

Unemployment Workshop Highlights

To the best of our abilities, we believe this information to be accurate and current. The Covid-19 pandemic, however, has caused there to be frequent changes to policies and procedures for unemployment insurance benefits that we may not be aware of.

Eligibility Criteria

1. You must have a minimum **680 hours** required in the **base year** (the time frame your claim's maximum benefits amount will be based on).
2. You must be laid off, have quit with good cause, be terminated due to no fault of your own, or still be working less than full-time. Adjunct faculty are considered to be "**laid-off**" when an assignment (contract) ends. We are **NOT on a "standby-status"** industry. Also, you must also have "**no reasonable assurance**" of future continued/renewed employment.
3. You must be mentally, physically, and available to work without restrictions that would prevent you from accepting work such as transportation issues, illness, vacations, or lack of family/child care.
4. You must be legally **authorized to work in the United States** during your base year and the weeks you are claiming benefits.

Reasonable Assurance

Your college employment terminates on **the last day of the quarter** (last day of finals) as identified on your PAF (Personnel Assignment Form)/assignment letter. Your unemployment eligibility begins the following day **if you have no reasonable assurance** of continued employment for the next quarter.

RCW states that there is no “reasonable assurance,” the expectation that you will have continued employment, when... you have **no contract or guarantee** that your future employment is NOT dependent on program needs such as staffing, enrollment, and funding.

Washington State Law on Reasonable Assurance

RCW [50.44.053](#)

(3) If no contract exists, the department must determine if the claimant has "reasonable assurance." The following factors will be considered in determining if an individual has "reasonable assurance," as that term is used in this section, RCW [50.44.050](#), and [50.44.055](#). For reasonable assurance to exist, each factor must be satisfied.

- **(a) If any contingencies in the employment offer are within the employer's control the claimant will not be considered to have reasonable assurance of employment. Contingencies within the employer's control include, but are not limited to:**
 - **(i) Course programming;**
 - **(ii) Funding allocation decisions;**
 - **(iii) Final course offerings; and**
 - **(iv) Facility availability.**
- **(b) If contingencies are not within the employer's control, the department must determine whether it is highly probable the contingencies contained within the offer will be satisfied. Primary weight will be given to the contingent nature of an offer of employment.**
- (c) Reasonable assurance must be determined on a case-by-case basis considering the totality of circumstances rather than on the existence of any one factor. For an individual to have reasonable assurance of employment, the totality of the circumstances must show that it is highly probable that employment will be available in the next academic year or term, and that the contingencies of that employment will be satisfied.
- (4) An individual who is tenured or holds tenure track status is considered to have reasonable assurance, unless advised otherwise by the college. For the purposes of this section, tenure track status means a probationary faculty employee having an opportunity to be reviewed for tenure.

For more information, go to <https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment/educational-employees>

When are you eligible to apply?



1. Quarters when you receive no classes or have classes cancelled
2. Breaks between quarters when you have no contract (subject to reasonable assurance).
3. When you receive fewer hours or courses than you did in the preceding quarters, you may be eligible for “partial unemployment.”

How to Determine the Current Base Year for the month in which you are filing:

1. Find the month in **red** in which you are filing.

For example, if you are applying in **June 2021**, your base year will start in Winter 20.

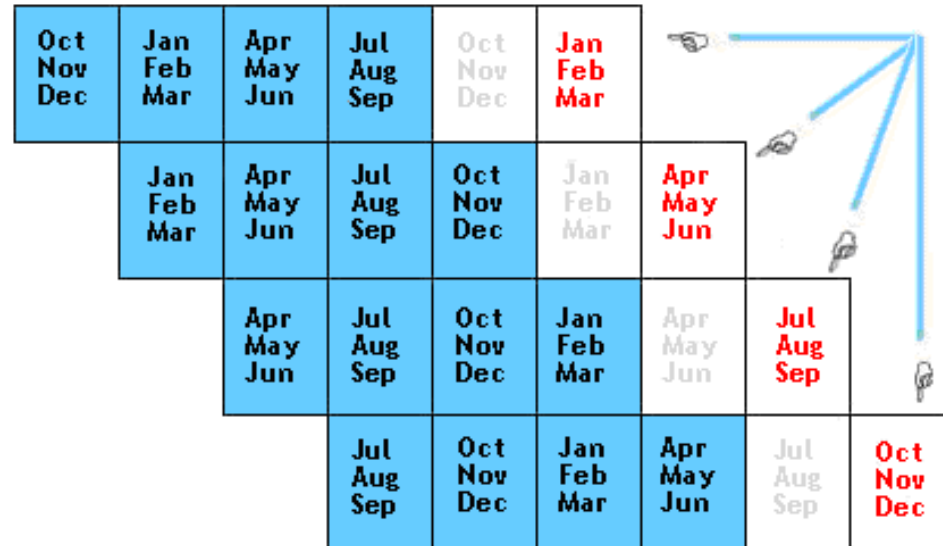
2. Then, add the next 3 quarters:

Winter 20

Spring 20

Summer 20

Fall 2020



If you are applying for the first time in ...

If you are applying **April, May, or June** your base year is:

1. Winter 2020
2. Spring 2020
3. Summer 2020
4. Fall 2020

Next, Count Your Hours for the Base Year

Add the total number of credits that you taught in **each** of these 4 quarters. The number of weeks for each quarter may vary, so calculate each quarter separately and then add them together.

Hours are calculated based on a full-time 35-hour work week!

Counting Hours



ESD uses a formula and colleges are required to report your hours based on contact (class) hours as a percentage of a full-time work week (35 hours).

1. Divide the number of class/credit hours by the number of full-time class hours that constitutes a full-time load; ESD uses 15 hours.

Example: $10 \text{ credits} \div 15 \text{ hours} = .67$

2. Multiple this % of a full-time load into a **35-hour week**

Example: $.67 \times 35 = 23.3$

3. Multiply the weekly hours by the **number of weeks** in each quarter.

Example: $23.3 \times 12 \text{ weeks} = 276 \text{ hours for 1 quarter}$

4. Add up the 4 relevant quarters.

Example 3 quarters @ 2 classes each = $276 \text{ hours} \times 3 = 828$ hours

When Can Begin a Claim?

You should establish your file as soon as you are laid off **after the last day of the quarter. However,**

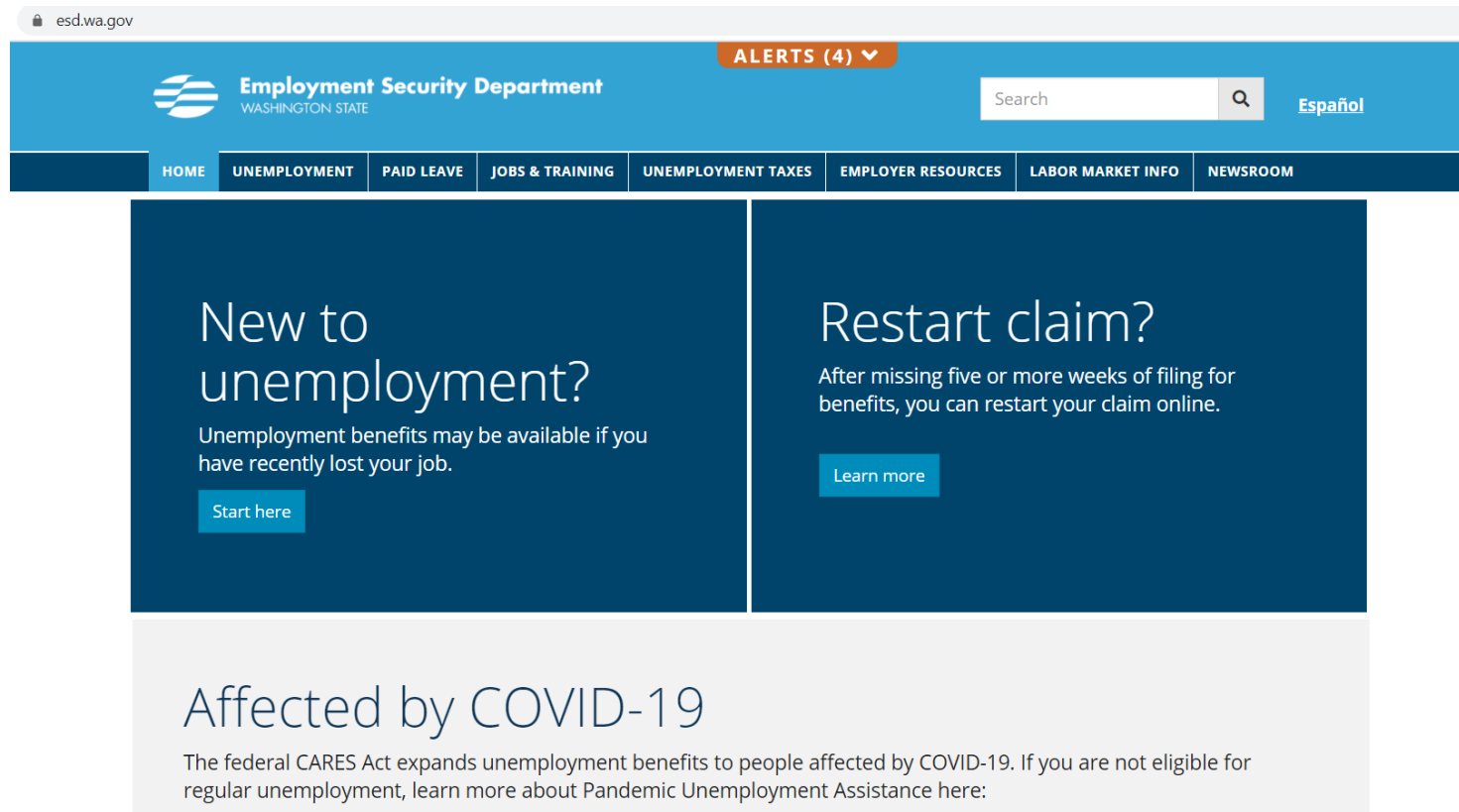
You may not claim benefits until the end of a full week of unemployment: Claims are filed for the previous week of unemployment from **Sunday through Saturday. So,**

You should register for benefits as soon as you are laid off, but you cannot claim benefits until the end of a full week of unemployment (Sunday – Saturday) starting each Sunday. **However,**

The “**waiting**” **week**” has been reinstated, so once a year, your first week of filing will not be paid.

* You should start or re-start your claim within 2 weeks of being laid off.


Now, go to esd.wa.gov




The screenshot shows the homepage of the Washington State Employment Security Department. The header is blue with the department's logo and name on the left, a search bar in the center, and a language selector for Spanish on the right. Below the header is a dark blue navigation bar with links for Home, Unemployment, Paid Leave, Jobs & Training, Unemployment Taxes, Employer Resources, Labor Market Info, and Newsroom. The main content area features two dark blue boxes: one for new unemployment claimants and another for restarting claims. A light gray box at the bottom provides information about COVID-19 assistance.

esd.wa.gov

ALERTS (4)

 **Employment Security Department**
WASHINGTON STATE

Search  [Español](#)

[HOME](#) [UNEMPLOYMENT](#) [PAID LEAVE](#) [JOBS & TRAINING](#) [UNEMPLOYMENT TAXES](#) [EMPLOYER RESOURCES](#) [LABOR MARKET INFO](#) [NEWSROOM](#)

New to unemployment?

Unemployment benefits may be available if you have recently lost your job.

[Start here](#)

Restart claim?

After missing five or more weeks of filing for benefits, you can restart your claim online.

[Learn more](#)

Affected by COVID-19

The federal CARES Act expands unemployment benefits to people affected by COVID-19. If you are not eligible for regular unemployment, learn more about Pandemic Unemployment Assistance here:

Before you apply...

Before you begin

- 1. Download the unemployment insurance application checklist and get your documents ready (esd.wa.gov/self-employed)
- 2. Watch the tutorial video and set up your account (esd.wa.gov/technical-support). **(Already applied for unemployment and were denied? You do not need to apply again. Skip to page 14 for some tips on the application for expanded benefits and the weekly claim.)**

Start with “Sign in for eServices”

1. Create or sign into your SAW account.
2. Now, you can...
 “Apply for Benefits” or
 “Restart a Claim” if you filed within the past year.

Tips

Apply for unemployment withing **2 weeks of being laid off. Late claims may be rejected!**

Use your name as it **appears on your Social Security card.**

Double-check your SSN and birthdate before you submit!

Have your **routing number** ready to create **direct deposit** account.

3. The **SUNDAY** of each week you will be asked to “Submit a Weekly Claim” for the previous week.

You may file Sunday - Saturday for the previous week, but the later in the week you apply, the later you will be paid.

Really Important Things to Remember When Applying!

- Identify your work at Bellevue College **Post Secondary Teacher** or College or Higher Ed Instructor! For ESD purposes; you are **not a teacher!!!**
- You are **NOT** on “Standby Status”: You are **“laid off”!!** When prompted to explain, you may say **“other”** – no work/temporary contract expired.
- If your future employment is contingent on funding and/or enrollment, and/or program needs, you have **NO REASONABLE ASSURANCE** of continued employment.
- It might take ~~4—6 weeks~~ **or more a while** for a decision to be made on your claim, so while you may not receive funds immediately, you will eventually be paid back to the day you applied. If you need **immediate emergency assistance** let ESD and your union know.
- The annual “waiting week” has been reinstated, so once a year, you will not be paid for the initial week of filing.
- You may be eligible for **“partial benefits”** if you are working at a reduced workload.
- You **pay taxes** on Unemployment Insurance benefits, so you may want to opt for deductions.



Your Responsibilities!

- **Answer all questions on weekly claims truthfully and report any earnings for that week.**
- Normally, job searches and keeping a job search log are required, but **job searches have been temporarily suspended; you may answer “no” to the question about job searches on your weekly report.**
- **Be willing, able , and available** for suitable work each week.
- **Submit a weekly claim (Sunday – Saturday) for the previous week** to continue to be eligible for benefits. Do not be late.
- **Check your “Alerts”** on your account page frequently.
- **Respond to ESD** communications in a timely manner. If you get a questionnaire, you must answer the questions honestly and return it by the due date.
- **Attend scheduled orientations or workshops.** If you are scheduled for an interview or appointment at a **WorkSource** office, you **must** attend as scheduled.
- **Keep your contact information current.** Even if your preferred method of contact is eServices, check your mailbox because some letters are sent by U.S. mail.

Keep handy...Documentation to Provide to Employment Services Division (ESD)

- Copies of language from your Faculty Contract.



- Assignment Letter (Yellow PAF)/assignment letter
- Notice of Cancellation of Guaranteed Workload
- Any emails that you've received about course cancellation meetings.

Your Responsibilities!

- Apply for unemployment withing **2 weeks of being laid off**.
- Use your name as it **appears on your Social Security card**.
- **Double-check your SSN and birthdate** before you submit!
- ~~Look for a job and keep a job search log~~ (currently waived), but...
- **Be available** for suitable work each week.
- **Submit a weekly claim** to continue to be eligible for benefits.
- **Answer all questions on weekly claims truthfully and** correctly report your job searches.
- **Check your “Alerts”** on your account page.
- **Respond to ESD** communications in a timely manner. If you get a questionnaire, you must answer the questions honestly and return it by the due date.
- **Attend scheduled orientations or workshops**. If you are scheduled for an interview or appointment at a **WorkSource** office, you **must** attend as scheduled.
- **Keep your contact information current**. Even if your preferred method of contact is eServices, check your mailbox because some letters are sent by U.S. mail.

Pandemic- Related Updates

The most recent federal stimulus bill extends **CARES Act** unemployment benefits

- Extends Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Pandemic Employment Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)* until **Sept. 4, 2021**.
- Continues the additional **\$300 per week** for all eligible claimants until **Sept. 4, 2021**. By federal law, all claimants will get this benefit, except those receiving Training Benefits. The \$300 is **in addition** to claimants' usual weekly benefit amount.
- ***The Pandemic Employment Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)**, available March 29, 2020 - Sept. 4, 2021, provides **additional weeks of benefits on top of regular unemployment benefits**. This and other benefit extension programs **may provide continued benefits after regular unemployment benefits expire**.

Federal Supplement

There may be an additional federal supplement as long as you qualify for at least \$1 of state benefits.

Federal unemployment stimulus

The federal stimulus bill that extends CARES Act unemployment benefits was signed into law.

The legislation:

- Extends Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Pandemic Employment Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) until Sept. 4, 2021.
- Continues the additional \$300 per week for all eligible claimants until Sept. 4, 2021. By federal law, all claimants will get this benefit, except those receiving Training Benefits. The \$300 is in addition to claimants' usual weekly benefit amount.

~~At this time, we do not expect most claimants to experience a gap in benefits as long as they~~

Pandemic- Related Updates

Waiting Week

- The Waiting Week policy, which requires claimants to forgo the first week of a new year of benefits, is **currently** waived. For those who were denied compensation for their first week of a new UI claim this year, there is some good news. The waiting week waiver was reinstated retroactively to January 9, 2021, and those who were **not** compensated on the basis of a "**waiting week**" in their first week of UI claims since that date will be reimbursed.

Job Search Requirements

- For those on "regular" benefits, the "job search" requirement that requires claimants to report at least three (3) job searches a week is **currently** optional. Claimants may answer "no" on the weekly question about job searches.

COBRA Subsidy

A **normal** change of contract, either voluntary or involuntary, between quarters that causes a reduction in hours and therefore results in a loss of employer-paid health coverage makes faculty eligible for the COBRA subsidy between April 1, 2021 through September 30, 2021.

More Tips...

- Go ahead and apply even if you don't think you have enough hours to qualify. ESD understands that we are only paid for contact hours and that our jobs take much more time than that, i.e. grading, lesson prep, therefore they have a way of calculating hours to adjust for that.
- Don't be afraid to appeal if your claim is denied.
Contact your union representatives for help.
- Let us know if your claim has not been processed for 12 weeks.

Resources

Primary: www.esd.gov

Send an email: <https://fortress.wa.gov/esd/webform/contactus/>

Handbook <https://esdorchardstorage.blob.core.windows.net/esdwa/Default/ESDWAGOV/Unemployment/ESD-Handbook-for-Unemployed-Workers.pdf>

COVID-19 UPDATES

Checklists:

Regular: <https://esdorchardstorage.blob.core.windows.net/esdwa/Default/ESDWAGOV/Unemployment/UIEligibilityChecker.pdf>

PUA https://esdorchardstorage.blob.core.windows.net/esdwa/Default/ESDWAGOV/Unemployment/COVID-19_Applications_CheckList.pdf_Applications

SAW Account Set-Up Tutorial:

https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment/technical-support?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

Filing Tutorial

<https://esdorchardstorage.blob.core.windows.net/esdwa/Default/ESDWAGOV/Unemployment/eservices-claimant-user-guide-english.pdf>

Need healthcare? <https://www.hca.wa.gov/health-care-services-supports/apple-health-medicaid-coverage/eligibility>

NEED HELP WITH SAW ACCOUNT?

- Try this number: (833) 572-8400
- **SAW help desk** 855-682-0785 Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Need to report Fraud?

<https://secureaccess.wa.gov/myAccess/saw/select.do>

Additional information about recovering from fraud may be found at

<https://www.identitytheft.gov/>

- <https://www.atg.wa.gov/recovering-identity-theft-or-fraud>

How Much Are the Benefits?

To estimate how much you might be eligible to receive, add together the gross wages in the two highest quarters during that period, divide by 2, and then multiply by 0.0385 to get your weekly benefit amount.

*\$202 is the minimum weekly benefit amount payable.

**\$844 is the maximum weekly benefit amount payable.

- The total amount of benefits potentially payable on your claim is found by taking the smaller of: 26 times your weekly benefit amount or 1/3 of the total gross wages in all four quarters of your base year.

Estimate your own WBA

- Identify the two highest quarters in your base year.
- Key each total in the boxes below.
- Press "Calculate" to see how much you are potentially eligible to receive.
- To try again, press "Clear" and start over.
- **Keep in mind that this is just an estimate of your weekly benefit amount. Your actual weekly benefit amount may be different when you file your claim.**