



(See Updates in RED)

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UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI) SPECIFIC SCENARIOS

I am confused by the work search question. I am currently out of work due to COVID-19 related reasons and not being paid by my employer. If I am approved for benefits, I am worried because I don't know when I will be allowed to return to work. I am not looking for another job right now because many businesses are closed, and I should be returning to my current employer. How should I answer the question and still tell the truth?

It is understandable to be confused. Just during the pandemic and until Governor has lifted restrictions, please be sure to answer YES to question 1 on your weekly claim. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commissioner has waived the requirement to look for work. If you answer no, your benefits will be stopped.

I am working from home full-time and getting paid by my employer. Can I file for benefits and, if so, will I be eligible?

You can only receive unemployment benefits if you are totally or partially unemployed. If you are working full-time, unfortunately, you will not be eligible to receive benefits. You may file, but you risk being assessed an overpayment down the road, when the Department has more time to fully review all claims. Moreover, if you are working full-time, and you say on your unemployment claims that you are not, that is fraud, and carries monetary and possibly criminal penalties, as well as your needing to pay benefits back, perhaps with interest.

If I need to take time off from work because I come down with COVID-19 and have no paid time off through my employer, OR if I am terminated from my job because I come down with COVID-19 can I collect unemployment benefits?

You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. However, please note that an individual must be physically and mentally able for full time work and ready to return to work in order to qualify for unemployment benefits, unless the individual has a note from a physician stating that the individual is only available for part time work.

My employer is requiring that I self-quarantine for 14 days even though I am not sick, and I am not getting paid OR my employer closed its doors and is requiring all employees to stay home for 14 days. My employer does not offer teleworking, and we are not getting paid. Can I collect unemployment benefits?

You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

I am unable to work because a family member is ill. Can I collect unemployment benefits?

If you are unable to work, you are most likely ineligible for UI until you are able to work. However, you may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

I am physically and mentally able to work, but home during the pandemic with my young children. Can I collect unemployment benefits?

You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. You may restrict your availability to return to work due to compelling personal circumstances (childcare) as long as you remain genuinely attached to the labor market. In other words, ready to return to work after a brief readjustment period to make childcare arrangements so that you are available for work.

If my employer only permits me to work part-time rather than my full-time hours OR if I have a full time and part time job and my full-time employer closes because of COVID-19, will I be able to collect unemployment benefits?

You should file for benefits as you may be eligible for partial unemployment. Please note: when working and filing, all hours and gross earnings must be reported. A portion of your gross earnings will be deducted from your weekly benefit rate.

If I have a full time and part time job and my part-time employer closes because of COVID-19, will I be able to collect unemployment benefits?

No. You would be considered fully employed and would not be eligible for unemployment benefits.

Religious schools and churches are generally not covered by unemployment. Are teachers who work for religious institutions eligible for UI benefits?

- Generally, no, unless the specific employer has “opted in” to voluntarily participate in the Unemployment Compensation program. Affected workers may file for unemployment benefits, and a determination will be made on the individual’s eligibility for benefits on a case-by-case basis.
- However, you may be eligible for benefits under the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program. For more information, go to the Federal Stimulus FAQs at this link <http://www.ctdol.state.ct.us/DOLCOVIDFAQ.PDF>. Check the FAQs regularly as they are updated often.

I received an offer to return to work, but I am concerned about the safety of the position in light of COVID-19. Will I be denied unemployment for that week?

Unemployment benefits are paid on a week to week basis. If the Governor's restrictions are still in place regarding essential and nonessential employment, or you have concerns regarding your specific place of employment, you may have good cause to refuse your employment as it is not suitable due to possible exposure to the COVID-19 virus, and would not be denied benefits on that basis.

I am an educational employee. Will I be eligible for unemployment during the summer?

Unemployment benefits are paid on a week to week basis. If the Governor's restrictions regarding schools is lifted by the summer, an educational employee returning to work in the fall may have reasonable assurance, and a fact-finding would need to be conducted to determine continuing eligibility.

I am a temporary worker. Will I be eligible for unemployment benefits?

You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. However, please note that an individual must be physically and mentally able for full time work and ready to return to work in order to qualify for unemployment benefits, unless the individual has a note from a physician stating that the individual is only available for part time work.

May an employer require that I deplete my PTO time during the period of time I am out of work – whether it is due to a temporary shutdown, or any other reason? How will that affect my unemployment benefit?

An employer may require an employee to take Paid Time Off, except that an employer may not take a deduction for the time that an exempt employee is absent from work from the employee's accrued benefits when a lack of work is due to the operating requirements of the employer. In regard to the unemployment payment, PTO that constitutes sick time is being considered a non-allocable bonus under CTDOL regulations which means that it will not be deducted from a claimant's unemployment benefit. Otherwise, a claim will need to go to a fact-finding to determine if the dismissal/separation payment may be non-allocable as vacation time if the employee's place of business has closed and there are no reemployment opportunities at that location or as severance pay, and the severance payments are conditioned upon the employee signing a waiver of statutory or common law rights.

If my employer lays me off due to COVID-19 or any other reasons, and I receive severance payments, how will that affect my unemployment benefit?

If you were required to waive a common law or statutory right to receive the severance payment, it will not be deducted from your weekly benefit payment. If you did not waive such rights, then it will be deducted from your weekly benefit payment.

If my employer pays me a supplemental payment to make up the difference between my unemployment benefits payment and my regular salary, how will that affect my unemployment payment?

Supplemental pay provided to an employee is non-allocable, which means that it would not be deducted from your weekly benefit payment.

My employer may have retaliated against me because I filed for unemployment benefits. Is there any recourse?

Yes. It is illegal for an employer to retaliate against individuals who have exercised their rights under the Connecticut Unemployment Compensation Act. Conn. Gen. Stat. §31- 226a provides individuals who believe that they have been retaliated against with an opportunity for a hearing.

If I received paid sick leave, am I eligible for unemployment benefits?

No, you would not be eligible for unemployment benefits during a week in which you received paid sick leave.

I work full-time and my employer has reduced my pay, but not my hours. Can I file for benefits and, if so, will I be eligible?

Anyone can file for benefits. However, an individual is only eligible to receive unemployment benefits if the individual is totally or partially unemployed. If you are working full-time, unfortunately, you will not be eligible to receive benefits, even if the employer has reduced your pay. If you left your employment due to a substantial reduction in pay, that could be found to be non-disqualifying as the employer unilaterally and adversely changed your conditions of employment. In either scenario, a decision on your eligibility would only be determined after a fact-finding process.