



J.B. Pritzker, Governor

Raymond P. Marchiori, Director

How to File an Unemployment Insurance Claim and Certify for Benefits

January 2025

Presented by the Illinois Department of Employment Security
Service Delivery|

Unemployment Insurance Benefits Overview

- Unemployment insurance is a state-administered program designed to provide workers with financial assistance during temporary periods of involuntary unemployment or underemployment.

Monetary Eligibility Requirements

- One of the requirements for receiving unemployment benefits is Monetary Eligibility.
- Monetarily Eligibility means you must have earned enough wages during the period of review to receive unemployment benefits.
- The amount you are eligible to receive is based on your earnings and is called your Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA).

Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA)

- The minimum Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA) is \$51, not including a dependent spouse or child
- The maximum Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA) is \$605, not including a dependent spouse (\$ 721) or child (\$ 827)

- As of 1/07/2025

Dependent Allowance

You may receive a Dependent Allowance in addition to your Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA) if you have:

- a. A dependent child under the age of eighteen (18) or;
 - b. A non-working spouse
- You can claim one or the other. You cannot claim both your spouse and your child as a dependent.
 - Reporting more than one dependent child will not increase your Dependent Allowance.

Dependent Allowance

- The minimum allowance for a dependent spouse is \$15; the maximum allowance is \$128.
- The minimum allowance for a dependent child is \$26; the maximum allowance is \$222.

Other Eligibility Requirements



Besides being monetarily eligible for benefits, other requirements which must be met to be eligible for benefits are:

1. You must be able and available for work.
2. You must be actively seeking work.
3. If required, you must register for work with Illinois Job Service website Illinois Job Link at www.Illinoisjoblink.com

The registration for work is section 500A of the unemployment insurance act.

Able, Available and Actively Seeking Work

- During each week, you must be willing, ready and able to accept a suitable job; you must be able to, and available for work.
- Report any unavailable days when you certify. Unavailable days include days that you are away on vacation or days you must stay at home to care for a sick child, for example.
- The law states that you must be actively seeking work on your own initiative. Keep a log of your job search activities for every week in which you claim benefits. If your eligibility is challenged, you may be required to produce that document. www.illinoisjoblink.com can help.

Able, Available and Actively Seeking Work

- Save your written records documenting your work search for any week being claimed until one year has passed from the end of that week.
- A work search form is available on our web site. If you apply in person, you will receive a work search form from the local office personnel.



**Tip:
Enter
your work
search on
IJL!**

Illinois Job Link

 [IllinoisJobLink.com](https://www.IllinoisJobLink.com)

The Illinois Job Link (IJL) is state of Illinois job service website to enhance an individual's ability to obtain employment and is also an eligibility requirement.

- There are exceptions to this requirement, including where local labor market conditions indicate employment service registration would not increase the likelihood of returning to work.

Information Needed to File Your Claim

It is important to have all the following information before you begin the filing process. The application will time out after an hour of nonuse:

- Your social security number
- Your Drivers License or State ID
- Your employment history from the past 18 months to include name of employers, employer address, start date, last day of work and number of days worked.

Information Needed to File Your Claim

If you are claiming a dependent child or a dependent spouse, you will need to provide your dependents:

- Name
- Social Security Number and;
- Date of Birth

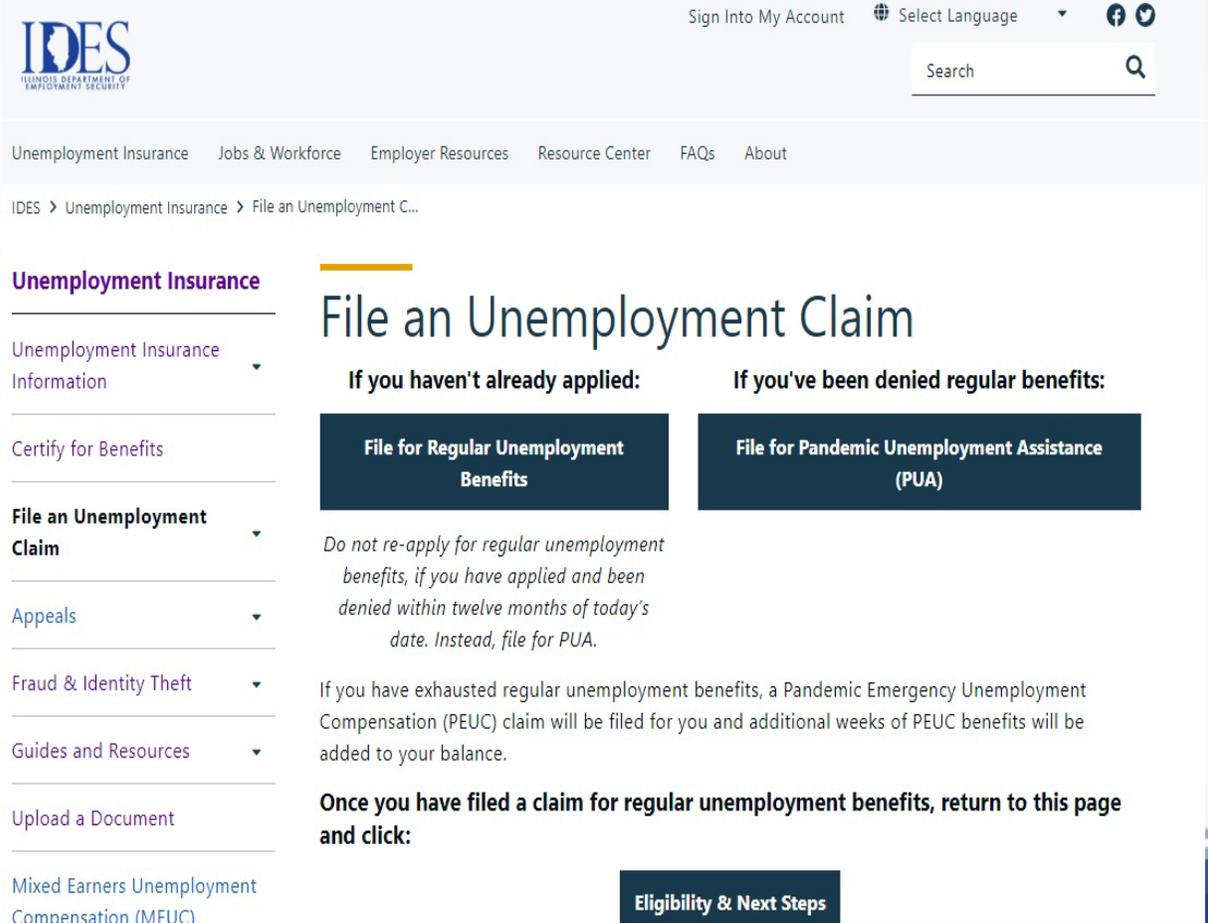
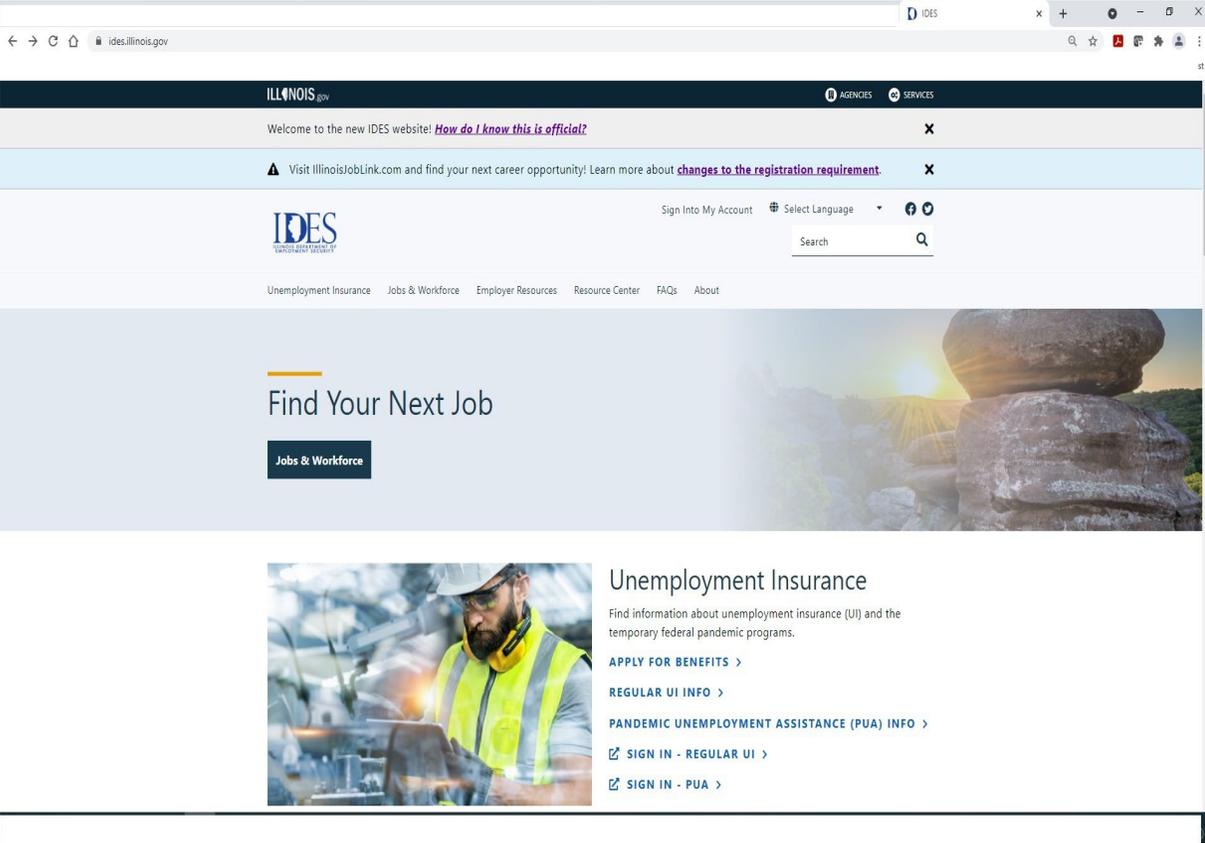
When to File

- File your claim for unemployment insurance benefits **during the first week of unemployment**, which would be the week you were laid off or your hours were reduced.
- Your claim is effective the week you file for benefits.
- However, if you worked during the week in which you are filing and those earnings are equal to or exceed the amount you are eligible to receive in benefits, your claim will be effective the following week.

(Example: You file your claim on 1/07/2025. Your last day of work was Friday, 1/3/2025, and you earned \$500 for that week. If your weekly benefit amount is \$300, you are not unemployed for that week (1/3) and your claim will be effective the following week, 1/07/2025.)

Where to File

- Apply for benefits online at: www.ides.illinois.gov
– Available anytime

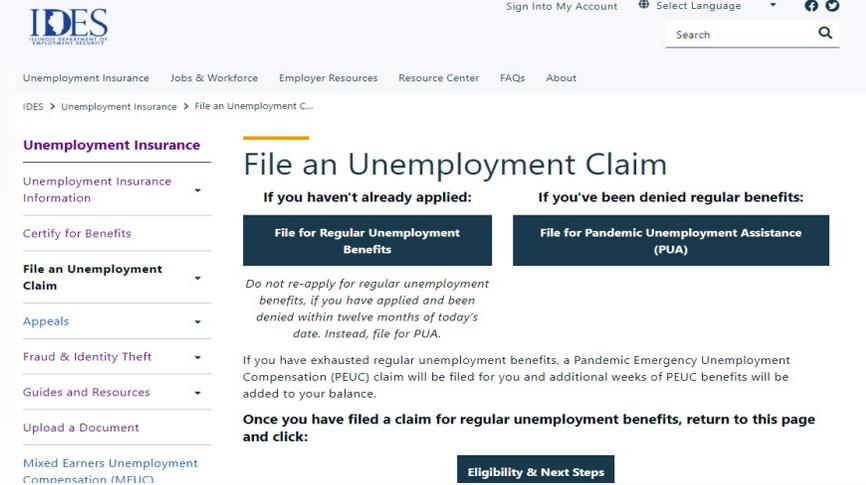


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There are instances where individuals are unable to register online and are therefore unable to file their claim online.

If you are unable to register and file online, you will need to contact Claimant Services at 800-244-5631 for assistance.

What Happens Next?

State of Illinois

Department of Employment Security



**I Filed My Claim
What Happens Now?**

What Happens Next?

After your claim is filed, IDES will send you a UI Finding, which will include information such as:

- Your Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA), which is the amount you are eligible to receive each week.
- Your Dependent Allowance, if applicable.
- Your first certification date and;
- Other information pertinent to your claim, including your Maximum Benefit Allowance.

What Happens Next?

Illinois Department of Employment Security
 Local Office City
 Local Office Address
 Local Office City, State & Zip Code
 Phone: (000) 000-0000 TTY: (000) 000-0000
 Fax: (000) 000-0000

www.ides.illinois.gov



JOHN Q. PUBLIC
 100 MAIN STREET
 ANYTOWN, IL 60000



Date Mailed: 05/25/2010
 Claimant ID: 0000000

U. I. Findings - Example

(Este es un documento importante. Si usted necesita un intérprete, póngase en contacto con su oficina local.)

Dependent Type: None
 Payment Method: Pending Debit Card
 Last Employer: WWWW Employer Inc.
 Unemployment Reason: Laid-Off (Lack of Work)

Filing Type: In-Person
 Last Day Worked: 05/21/2010

Your bi-weekly call certification day is: Wednesday
 Your First Certification date is: 06/09/2010

You may certify by telephone at (312) 338-4337 or by using the Internet at www.ides.illinois.gov/certify. The best way to certify for benefits is the internet. These services are available Monday – Friday from 05:00AM to 07:30PM.

Illinois Department of Employment Security
 Local Office City
 Local Office Address
 Local Office City, State & Zip Code
 Phone: (000) 000-0000 TTY: (000) 000-0000
 Fax: (000) 000-0000
 www.ides.illinois.gov



JOHN Q. PUBLIC
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You have the option of depositing your UI benefit payments directly into your checking account or directly applied to a debit card. To begin the process, visit the IDES website at www.ides.illinois.gov and look for payment options or contact your local office.

Your current payment status is pending debit card. A debit card will be issued to you within the next 7 days. This card must be activated by calling (888) 708-2747 to receive your benefits, please activate as soon as you receive the debit card.

Federal Additional Compensation (FAC) Program provides a \$20 weekly supplement to individuals who are eligible to receive unemployment benefits under federal or state law.

If you have established a benefit beginning prior to May 30, 2010 the payment of FAC will continue for any week which you are eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits through the week ending December 11, 2010. If your benefit year did not begin prior to May 30, 2010 FAC benefits will end with the week ending April 3, 2010.

FAC benefits are subject to federal and state laws.

An individual may not receive a FAC supplement if they are ineligible for unemployment benefits. If you were paid a FAC supplement to which you were not entitled, an overpayment will be established.

Benefit Year Begin Date: 05/16/2010
 Date of Claim: 05/25/2010
 Benefit Year End Date: 05/09/2011
 Program Type: Regular

Qualifying Period Quarters and Wages (Week)	01-0000 (Q)	02-0000 (Q)	03-0000 (Q)	04-0000 (Q)
Employee Name	01-0000 (Q)	02-0000 (Q)	03-0000 (Q)	04-0000 (Q)
Wage Rate (State/Local/Fed)	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Wage Rate (Federal) FICA	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00

*Many of the wages shown above are not yours, contact your local office immediately.

Weekly Benefit Amount: \$20.00
 Dependence Allowance: 0.00
 Benefit Amount per Week: \$20.00

Maximum Benefit Balance (Does not include dependency allowance): \$10,000.00

If you think this information is incorrect or require additional information, contact the local office below.

Appeal Rights: If you disagree with the amount of wages shown.

Local Office Name
 Local Office Address
 Phone: (000) 000-0000



Maximum Benefit Allowance

Maximum Benefit Allowance is the total amount you are eligible to receive during your benefit year.

- The Maximum Benefit Allowance is your Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA) times 26 weeks.
- The Maximum Benefit Allowance does not include your Dependent Allowance.

Example: Your weekly benefit amount is \$350. Your Maximum Benefit Allowance is \$350 (WBA) X 26 (Weeks) =\$9100.

Certification

- Certification involves answering a list of questions which are asked to determine if you are eligible to receive unemployment benefits for the weeks in question. Questions are available in “I Filed My Claim” document.
- You will be assigned a certification day; either Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday and will be asked questions pertaining the two weeks immediately preceding.

Example: If your call date is Monday, 9/13/2021, you will be asked questions pertaining to the week of 09/5/2021 through 09/11/2021.

- If you miss your regular certification day you can certify on Thursday or Friday of the same week. You may also you certify on your regular day in the following week (or Thursday or Friday of that week).

Certification

- There are two ways to certify for benefits:
- You can call the agency's touch-tone voice response system called Tele-Serve at **1-312-338-4337**
 - Available from 5 AM to 7:30 PM or;
- You can certify online at <http://www.ides.illinois.gov/>
 - Available from 5 AM to 7:30 PM

Certification



Sign Into My Account

Select Language



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Certify for Benefits Things You Should Know Before Certifying

Benefit Year Ending Information:

Has it been one year since you first filed for benefits? No need to worry – we're working to keep your claim active. [Find out what it means when your benefit year is ending.](#)

Regular UI Certification Timeline:

[English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Polish](#) | [Chinese](#) | [Arabic](#) | [Tagalog](#) | [Hindi](#)

- The best way to complete your certification is online from **3:00am - 7:30pm** on your designated certification day, including holidays.
- Thursdays and Fridays are make-up days if you miss your certification day
- You may also certify by [Tele-Serve](#) at (312) 338-4337 (3:00am - 7:30pm, Monday - Friday)

PUA Certification Timeline:

[English](#) | [Spanish](#) | [Polish](#) | [Chinese](#) | [Arabic](#) | [Tagalog](#) | [Hindi](#)

Certify Online Here:

[Certify \(Regular UI, PEUC, or EB\)](#)

[Certify \(PUA\)](#)



Certify for Benefits

Certification is how eligible claimants are paid benefits. Regular UI claimants certify every other week. Be sure to certify on your assigned day.

[CERTIFY FOR BENEFITS >](#)

[BENEFITS HANDBOOK >](#)

[GUIDE TO ADDITIONAL CLAIMS >](#)

Payment Options

- You will receive payment via paper check
- You have the option to set up Direct Deposit to your checking or savings account online at www.ides.illinois.gov . If your direct deposit is not set up at the time of your certification your benefits will be paid to you by paper check. Once your Direct Deposit is set up, benefits will automatically go to your Direct Deposit account.

Benefit Payment

- Once you have certified for benefits, it will be determined if you are eligible to receive benefits based on the answers you provided.
- If you are eligible to receive benefits, generally you will receive a payment within 2 to 3 business days.
- Payments will be sent via paper check; or if you set up direct deposit, payments will be deposited into your bank account.
- You are now eligible to receive payment for the first week of your claim, along with the second week. We no longer have a waiting week.

Benefit Payment

- Unemployment insurance benefits are subject to State and Federal income taxes.
- You can elect to have deductions taken out at the time you file your claim or after.
- Deductions are 10% federal income taxes and 4.95% state income taxes.
- You can not elect deductions on a payment you have already been paid.

FAQ

Can I work and receive benefits?

Yes. If you work and your gross earnings are less than your Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA), you may be eligible for all or partial benefits. For example, earning less than half of your WBA will not affect the amount you receive. However, if you earn more than half of your WBA, anything over half of your WBA will be deducted from your benefits.

Part-time Unemployment

Example: Your WBA is \$350. You earned \$275 working. Since half of your WBA is $\$350/2 = \175 , your benefits will be reduced as follows: $\$275$ (earnings) - $\$175 = \100 , which means \$100 will be deducted from your WBA.

Therefore, for the week that you worked and earned wages in the amount of \$275, you will receive $\$350$ (WBA) - $100 = \$250$ plus your Dependent Allowance, if applicable.

Note: Dependent allowance is payable only if benefits are payable.

Disqualifying Income

I receive a pension. Will this affect my unemployment benefits?

If the pension was paid by an employer in the base period or the employer is the chargeable employer on your claim, those pension payments are considered disqualifying income.

- 50% of the amount you receive may be deducted from your Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA) if you paid into the pension or;
- 100% will be deducted if your employer paid the full amount.
- If you received a lump sum amount and did not have the option to receive monthly payments, a deduction will be made **only** for the week in which you received the payment.
- If it has been more than 18 months since you worked for the employer, the pension you are paid is not disqualifying income and therefore, will not be deducted from your benefits.

Workers' Compensation

Is workers' compensation the same as unemployment compensation? No. Workers' Compensation is payment made based on the Workers' Compensation Act and are paid due to a temporary disability.

If I receive Workers' Compensation will this affect my unemployment benefits? Yes. 100% of your workers' compensation will be deducted from your Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA).

Important Numbers and Websites

File your claim, certify for benefits, check your payment status

at: www.ides.illinois.gov

Tele-Serve: 1-312-338-4337

Claimant Services: 1-800-244-5631

Fax Number (for sending ALL documents): 1-217-557-4913