

## **Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Unemployment Under SharedWork Ohio**

(adapted from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) Website

(<http://jfs.ohio.gov/ouio/CoronavirusAndUI.stm>) and

(<http://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/SharedWorkOhio-ParticipatingEmployeeInformationSheet.stm>)

An executive order issued by Governor DeWine expands flexibility for Ohioans to receive unemployment benefits during Ohio's emergency declaration period. In addition, the waiting period for eligible Ohioans to receive unemployment benefits will be waived. Furthermore, the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides for an additional 13 weeks of Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation benefits (through December 26, 2020 in accordance with the law and the ODJFS pay week), as well as an additional \$600 per week for all employees receiving state unemployment compensation (through July 25, 2020 in accordance with the law and the ODJFS pay week).

1. What is SharedWork Ohio?
  - a. The SharedWork Ohio program is a layoff aversion program that allows employers to reduce affected employees' hours by 10 to 50 percent while permitting the employees to receive a prorated unemployment benefit while continuing to work.
2. Who is eligible for SharedWork Ohio benefits?
  - a. In order to receive SharedWork Ohio benefits, you must meet the eligibility requirements for regular unemployment. While your hours will be reduced, you must be available to work with your SharedWork Ohio employer up to your normal weekly hours per week (the same hours you worked before the SharedWork Ohio plan went into effect).
3. How is unemployment under a SharedWork Ohio agreement different than regular unemployment?
  - a. Individuals whose FTE is reduced by less than 50% may be eligible for unemployment if their employer has received approval under a SharedWork Ohio agreement. The eligibility and benefit amounts are the same as regular unemployment except that employees will be eligible for unemployment benefits proportionate to their reduced hours.
4. What are the regular eligibility requirements for unemployment benefits?
  - a. Individuals must have at least 20 weeks of employment and an average weekly wage of \$269 during the base period of the claim. The 'base period' is the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters at the time the claim is filed. (Claims filed after April 4th would be calculated on the four quarters beginning January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019. For a detailed explanation of the base period, see pages 14-16 of the Worker's Guide to Unemployment Insurance on the ODJFS website: <http://www.odjfs.state.oh.us/forms/num/JFS55213/pdf/>).
5. Do the current expansions of unemployment, like the waiving of the 'waiting week' and waiving of the need to search for work, apply to SharedWork Ohio participants?
  - a. Unlike regular unemployment benefits, with SharedWork Ohio you do not need to search, or apply, for other jobs even without the current expansions. However, like regular unemployment under the current benefit expansions, SharedWork Ohio participants do not have to serve a 'waiting week' at this time.

6. How much would I have expected to receive in benefits if my employment had been reduced by more than 50% and my application was approved?
  - a. The weekly benefit amount under regular unemployment is typically half the claimant's previous wages up to a set maximum (range of \$480-\$647 per week depending on qualified dependents claimed). Additionally, if you receive any amount of state unemployment benefits, you will be eligible to receive an additional \$600 per week under the federal CARES Act.
7. How will my SharedWork Ohio benefit be calculated?
  - a. If you are eligible, you will receive a portion of the amount you would have received if you had been laid off from your SharedWork Ohio employer. For example, if you had been laid off from a 40-hour-a-week job and your weekly unemployment benefit would have been \$200, but your employer instead reduced your hours by 20 percent under a SharedWork Ohio plan, you would be eligible to receive 20 percent of \$200, or \$40. You will also be eligible to receive the additional \$600 per week under the federal CARES Act.
8. How do I initially apply for benefits?
  - a. Your employer has already submitted your name as a part of their SharedWork Ohio agreements. You may apply for unemployment benefits either online at <http://unemployment.ohio.gov/> or by calling 1-877-644-6562 between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays. The system will recognize you as a SharedWork Ohio applicant and will automatically list "Still Employed" as the answer to the question "What is your reason for separation?" Please do not change this answer.
9. How do I file for weekly benefits?
  - a. Your SharedWork Ohio employer will submit data to ODJFS on your behalf, including the hours you worked. You will then be asked to confirm the information and provide additional details, such as any outside, non-SharedWork Ohio hours worked. You will confirm the employer's answers and file continued claims online at <http://unemployment.ohio.gov/>. IMPORTANT: You must confirm the employer's answers before payment is released. Failure to do so may result in denied benefits. ODJFS will notify your employer every two weeks when the system is ready for you to file. Please wait for notice from your employer before attempting to file your claims. To avoid any delay in benefits, file your claims as soon as you receive notification.
10. How long can I receive benefits? Could unemployment be offered indefinitely through this crisis?
  - a. Claimants of regular unemployment may receive up to 26 weeks of benefits a year. Currently, there is no extension of benefits in place. However, because SharedWork Ohio participants are still working at least 50% of time, the unemployment benefits are available for a longer period of time (up to 52 weeks).
11. Can I file my application on my mobile device?
  - a. Yes, you can use the web browser on your mobile device to apply online. Please use caution when entering information to make sure that what you type is accurate, including your Social Security number and bank account number.

12. What is being done for potentially qualified individuals who still cannot access unemployment?  
Wait times on phone calls are lengthy and the website is occasionally not working as expected, and people are being denied automatically.
- a. ODJFS apologizes for any difficulties employees are having with regular unemployment. However, SharedWork Ohio arrangements are handled differently than regular unemployment and the team dedicated to SharedWork Ohio has indicated that the access and speed issues being experienced are not as great. In addition, all benefits will be retroactive to the date claimants became eligible.
13. My driver's license is expired, and I can't renew it because the BMV is shut down. Can I still file for unemployment?
- a. Yes. Please enter the expired driver's license number in the required field. At this time, no claim will be stopped as a result of an expired license.
14. What do I need to apply for Unemployment Insurance Benefits?
- a. You will need:
  - b. Your Social Security number
  - c. Your driver's license or state ID number
  - d. Your name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address
  - e. Name, address, telephone number, and dates of employment with each employer you worked for during the past 6 weeks of employment
  - f. ~~The reason you became unemployed~~ The system will recognize you as a SharedWork Ohio applicant and will automatically list "Still Employed" as the answer to the question "What is your reason for separation?" Please do not change this answer.
  - g. Dependents' names, Social Security numbers, and dates of birth
    - i. If claiming dependents, your spouse's name, Social Security number, and birth date
  - h. If you are not a U.S. citizen or national, alien registration number and expiration date
  - i. Your regular occupation and job skills
  - j. Also, if you had out-of-state employment, have worked for the federal government, or are separated from military service, more information is required, including Form DD-214, member 4 copy (for military service) and/or the SF-8 or SF-50 form (for federal government employment).
15. My benefits were previously exhausted. What do I do?
- a. You may qualify for an additional 13 weeks of Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation benefits under the, CARES Act which was signed into law on March 27. The benefit amount will be similar to traditional unemployment benefits, plus an additional \$600. Necessary system programming to enable these benefits is underway. Benefits will be retroactive to the date claimants became eligible.