

Ohio Unemployment Insurance Guidance for Federal Employees Affected by the Federal Shutdown

- Federal employees affected by the federal government shutdown can file for Ohio Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits if they are partially or totally unemployed due to the federal shutdown.
- Federal employees that are still working during the shutdown generally are not eligible for Ohio UI because they are considered still employed.
- Federal employees who wish to file for unemployment insurance are encouraged to file with the state where the individual's federal wages are assigned. For example, if a federal employee has their residence in California, but their current job is in Ohio, they typically will file with the State of Ohio. By contrast, a federal employee with their residence in Ohio, but a current job in California typically will file with the State of California.
- New Ohio UI claims may be filed online at www.unemployment.ohio.gov (*go to the "Unemployed Workers" section under the tab, "File/Appeal Benefits"), or those needing special assistance may call (877) 644-6562.
- Individuals filing new claims must have at least 20 weeks of employment and an average weekly wage of \$261 during the 12 months beginning October 1, 2017, and ending September 30, 2018, to qualify for benefits. A benefits estimator can be found at www.unemployment.ohio.gov in the "Additional Information section" under the "Benefits Estimator" tab.
- Federal employees affected by the federal shutdown are required to make an active search for work by applying for at least two positions each week, and providing that information when they file their weekly claims.
- Unlike other employers, federal employers do not report wage information to state labor departments. Therefore, when the affected federal employee files for Ohio UI benefits, the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) will send a request for wage and separation information directly to the federal employer.
- Some federal agencies may not be available to respond to requests for required information, as they too may be affected by the shutdown. Although request forms are always sent to the federal employer and a claimant affidavit of wages to the federal employee, if ODJFS is unable to contact a federal employer, we will use the employee affidavit to obtain the needed information. In these cases, employees will need to ensure their affidavits are accompanied by supporting documents that show wage history.
- Claims are usually processed within four (4) weeks, at which time allowed claims will be paid for eligible weeks that have been claimed. Federal employees should continue to file their weekly claims while their application is pending.
- Claimants will receive a New Claim Instruction Sheet that advises them when to file weekly claims for benefit payments. Instructions may also be found at www.unemployment.ohio.gov in the "Unemployed Workers" section under the tab, "Filing Your Weekly Claims."
- If individuals are paid Ohio UI benefits and later receive backpay for the same weeks, the UI weeks will be considered overpaid, and ODJFS will send a notice requiring repayment of the benefits.