)  or when you receive your last payment on a [benefit extension](#) , whichever is **later**.

Job-search log for week ending (Month/Day/Year)

MM/DD/YYYY

Name (Last, First, Middle): _____ ID or SSN: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Please use dark ink only. Do not send your logs to us unless we ask for them. You must complete a log for each week you claim unemployment benefits. You must have a combined total of three Employer contacts, approved WorkSource activities or Other approved activities each week. **Keep your job-search log for at least 30 days after either the end of your benefit year¹ or when you receive your last payment on a benefit extension², whichever is later.** We may verify your Employer contacts, approved WorkSource activities or Other approved activities conducted. Providing false information is fraud that can result in a denial of your unemployment benefits and additional penalties. You can get more logs at your local WorkSource office or online at esd.wa.gov/job-search-log. Refer to your Handbook for Unemployed Workers for further instructions on completing this log.

EMPLOYER CONTACTS AND JOB SEARCH ACTIVITIES

Keep this log for your records.

CONTACT 1

CONTACT 2

CONTACT 3

What kind of activity did you do? Choose one:
 Employer contact WorkSource activity Other activity

What kind of activity did you do? Choose one:
 Employer contact WorkSource activity Other activity

What kind of activity did you do? Choose one:
 Employer contact WorkSource activity Other activity

If this was an **employer contact**, please provide the following:
 Job title or job reference number: _____

If this was an **employer contact**, please provide the following:
 Job title or job reference number: _____

If this was an **employer contact**, please provide the following:
 Job title or job reference number: _____

Employer or business name: _____
 How did you make the contact?
 In-person Online By phone By Email By mail
 Other: _____
 Type of contact (Choose one)
 Application/resume Interview Inquiry

Employer or business name: _____
 How did you make the contact?
 In-person Online By phone By Email By mail
 Other: _____
 Type of contact (Choose one)
 Application/resume Interview Inquiry

Employer or business name: _____
 How did you make the contact?
 In-person Online By phone By Email By mail
 Other: _____
 Type of contact (Choose one)
 Application/resume Interview Inquiry

Employer or business contact information:
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____
 Website or email address: _____
 Phone number: _____

Employer or business contact information:
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____
 Website or email address: _____
 Phone number: _____

Employer or business contact information:
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____
 Website or email address: _____
 Phone number: _____

If this was an approved **WorkSource activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete:

 What documentation do you have:

If this was an approved **WorkSource activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete:

 What documentation do you have:

If this was an approved **WorkSource activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete:

 What documentation do you have:

Where did you complete this activity?
 Office name: _____
 City: _____ State: _____

Where did you complete this activity?
 Office name: _____
 City: _____ State: _____

Where did you complete this activity?
 Office name: _____
 City: _____ State: _____

If this was an approved **other activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete:

 What documentation do you have:

If this was an approved **other activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete:

 What documentation do you have:

If this was an approved **other activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete:

 What documentation do you have:

The Employment Security Department is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Language assistance services for limited English proficient individuals are available upon request. Washington Relay Service: 711
 EMS 10313 CC 7540-032-823 Rev 111622
 1. Your benefit year is the 52-week period when you can receive unemployment benefits on your claim. It usually begins the Sunday of the week you first apply for benefits.
 2. Benefit extensions, when available, let you get additional benefits after you are no longer eligible to receive regular unemployment benefits.

ID or SSN: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Please use dark ink only. Do not send your logs to us unless we ask for them. You must complete a log for each week you claim unemployment benefits. You must have a combined total of three Employer contacts, approved WorkSource activities or Other approved activities each week. **Keep your job-search log for at least 30 days after either the end of your benefit year¹ or when you receive your last payment on a benefit extension², whichever is later.** We may verify your Employer contacts, approved WorkSource activities or Other approved activities conducted. Providing false information is fraud that can result in a denial of your unemployment benefits and additional penalties.

You can get more logs at your local WorkSource office or online at gsd.wa.gov/job-search-log. Refer to your Handbook for Unemployed Workers for further instructions on completing this log.

EMPLOYER CONTACTS AND JOB SEARCH ACTIVITIES

Keep this log for your records.

CONTACT 1 Contact Date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

What kind of activity did you do? Choose one:
 Employer contact WorkSource activity Other activity

If this was an **employer contact**, please provide the following:
 Job title or job reference number: _____

Employer or business name: _____

How did you make the contact?
 In-person Online By phone By Email By mail
 Other: _____

Type of contact (Choose one)
 Application/resume Interview Inquiry

Employer or business contact information:
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____
 Website or email address: _____
 Phone number: _____

If this was an approved **WorkSource activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete: _____

What documentation do you have: _____

Where did you complete this activity?
 Office name: _____
 City: _____ State: _____

If this was an approved **other activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete: _____

What documentation do you have: _____

CONTACT 2 Contact Date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

What kind of activity did you do? Choose one:
 Employer contact WorkSource activity Other activity

If this was an **employer contact**, please provide the following:
 Job title or job reference number: _____

Employer or business name: _____

How did you make the contact?
 In-person Online By phone By Email By mail
 Other: _____

Type of contact (Choose one)
 Application/resume Interview Inquiry

Employer or business contact information:
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____
 Website or email address: _____
 Phone number: _____

If this was an approved **WorkSource activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete: _____

What documentation do you have: _____

Where did you complete this activity?
 Office name: _____
 City: _____ State: _____

If this was an approved **other activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete: _____

What documentation do you have: _____

CONTACT 3 Contact Date (MM/DD/YYYY): _____

What kind of activity did you do? Choose one:
 Employer contact WorkSource activity Other activity

If this was an **employer contact**, please provide the following:
 Job title or job reference number: _____

Employer or business name: _____

How did you make the contact?
 In-person Online By phone By Email By mail
 Other: _____

Type of contact (Choose one)
 Application/resume Interview Inquiry

Employer or business contact information:
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____
 Website or email address: _____
 Phone number: _____

If this was an approved **WorkSource activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete: _____

What documentation do you have: _____

Where did you complete this activity?
 Office name: _____
 City: _____ State: _____

If this was an approved **other activity**, please provide the following information:
 What activity did you complete: _____

What documentation do you have: _____

The Employment Security Department is an equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Language assistance services for limited English proficient individuals are available free of charge. Washington Relay Service: 711

1. Your benefit year is the 52-week period when you can receive unemployment benefits on your claim. It usually begins the Sunday of the week you first apply for benefits.

2. Benefit extensions, when available, let you get additional benefits until you are no longer eligible to receive regular unemployment benefits.



Employment Security Department
WASHINGTON STATE

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