

# You may be eligible for **UNEMPLOYMENT BENEFITS** if you lose your job

Visit [www.esd.wa.gov](http://www.esd.wa.gov) to apply and  
click "Sign in or create an account"



**Employment  
Security  
Department**  
WASHINGTON STATE

## To apply for unemployment, you will need

- Your Social Security number.
- Names and addresses of everyone you worked for in the last 18 months.
- Dates you started and stopped working for each employer.
- Reasons you left each job.
- Your alien registration number if you are not a U.S. citizen.
- Your SF8 and SF50 (if you worked for the Federal Government in the last 18 months).
- Your Washington State ID or License, if applicable.

If you were in the military within the last 18 months, we will also ask you to fax or mail us a copy of your discharge papers (Form DD214 member 4 or higher).

## The fastest way to apply is online at [esd.wa.gov](http://esd.wa.gov)

If you don't have a home computer, you can access one at a WorkSource center or your local library.

## If you can't apply online, try contacting us over the phone

Call 800-318-6022. Persons with hearing or speaking impairments can call Washington Relay Service 711. We are available to help you Monday through Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., except on state holidays. You may experience long wait times.

## You must look for work each week that you claim benefits

Visit WorkSource to find all the FREE resources you need to find a job. These include workshops, computers, copiers, phones, fax machines, Internet access, and job listings. Log onto [WorkSourceWA.com](http://WorkSourceWA.com) to find the nearest office.

If your work hours have been reduced to part-time, you may qualify for partial unemployment benefits.

If you have been unemployed due to a work-related injury or non-work-related illness or injury and are now able to work again, you may be eligible for Temporary Total Disability (TTD) unemployment benefits.

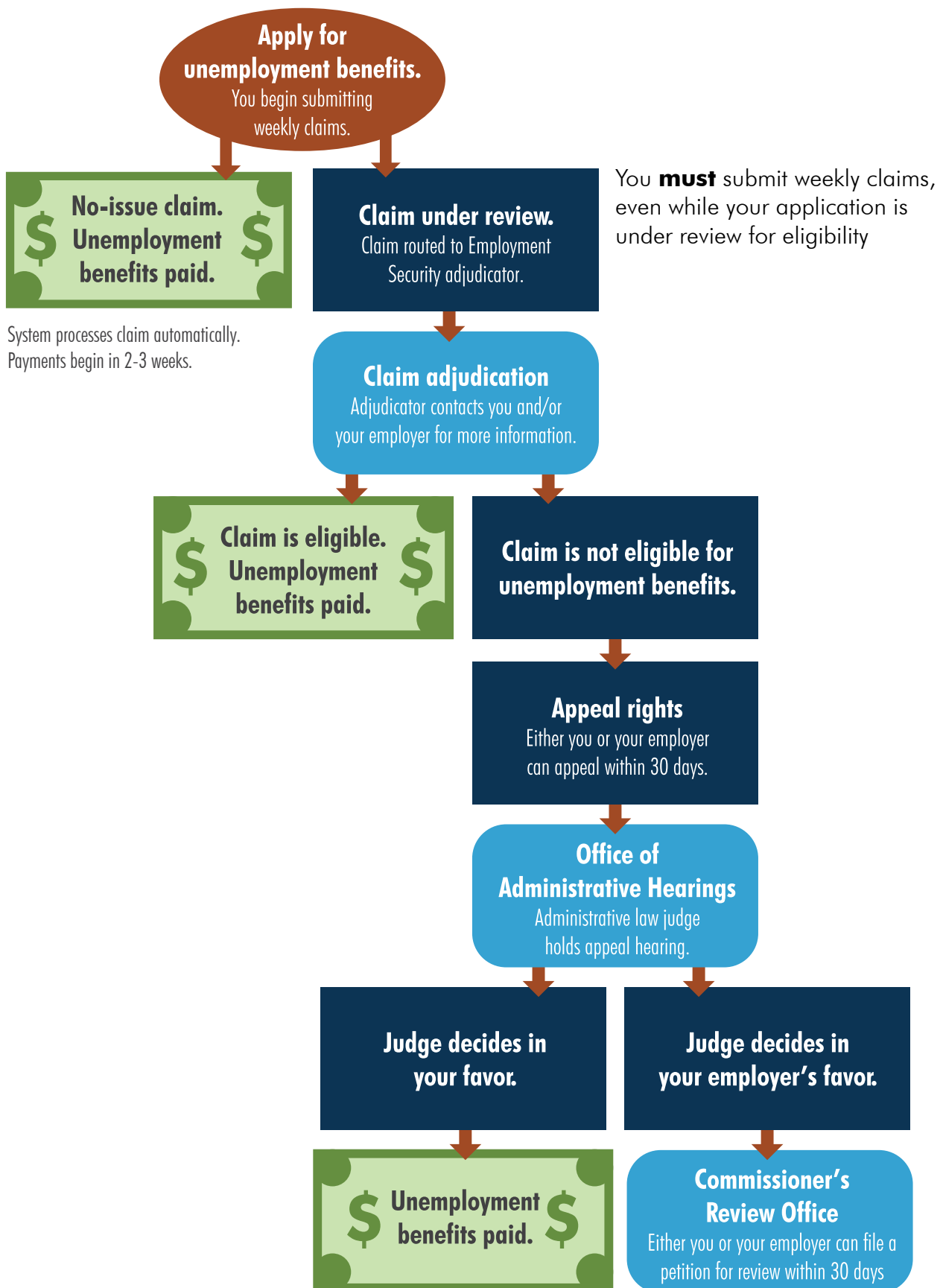
For more information, please refer to the Handbook for Unemployed Workers at [ESD.WA.GOV](http://ESD.WA.GOV).

Employers are legally required to post this notice in a place convenient for employees to read (see RCW 50.20.140).

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

**ESD.WA.GOV**

# The unemployment benefits process



---

## BASIC INFORMATION

---

Words in ***bold italics*** are defined in the Definitions section in the Appendix section of this Handbook.

### What is Unemployment Insurance?

Unemployment Insurance is a program that provides financial benefits for eligible unemployed workers to help you meet expenses while looking for a new job. Unemployment benefits replace part of your lost income and are not public assistance. Unemployment benefits are made possible through unemployment taxes paid by employers. Unemployment taxes are not withheld from employees' paychecks.

The Washington state Employment Security Department (ESD) has programs and services to

- help you financially when you become unemployed due to no fault of your own and
- assist you to return to work as quickly as possible.

We are here to help you apply for ***unemployment benefits***, submit ***weekly claims***, improve your ***job search*** skills and look for work.

### Information needed to apply for benefits

You will need to be prepared to provide the following information in order to apply for unemployment benefits:

- Your complete work history for the past 18 months including:
  - employer name(s)
  - address(es)
  - phone number(s)
  - start and end dates of employment for each employer.
- If you have worked in other states in the last 18 months, you need the state(s) where you physically worked and your employer's payroll address.

### How long can you collect unemployment benefits?

Your unemployment claim is considered to be open for one year. However, your actual benefits will generally last for six months (26 weeks). Your benefits may last longer than six months if you have deductible earnings

from working or you are collecting retirement pay. If you run out of (exhaust) your benefits, you cannot apply for a new claim until your current claim expires (one year).



## Maintaining eligibility for benefits

To maintain benefits, you must continue to meet the eligibility requirements for each week that you claim. Eligibility means:

- being able to work
- being available for work
- actively seeking work and
- keeping track of your job search by maintaining **job search logs**.

Your job search logs may be reviewed at any time by ESD to ensure that you are meeting your job search requirements.

## Requalifying for benefits

If you were paid unemployment benefits on a claim that is now expired, you must meet the following requirements to qualify for a new claim:

1. You must have worked at least 680 hours in the base year of your new claim.
2. You must have returned to work and earned six times your weekly benefit amount since the initial job separation and application date on your prior claim, but before the effective date of your new claim.

These rules do not apply if you file a claim in Washington after **exhausting benefits** in another state or if you were not paid on the prior claim.

## Canceling a claim

You can cancel your claim if you have not received any payments on the claim and it has not been more than 30 days since you applied for benefits. You will need to call the Claims Center at 800-318-6022 to request a claim cancellation. Once a claim is canceled, it cannot be reinstated. You would need to apply for a new claim to begin receiving benefits.

## Stop claiming once you start a full-time job

Once you are hired full-time or earn at least your weekly benefit amount, you do not need to call us to tell us that you found work. But you must stop submitting weekly claims once you actually start your new job – not after you get your first paycheck.

### Are you eligible for benefits?

There are a number of factors which ESD takes into consideration to determine who can receive benefits. We look at:

1. The number of hours you have worked in the past 12-18 months, to determine if you have the minimum 680 hours required in the base year (the time frame your claim's maximum benefits amount will be based on).
2. The reason you were separated from your job: laid off, quit with good cause, terminated due to no fault of your own, or still working less than full-time.
3. If you are mentally and physically able to work, as well as available to work without restrictions that would prevent you from accepting work (for example: transportation issues, illness, vacations, or lack of family/child care).
4. If you are making an active, weekly job search to make sure you are looking for work in occupations that you are willing and able to work in. You must keep a log of your job search activities.
5. If you are legally authorized to work in the United States during your base year and the weeks you are claiming benefits.

### Covered and Non-covered employment

Covered employment is a type of job for which your employer is required to pay into the unemployment tax trust fund. It is not a deduction from your paycheck.

**Non-covered employment** includes such occupations as:

1. Self-employed workers
2. Elected government officials
3. Church employees
4. Appraisers
5. Amateur sports officials, like umpires and referees
6. Work-study students
7. Workers on some small fishing boats
8. Corporate officers
9. Workers paid based on commission