

# Information for Laid Off Workers - Dane County Unemployment Insurance, Job Center of Wisconsin, Health Insurance, WorkSmart, and 211

[This information is current as of 31 January 2024 but changes do occur so please check the websites noted for any updates!]

## Some things to know before you file your Unemployment Insurance (UI) claim:

EVERYTHING is done online so find internet/computer access if you don't already have it. [It can be done on a smartphone but it's not easy.]

For internet assistance, visit <https://psc.wi.gov/Pages/Programs/BroadbandEmergencyInternetResources.aspx>.

This site is maintained by the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin and includes a public WiFi locations map.

Using the same username and password for your logon for both UI and the Job Center of Wisconsin may make it easier to remember.

But, if you already have a Job Center account established, you can use that information. There is no need to change it.

You will need an e-mail address (and it shouldn't be your work e-mail).

You will need to provide your SSN, first/last name, date of birth, gender, address, your WI driver's license number/ID, and your work history.

There are a number of questions or prompts. Read each one carefully. Always be honest. If you don't understand, call for assistance.

Unemployment Insurance is taxable income so consider having federal and state taxes withheld.

There are no paper checks issued. All payments are either direct deposit or "loaded" on a debit card.

The maximum weekly UI benefit in Wisconsin is \$370 and that is based on your wage history.

## File your initial Unemployment Insurance claim NOW (<https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/apply/>)!!

This will register/open your Unemployment Insurance (UI) account with the WI Department of Workforce Development.

This is the first step of the two-step process. After this, you will need to file WEEKLY claims for every week you do not work.

If you are laid off/furloughed intermittently (and there is more than a fourteen day "gap"), you may need to repeat this step.

Once you've established your account, you will need to file weekly claims once the week is over for as long as you are unemployed.

## Since the COVID-19 pandemic is "technically" over, there are no increased federal payments or other enhanced benefits.

## Register online/create an account with the Job Center of Wisconsin ([www.JobCenterofWisconsin.com](http://www.JobCenterofWisconsin.com)).

You may be taken directly to this website from the Unemployment Insurance website since it is a required step.

This is a three step process and will take a bit of time. You will need all items mentioned in the first section and your ten-year job history.

You will need to upload a resume or create one online.

If you do not get three big green check marks on the screen when you're done, your registration is not complete!

At this time, even if you may eventually be returning to work for your same employer, this step must be completed.

There is IN PERSON assistance available at the Dane County Job Center at 1819 Aberg Avenue in Madison (from 8:00 a.m. to 4:20 p.m.).

They help with job center registration, resumes, cover letters, job applications, and unemployment benefits.

## FOUR weekly work search actions are required EVERY week unless waived by the Unemployment Insurance office.

All job searches must be documented and it is recommended to use the Work Search Plan template to keep track of these.

These will need to be added online manually when you file your weekly claim.

Alternatively, you may document your work search actions on the Weekly Work Search Entry Form in your claimant portal.

You would do this by visiting your "UI Home Page" and selecting "Enter Work Search".

You cannot apply work search activities from a prior week to a future week.

The work search documentation is in addition to filing your weekly claim. Both must be done!

Keep proof of your work search actions for a year. We may request acceptable proof of your work search actions at any time.

## Have you lost your health insurance?

Job loss is a qualifying event to allow for special enrollment on the Health Insurance Marketplace, if you're otherwise income eligible.

If your spouse has group insurance available, your job loss is a "qualifying event" for special enrollment there so contact them now.

The website [www.healthcare.gov](http://www.healthcare.gov) is a resource for health insurance coverage that may meet your needs and fit your budget.

For help finding coverage or for general health insurance type questions, Covering Wisconsin ([www.CoveringWI.org](http://www.CoveringWI.org)) is a great resource.

COBRA will be an option, if you have insurance now, but that is usually pretty expensive.

## If your company is permanently closed or if you know you are not going to be "recalled"/returning, register with the Dislocated Worker program. [Also known as Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) or the WorkSmart program ([www.WDBSCW.org/WorkSmart-Network.org](http://www.WDBSCW.org/WorkSmart-Network.org)).

This is how you may be eligible for free training assistance and help with looking for a job.

This program is at no cost to participants so it is a great resource. These are federal dollars, administered locally.

After your initial orientation, you will be assigned a career counselor/navigator to help you thru the process/your job search.

You are eligible for the WIOA program/training benefits essentially FOREVER so it's another sort of safety net for the future.

## United Way 211 - Help Starts Here

For other questions, don't hesitate to reach out to this free, confidential information and referral resource.

211 is available via telephone (voice or text) 24 hours a day, every day.

Covers the entire state and you reach a "live" resource specialist by simply calling 211 or texting your zip code to 898-211.

If you prefer, the information is also available online at <https://211wisconsin.org/>.

