



Unemployment Benefits: General Information

Unemployment benefits provide short-term income to unemployed workers who lose their jobs through no fault of their own and who are actively seeking work. It reduces the hardship felt by families during periods of temporary unemployment. The program is financed by taxes paid by employers to both the federal and state governments.

How and when do I apply?

Do not delay; file an application as soon as you are unemployed. You can file online 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at unemployment.ohio.gov. You also can file by phone Monday through Friday (except holidays) from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. by calling (877) 644-6562.

What information do I need when applying?

- Personal information:
 - » Social Security number and either your driver's license or state ID number
 - » Your name, address, telephone number(s), email address and date of birth
 - » Your regular occupation and job skills information
 - » If you have dependent children (including stepchildren): Their names, Social Security numbers and dates of birth. If you are claiming dependent children and you are married, you must provide your spouse's name, Social Security number and date of birth, even if you are not claiming your spouse.
 - » If you are not a U.S. citizen: Your alien registration number and the expiration date of your work authorization
 - » If you elect to receive direct deposit: Your bank name, routing number and account number
- Employment information for all employers you worked for in the last six weeks:
 - » Employer(s) name, address, telephone number and dates you worked with each employer
 - » Employer contact information for all out-of-state employment within the last 18 months
 - » Discharge papers (form DD-214, member 4), if separated from military service with any branch of the U.S. armed forces within the last 18 months
 - » Form SF-8 or SF-50, if employed and separated from a federal government position within the last 18 months
 - » The reason you became totally or partially unemployed from any of the above employers

What will I receive after applying?

- A temporary Personal Identification Number (PIN), if you have not already established one through a previous unemployment claim.
- A New Claim Instruction Sheet, which includes individual work search instructions and reemployment activity requirements.
- A Worker's Guide to Unemployment Compensation booklet, which outlines additional unemployment benefit requirements. If you chose email as your contact method, you will receive an email with a link to the guide.
- You may receive notices requesting additional information. Complete and submit them timely, or your benefits may be delayed or stopped.

What are the requirements to file for unemployment benefits?

- You must be totally or partially unemployed.
- In 2016, you must have worked at least 20 weeks in covered employment and earned at least \$243 in the base period (four out of the last five completed calendar quarters).
- You must be unemployed through no fault of your own.
- If you had a prior unemployment claim that is expired, you must have worked in covered employment since the beginning of the prior claim year to reestablish yourself as a worker.

How do I maintain eligibility for unemployment benefits?

- You must be physically and mentally able to work.
- You must be available and willing to work any shift of any occupation consistent with your prior training or experience.
- You must actively seek work:
 - » Register with OhioMeansJobs.com for job placement assistance.
 - » Complete reemployment activities as explained on your New Claim Instruction Sheet.
 - » Apply for work with at least two different employers per week. Contact with an employer you worked for within the last 18 months does not count.
 - » Keep a written record of your work search efforts each week.
- You must report earnings for any work performed and any income paid or payable to you while claiming benefits.
- If you belong to a union with a hiring hall or are a student, you must submit verification.

How and when do I file a weekly claim?

After filing your initial application for benefits, you must file weekly or biweekly claims. Your responses to questions asked when you file will determine your continued eligibility for each week claimed.

- To file weekly claims, you will need your Social Security number and PIN. You can file online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at unemployment.ohio.gov. If you do not have access to the internet, you may visit your local library or OhioMeansJobs center, where computers are available for public use. To find your nearest OhioMeansJobs center, call (888) 296-7541. Those with no ability to access the internet may call (877) 644-6562 for assistance.
- File weekly for the first three weeks. If you chose email as your contact method, you will continue to file weekly. If you chose U.S. mail, you will file biweekly.
- You must file claims for benefits timely, no later than three weeks (21 days) from either the Saturday of the week you filed your application or the Saturday of the last week you claimed for benefits. Failing to file timely claims could result in a denial of payment.

Additional Information

- Ohio law requires claimants to serve a waiting period after filing an initial application. This “waiting week” is the first week claimed in the benefit year in which you meet all eligibility requirements. Benefits cannot be paid for the waiting week.
- No more than half of a weekly benefit can be withheld for court-ordered child support payments.
- Unemployment benefits are subject to federal and state income taxes. You can request that 10 percent of your benefits be withheld for this purpose. You will receive an Internal Revenue Service 1099 form at the end of January for the previous year’s benefits.