

How to Apply for Unemployment Benefits

Apply for Unemployment Benefits in 3 Steps¹

To apply for unemployment benefits, you must do 3 things:

1. Submit your initial claim
2. Register with the Job Center of Wisconsin (if DWD requires)
3. Submit your claim certifications every week

Step 1: Submit Your Initial Claim

You can apply for benefits online at the following times:

Sunday:	12:00 noon – 5:00 pm
Monday - Friday:	6:00 am – 7:00 pm
Saturday:	9:00 am – 2:30 pm

Complete your **claim application** during the **first week** that your hours are reduced.

- Do **not** wait until the first week in which you have reduced hours is over to apply for unemployment benefits.
 - A work week is defined as Sunday through Saturday. Each work week ends on Saturday and a new work week starts on Sunday.
- DWD needs this information to decide if you are eligible for benefits.
- The information you report is confidential.

If you want to apply online, you can create your logon profile (username and password) before your hours are reduced.

Create Your Username and Password

1. Go to my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov.
2. Read the “Terms and Conditions.”
3. Check the box “I Accept” and click “Continue.”
4. Find “Don’t have a username?” under the “Log In” button.
5. Click “Sign up.”

¹ **Please note:** This information is provided by the Office of Human Resources at UW–Madison and is for reference only. Information about COVID-19 issues is frequently changing. The best source of up-to-date information about unemployment benefits is the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD). You can also contact the Office of Human Resources at UW–Madison for assistance with the process of applying for unemployment benefits. Contact information for DWD and the UW–Madison Office of Human Resources is provided at the end of this document.

6. Enter your information to “Create a Logon.” (You must have an email address or mobile phone number.)
7. DWD will send a message to your email address or mobile phone.
8. Open the message from DWD, and follow the instructions to activate your account.

Want **more help** creating a username and password?

- Watch a short video:
 - English: media.wisconsin.gov/ui/ext/benefits/username_creation.htm
 - Spanish: media.wisconsin.gov/ui/ext/benefits/username_creation_sp.htm
- Read answers to common questions at dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/faqs/logon.htm.

Log on to Your Account

1. Go to my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov.
2. Enter your username and password.
3. The **first time you log on** you must:
 - Choose “Click here to enter your personal information.”
 - Enter your name, social security number, and date of birth.
4. Next time you log on to my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov, you will see your personal **Unemployment Insurance Summary**.

Submit Your Initial Claim

1. Have all required information ready.
 - Read “Required Information for Your Claim” below.
2. Go to my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov.
3. Read and accept “Terms and Conditions.”
4. Enter your username and password to log on.
5. Click on “file an initial claim.”
6. Complete your application.
7. Review your claim before you submit it. Make sure all of your answers are correct.

Required Information for Your Claim

- Your username and password (to apply online)
- A valid email or mobile number
- Your social security number
- Your Wisconsin driver license or identification number (if you have one)
- Your work history for all jobs during the past 18 months. For UW–Madison, use the following information:

- Employer name and address
 - The computer program may automatically fill in the UW-Madison name and address. If you need to add the name and address, please use the following. (Do not use your physical work location.)
 - Employer name: **UW–Madison**
 - Payroll address: **21 N PARK ST #5101 / MADISON, WI 53715-1218**
 - Phone number: **608-265-2257**
- Your first and last dates of work with each employer:
 - First Day: **Your UW–Madison hire date**
 - If you are unsure of your first day of work, estimate the date as closely as possible. For example, if you only know the month and the year, you can indicate the first day of that month as your hire date.
 - If you do not know your first day of work, you can get this information from [your Human Resources \(HR\) department](#) or contact the Office of Human Resources at (608) 265-2257 or furlough@ohr.wisc.edu. For language assistance, call Cultural Linguistic Services (CLS) at one of the phone numbers listed at the end of this document.
 - Most recent last day of work: **Indicate the last day you did some work before furlough started** if you are on a Work-Share program or Position-Specific Furlough with UW–Madison.
- Why are you no longer working for this employer? (Separation Reason)
 - Check “Laid Off / Lack of work (any duration) / Plant Shutdown / Holiday Shutdown” if you are on a Work-Share program or Position-Specific Furlough with UW–Madison. This is the correct response when your place of employment has been affected by COVID-19.
 - Other jobs may have other reasons.
- If you are **not** a U.S. citizen, you need your alien registration/USCIS number, document number, and expiration date.
- Your current address
 - You need a current mailing address to receive important information about your claim.
 - Tell the post office if you have recent changes to your address.
- Your bank routing and account numbers, if you want your payment direct deposited.
- If you change your name, update it online under “Unemployment Services” and “Change Personal Information.”

Your username, password, and social security number identify you.
Do not tell ANYONE your username, password, or social security number.

Information You Need to Know

- Submitting a **claim** does not mean you will receive a payment.
- **Never** apply for benefits if you are outside of the United States. If you do, DWD will block your application and hold your benefits.
- Review your claim before you submit it. Make sure all your answers are correct.
- Print or take a screenshot of your answers.
- **If you submit your claim with a mistake**, you can correct it **the same day** you submitted the claim.
 - That same day, click the link on your summary page and correct the information.
 - After that day, contact the Unemployment Insurance Help Center to make corrections.
 - The easiest way to contact DWD is to complete the contact form at dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwdsendmail/mailtodwd.aspx. You can use your wisc.edu email account when emailing DWD.
 - If you cannot go online, call (414) 435-7069 or toll-free at (844) 910-3662. You can call Monday through Friday, 7:35 am – 3:30 pm. DWD receives many calls about unemployment, so you will have a long wait if you call.

Check and correct all answers before you submit your claim. Avoid delays with your payment!

Step 2: Register with the Job Center of Wisconsin (JCW), if DWD Requires

Right now, you are not required to look for work (Wisconsin Emergency Order #7). DWD will tell you if you need to register with the Job Center of Wisconsin (JCW).

If DWD says you must register with JCW:

- You must register **within 14 days** after submitting your claim for unemployment.
- If you do not register within 14 days:
 - you will not receive payments for the weeks before you registered with JCW.
 - your payments will be delayed.
- If you forgot to register with JCW and the 14 days have already passed, **register as soon as you can**. For now, rules about registration are more flexible.

How to Register with the Job Center of Wisconsin (JCW) If Required

1. Go to JobCenterofWisconsin.com/ui.
2. Enter the username and password you used to submit your online claim for unemployment benefits.
 - You can create a Logon Profile with your name, email, and phone number.
3. Enroll for text message alerts.

- We recommend enrolling in text message alerts if you can. This is the fastest way to receive information from the JCW at this busy time.
4. Register for services.
 - Enter your social security number, date of birth, gender, current address, level of education, and current employment status.
 - For “Unemployment Insurance Status,” choose: **“I am filing for unemployment benefits and was mandated to register as part of my application.”**
 5. Add a résumé if you have one.
 - You are not required to provide a résumé right now.
 - If you want help writing a résumé, use the JCW résumé builder tool. A link to this tool will be provided during your registration process.

If you have questions or need help:

- Call the Job Service Call Center at (888) 258-9966.
- Email JobCenterofWisconsin@dwd.wisconsin.gov.
- Call (608) 616-9374 to make an appointment for over-the-phone support.
 - Columbia, Dane, Dodge, Jefferson, Marquette, and Sauk counties only
 - Expect an answer within 2 business days.

For language support, call (888) 258-9966 and ask for an interpreter.

The Job Center gets many phone calls about unemployment. You may experience delays if you call them.

Step 3: Submit Your Claim Certification Each Week

<u>You can file your weekly claim online at the following times:</u>	
Sunday:	9:00 am – 12:00 midnight
Monday - Friday:	Available 24 hours
Saturday:	1:00 am – 3:00 pm

After your hours are reduced and you submit your first claim for unemployment, you must file a **Weekly Claim Certification** every week.

- A work week is defined as Sunday through Saturday. Each work week ends on Saturday and a new work week starts on Sunday.
- Answer all questions for the specific calendar week you are claiming.
 - For example: When they ask if you quit a job, they are asking if you quit during the week you are claiming. If you did not quit during that week, answer **“NO.”**
- Every question has step-by-step instructions. Follow the instructions for every question.
- Answer all questions completely and correctly.
- If you do not understand the questions, ask a claims specialist for help.

- The easiest way to contact DWD is to complete the contact form at dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwdsendmail/mailtodwd.aspx. You can use your wisc.edu email account when emailing DWD.
- If you cannot go online, call (414) 435-7069 or toll-free at (844) 910-3662. You can call Monday through Friday, 7:35 am – 3:30 pm. DWD receives many calls about unemployment, so you will have a long wait if you call.
- You are responsible for incorrect or incomplete information that you give.
 - If you receive more income than you reported, **contact DWD immediately** to make a correction.
 - If you do not report work and income correctly, you may receive overpayments and penalties.
- Have your most recent paystub available.
- Report extra income (more than the hours you worked) during the week you receive it.

When to File Your Weekly Claim Certification

- File Monday through Friday or later in the day on Sunday.
 - Sundays from 9:00 –10:00 am, over 30,000 people file their weekly claim, so try to avoid this time.
- File your **weekly claim certification** within 14 days of the Saturday at the end of the work week you are claiming.
 - A work week is defined as Sunday through Saturday. Each work week ends on Saturday and a new work week starts on Sunday.
- File as early as possible to get paid sooner.
- Payments can be delayed because of incomplete claims or eligibility issues.
- You will usually get paid within 7 days of filing your weekly claim certification.

Answer Questions on Your Weekly Claim Certification:

For the week(s) you are claiming you must answer:

- Why are you not working? **“COVID-19”**
- Are you unemployed or working reduced hours?
 - Answer this question based on your status during the week you are claiming. Please note that if you are on Work-Share or Position-Specific Furlough, you are not unemployed and you are working reduced hours.
- Are you able to work and available for work?
 - As you respond to this question, please remember that if you are on furlough, you are considered available for work.
- Have you refused any work hours, job offers, or referrals to a job?
- Are you actively looking for work? **[You don’t need to answer, because of COVID-19.]**
 - The computer program will automatically fill in an answer.
- What are your work hours and wages for the week?

- Report **all** work, hours, and wages (of any amount).
 - If you do not report work and income correctly, you may receive overpayments and penalties, including prosecution.
- Report holiday, vacation, and sick pay for the week you use it, even if you are paid in a later week.
- **Wages:** Include any type of pay for full-time (32 hours or more per week) or part-time work you do in the week.
 - Report wages the week you work the hours, even if you will be paid for the hours in a later week.
- **Workers Compensation:** Report payments for the week you are paid compensation.
- **Bonuses:** Report income the week you are paid the bonus.
 - Include: quarterly lump sums, on-site differential, night differential, sign-on bonuses, etc.
 - Find this information on your most current paystub.
- **Stimulus Check:** Do **not** report your stimulus check from the Federal Government.
- **Retirement Pay**
 - Tell DWD if you have applied for or are receiving a retirement payment.
 - Unless instructed otherwise by DWD, do **not** report a retirement payment as wages on your **weekly** claim certification.
 - Your weekly unemployment payments may be lower if you are receiving a retirement payment.
- **Child Support**
 - If DWD receives a child support order from a child support enforcement agency, DWD must withhold money from your unemployment payment to pay the child support.
 - If you disagree with the amount or feel the order is incorrect, contact the child support agency.
 - **Only the child support agency can change or stop withholdings.**

You must report a bonus for the week the bonus is paid. Check your paystub every week to make sure you report all bonuses.

Look at Your Earnings Statements (Paystub) Online

1. Log on to MyUW at my.wisc.edu.
2. Enter your NetID and password.
 - If you have problems or forget your username and password, call (608) 264-4357.
3. Disable pop-up blockers from your internet browser.
4. In MyUW, click on the “Payroll Information” box.

5. Click on “Earnings Statements” to see a list of your earnings statements.
6. Click on the date for the earnings statement you want to see.

Important Information

Eligibility Issues

- An eligibility issue is any information or situation that raises a legal question about whether you should receive unemployment benefits.
 - This issue could cause DWD to deny, stop, or lower your benefits under the Unemployment Insurance law.
 - DWD must investigate all eligibility issues before they can pay you.
- If DWD has questions about your application, they can schedule a fact-finding interview with you. They may contact you by phone or mail.
 - You **must** respond and provide requested information **within 5 days**, even if your application is complete and accepted.
- If you do not participate in a fact-finding investigation, you could **lose benefits**.
- DWD gives you and your employer the chance to offer facts before they make a decision.
 - If you do not contact DWD or provide requested information, you could **lose benefits**.
 - If you miss an interview, DWD will make a decision using the information they have. You could **lose benefits**.

DWD cannot pay you while investigating eligibility issues on your claim.

You must file your weekly claim certifications during the investigation, even if you don't receive payments.

When You Will Receive Your First Payment

- Usually, DWD decides your eligibility for payment **within 7 days** after you file your **first claim**.
 - If DWD has a high number of claims, they may take more time to respond.
 - If your claim has a mistake or is missing information, DWD may take longer to process it.
- If you are eligible, you usually receive your payment within 7 days after filing your **Weekly Claim Certification**.
- If you do not receive your payment (or an explanation for not receiving a payment) within 7 days after you filed your **Weekly Claim Certification**, you should:
 - Check your claim status online.
 - If you can't go online or need help using online services, call (414) 435-7069 or toll-free (844) 910-3661.

Check Your Payment Status

You must file your **Weekly Claim Certification** to activate your unemployment payment for that week.

You can check your payment information online. To see if a payment has been made:

1. Go to my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov.
 - Click the "My Information" tab.
 - Click "Benefit Payment History."
2. It can take a few days before payments are available on your debit card or in your bank account.
3. If you have questions or concerns about payments, contact:
 - U.S. Bank at (855) 279-1271, if you receive payments on a debit card
 - Your personal bank if you receive direct deposit payments to your bank account

Your Options for Receiving Payments

You can choose to receive your unemployment benefit payments by:

- Direct Deposit to your checking or savings account (have your bank routing and account numbers ready)

or

- Visa® Pre-Paid Debit Card (U.S. Bank ReliaCard®) mailed to your home

Unemployment Payments Are Taxed

- Your unemployment payments are considered income for federal and state tax purposes.
 - You will receive a 1099 form at the end of the 2020 year for unemployment payments.
- You can withhold state and federal taxes from your weekly unemployment payments.
 - If you withhold taxes, DWD will take out 10 percent for federal taxes and/or 5 percent for state taxes from your weekly payments.
 - **At any time**, you can choose to withhold taxes at my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov.
- For more information, go to dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/withholding.htm or ask a tax advisor.

Unemployment Scams and Fraud

- Protect your personal information.
- DWD has a list of recent scams related to unemployment benefits at <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/ui/fraud/scams.htm>.
- DWD will never ask you to give personal information or verify your eligibility for unemployment benefits by email or text message.
- If you want to make sure an email or text message came from the Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Unemployment Insurance division, call (414) 435-7069.
- Applying for unemployment benefits is free. If someone offers to help you apply for unemployment benefits and charges a fee, it is a scam. Do not respond!

- Do not respond to offers of online business opportunities, work-at-home promises, or sites and postings that request personal information.

Find More Information from DWD

The DWD website has complete and current information about unemployment benefits and the impact of COVID-19. If you can go online, look at the DWD website first for answers to your questions.

Important DWD resources:

- DWD Unemployment Website: dwd.wisconsin.gov/ui/
- Unemployment Frequently Asked Questions: dwd.wi.gov/uiben/faqs
- Handbook for Claimants: dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/handbook

How to Contact DWD

The easiest way to contact DWD is to complete the contact form at dwd.wisconsin.gov/dwdsendmail/mailtodwd.aspx. You can use your wisc.edu email account when emailing DWD.

If you cannot go online, call (414) 435-7069 or toll-free at (844) 910-3662. You can call Monday through Friday, 7:35 am – 3:30 pm. DWD receives many calls about unemployment, so you will have a long wait if you call.

Language Assistance

- DWD provides a language interpreter for free.
- Multilingual unemployment and COVID-19 information
 - Spanish: dwd.wisconsin.gov/covid19/public/ui-s.htm
 - Hmong: dwd.wisconsin.gov/covid19/public/ui-h.htm
 - Different languages: dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/applylb.htm

Sign Language Interpretation

If you need special accommodations, write this on your unemployment claim. DWD will provide a sign language interpreter for free.

Finding Help at UW–Madison

UW–Madison can guide you on the process for requesting unemployment benefits. Contact the Office of Human Resources at (608) 265-2257 or furlough@ohr.wisc.edu.

For interpretation and translation services from UW–Madison, please call Cultural Linguistic Services:

- ESPAÑOL / Spanish: (608) 265-0838
- HMOOB / Hmong: (608) 263-2217
- སྐད་ལྟོགས་ / Tibetan: (608) 890-2545
- 中文 / Chinese: (608) 890-2628
- नेपाली / Nepali: (608) 262-7521

Last update 05/15/2020