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# What Every Worker Should Know About Unemployment Insurance

## Notice to Employers

When workers are laid off for a period of seven days or more or are separated from the payroll for any reason, employers are required to provide them with a copy of this publication. If it is not practical to provide copies at the work site, the publication should be mailed to employees' last known address within five calendar days of separation. Enter the firm's name and address in the space below:

The Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) administers the unemployment insurance program for the State of Illinois. You are entitled to unemployment insurance benefits while you are unemployed if you meet the legal requirements. Benefits are financed by employer payroll taxes – not by any deductions from your wages.

### Who Qualifies for Unemployment Insurance?

1. To qualify, you must have earned at least \$1,600 during a recent 12-month period (known as the base period) and you must have earned at least \$440 outside of the base period quarter in which your earnings were the highest. If you do not qualify under the standard base period, IDES may use the most recent four completed quarters as an alternate base period.

<i>If your Benefit Year begins:</i>	<i>Your Base Period will be:</i>	<i>Your Alternate Base Period will be:</i>
<i>This Year Between: Jan. 1 and March 31</i>	<i>Last Year Between: Jan. 1 and Sept. 30 and the year before between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31</i>	<i>Last year between: Jan. 1 and Dec. 31</i>
<i>This Year Between: April 1 and June 30</i>	<i>Last Year Between: Jan. 1 and Dec. 31</i>	<i>Last year between: April 1 and Dec. 31 and this year between Jan. 1 and Mar. 31</i>
<i>This Year Between: July 1 and Sept. 30</i>	<i>Last Year Between: April 1 and Dec. 31 and this year between Jan. 1 and March 31</i>	<i>Last year between: July 1 and Dec. 31 and this year between Jan. 1 and June 30</i>
<i>This Year Between: Oct. 1 and Dec. 31</i>	<i>Last Year Between: July 1 and Dec. 31 and this year between Jan. 1 and June 30</i>	<i>Last year between: Oct. 1 and Dec. 31 and this year between Jan. 1 and Sept. 30</i>

*If you have been awarded temporary total disability benefits under a workers' compensation act or other similar acts, or if you only have worked within the last few months, your base period may be determined differently.*

2. Your employer must be subject to the State's unemployment insurance law. Among the types of work not covered are certain agricultural, domestic, railroad and government work, and certain work done for one's family and on commission.
3. You must either be entirely out of work or be working less than full-time because full time work is not available. Your earnings must fall below a certain threshold determined at the time you file your claim.
4. Your unemployment must be involuntary. You may be disqualified if you:
  - a. quit your job voluntarily without good cause attributable to your employer;
  - b. were discharged for misconduct in connection with your work;
  - c. were discharged for a felony or theft in connection with your work; or
  - d. are out of work because of a labor dispute.

5. You must be able and available to work. Benefits are not paid for any period in which you are on vacation, when your principle occupation is that of a student (you may be eligible if you are attending a training course approved by the IDES Director) or while you engage in any other activity that makes you unavailable for work. Benefits are not paid for any day or days on which you are unable to work because of illness, disability, family responsibilities, lack of transportation, etc.
6. You must be actively seeking work and willing to accept any suitable job offered. You must keep a log of your job search activities in every week for which you claim benefits. If your eligibility is challenged, you may be required to produce that document.

### **Illinois Employment Service Registration Requirement:**

You must complete registration with Illinois Employment Services at [IllinoisJobLink.com](http://IllinoisJobLink.com) before unemployment insurance benefits can be paid. Once completing your registration at [IllinoisJobLink.com](http://IllinoisJobLink.com), you can create a resume and search for work.

### **Information Needed to File for Benefits:**

- Your Social Security Number and Name as it appears on your Social Security card;
- Your Driver License / State ID (this will provide your weight, which is required when filing);
- If claiming your spouse or child as a dependent, the Social Security Number, date of birth and name(s) of dependent(s);
- Name, mailing address, phone number, employment dates, and separation reason for all the employers you worked for in the last 18 months;
  - Wage records (W-2 form, check stubs, etc.) from these employers may be necessary.
- If you worked since Sunday of this week, the gross wages earned this week;
  - You must report all gross wages for any work performed, full or part-time;
  - Gross means the total amount earned before deductions, not “take home pay”, including wages in the form of lodging, meals, merchandise or any other form;
  - Gross wages must be reported the week in which they are earned, not the week in which you receive the wages;
  - If your gross wages earned in any week are less than your weekly benefit amount, you still may be eligible to receive a full or partial benefit payment);
- Records of any pension payments you are receiving (not including Social Security);
- If you are not a United States citizen, your Alien Registration Information;
- If you are a recently separated veteran, the Member 4 Copy of the DD form 214 / 215;
  - Other copies of the DD Form 214 / 215 are acceptable, but the Member 4 copy is the most commonly available.
- If you are separated from work as a civilian employee of the federal government, copies of your Standard Form 8 and Personnel Action Form 50.

## **When and Where to File:**

File your claim for unemployment insurance benefits during the first week after you have become unemployed. We recommend filing for benefits online at [ides.illinois.gov](http://ides.illinois.gov), or you may file in person at a local IDES office. Check our website for office locations.

Please review the **Unemployment Insurance Benefits Handbook** for additional requirements and more detailed information. This and other publications are available online at [ides.illinois.gov](http://ides.illinois.gov).

If you have additional questions, please call **IDES Claimant Services** at **(800) 244-5631** or **TTY: (866) 488-4016**.

*The law provides jail sentences and fines if you attempt to obtain benefits fraudulently by withholding pertinent information or by making false statements with your claim.*

IDES is an equal opportunity employer and complies with all state and federal nondiscrimination laws in the administration of its programs. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact the manager of the IDES office nearest you or the IDES Equal Opportunity Officer at (312) 793-9290 or TTY: (888) 340-1007.

Note: The information contained in this brochure is subject to change at any time. For the latest information, visit the IDES Web site at [www.ides.illinois.gov](http://www.ides.illinois.gov).