



What to do if you've become unemployed in Massachusetts

About unemployment benefits, career services, and finding a new job

We know losing your job is stressful. The information and resources in this guide are available to support you while you seek new employment.

If you're out of work and able and available to work, you may be eligible for unemployment insurance (UI). If you qualify, you will receive weekly payments while you search for a new job. The amount you receive is based on what you earned in the last year.

The Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) manages the UI program for Massachusetts. The MassHire Department of Career Services provides free resources to help you get back to work.

What to do in your first few weeks

1. Check your potential eligibility for unemployment benefits

When: **Immediately** after losing your job.

2. Apply for UI benefits

When: **As soon as possible**. Apply within your first week of partial or total unemployment.

3. Search for work and request your UI benefits

When: **In your first week**, and **repeat every week you are seeking benefits**.

4. Use career services

When: You may receive a **deadline** to attend a **required** program. Take advantage of **additional resources** at any time.

1. Check your potential eligibility for unemployment benefits



When: **Immediately** after losing your job.

The unemployment insurance (UI) program covers most Massachusetts workers. Eligibility is determined by the Department of Unemployment Assistance.

You may be eligible for UI benefits if you meet all of the following criteria:

- Lost your job, or are working significantly reduced hours, through no fault of your own
- Earned at least \$5,100 over the last 4 completed calendar quarters
- Are able to work: You do not have a medical condition that prevents you from working.
- Are available to work: There is nothing preventing you from accepting a job.
- Are actively looking for work: You are currently searching for a job according to DUA requirements (see section 3 below).

Workers in some jobs may not be eligible for benefits. To read more about eligibility requirements, visit: mass.gov/service-details/check-eligibility-for-unemployment-benefits

To estimate your benefit amount, you can visit: mass.gov/service-details/how-your-unemployment-benefits-are-determined

2. Apply for UI benefits



When: **As soon as possible.** Complete within your first week of partial or total unemployment.

To apply, you will need the following information:

- Your Social Security number, birth date, home address, email address, and phone number
- Your work history for the last 15 months, including the legal names, addresses, and phone numbers of all your employers, and your work start and end dates
TIP: Your paycheck or W-2 will show your employer's legal name.
- If you have dependent children: Their legal birth dates and Social Security numbers.
- To receive payments by direct deposit, you'll also need your bank name, account number, and routing number. Otherwise, DUA will send you a debit card. (Optional)
TIP: If your application is approved, your first payment will be mailed to you as a paper check. After that, payments will be sent to you by direct deposit or by debit card, depending on the method you chose in your application. The fastest way to receive payments is to set up direct deposit.

You may need to provide additional information if you are not a U.S. citizen, are in a union, were in the military, or worked for the federal government.

How to apply

Online (recommended)

The fastest option is to apply online at www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-unemployment-benefits

TIP: You will need your password each time you log in. Make sure to save your password somewhere you will remember.

TIP: If you don't have access to a computer, you can visit your local library, MassHire Career Center, or the Boston Walk-In Center.

Phone

Call the **TeleClaim Center**. See the end of this guide for more information.

What happens next

You're not done yet: once you have applied, you still need to request your weekly benefits ([see section 3 below](#)).

Most applications are processed in 3-4 weeks unless there is an issue with your claim. There are 3 possible outcomes when you apply for UI:

- **Approved:** DUA may send you correspondence regarding your eligibility. Once your application is approved, you will start to receive benefit payments as you request them each week.
- **More information required:** If more information is needed for your application, DUA will send you a questionnaire with a deadline to respond.
- **Denied:** You will receive a Notice of Disqualification.

Watch for correspondence from DUA and MassHire in your UI Online mailbox and/or your paper mail.

3. Search for work and request your UI benefits



When: **In your first week**, and **repeat every week you are seeking benefits**.

You must search for work every week that you are unemployed. You should begin doing this **immediately**, the same week you submit your application. No payment will be issued for any week that you do not search for work and request benefits. At any point, DUA may ask you for more information.

Sunday is the first day of the week that you can request benefits for the prior week.

During the week: Complete job searches (Sunday to Saturday)

- Conduct at least 3 separate job searches on 3 separate days each week. These can include things like looking for a job online, looking for a job in person, or applying for a job. You can find a list of examples at mass.gov/service-details/work-search-examples
- Keep a written log of your searches. You can use the Work Search Activity Log template for this, which can be found at mass.gov/files/documents/2018/08/08/Work%20Search%20Form%2008-08-18.pdf. You may be required to submit this information at a later date.

After the week is over: Request benefits

After the week is over, you may request benefits anytime from Sunday through Saturday of the following week. Request benefits through UI Online (strongly recommended) or call the TeleCert number listed at the end of this guide. You will need to:

- Request your benefit payment
- Carefully answer certification questions. You must report part-time earnings or any change in your unemployment status.

4. Use career services



When: You may be given a **deadline** to attend a **required** program. Many more free, optional **resources** are available—take advantage of them anytime!

MassHire Department of Career Services offers free seminars and workshops that can help you find a job or access funded training opportunities that will increase your skills and help you get back to work.

Mandatory career services program

Watch for a notice with your first check. If selected, you will be required to report to a Career Center to participate in the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) Program by a certain deadline.

Once selected, your participation is mandatory. Schedule your appointment right away to secure a spot by your deadline. If you don't participate by the deadline, it will delay or cause you to lose your unemployment benefits.

For more information, visit: mass.gov/guides/your-rights-and-responsibilities-as-a-claimant

To find a Career Center, visit: mass.gov/how-to/find-a-masshire-career-center

Programs and resources available anytime

We encourage you to use our resources at any time throughout your job search. You can:

- Meet with career counselors and peers to get tips on how to navigate the job search process
- Attend workshops on job search techniques including interviewing, networking, and writing resumes and cover letters
- Get career planning help and information on in-demand jobs, occupations, and skills
- Access local, statewide, and national job listings
- Access resources including computers, copiers and printers, fax machines, newspapers, professional journals, business directories, and publications on job searching and careers
- Find opportunities to meet potential employers and network with other job seekers

Contact information

Online (recommended)

The UI Online web portal is the fastest way to apply, check your claim status, submit your weekly benefit request, and provide information to DUA. Make sure to save your password somewhere you will remember.

Visit uionline.detma.org/Claimant/Core/Login.ASPX

UI Online is designed to be accessed from a desktop computer or a laptop. If you log in to UI Online from a smartphone, tablet, or other mobile device, you may not be able to access certain features or view time-sensitive correspondence.

TIP: If you don't have access to a computer, you can visit your local library, MassHire Career Center, or the Boston Walk-In Center.

Phone

To apply for unemployment benefits or get help with your application

TeleClaim Center

Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Last digit of your Social Security Number:

0, 1

2, 3

4, 5, 6

7, 8, 9

Any last digit

Assigned day to call the TeleClaim Center:

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

(877) 626-6800 if you are calling from area codes 351, 413, 508, 774, and 978

(617) 626-6800 from any other area code

711 for Voice Relay

To request weekly benefits

TeleCert Line

Daily, 6 a.m. – 10 p.m.

(617) 626-6338

To check your claim or benefit payment status

Payment Status Line

(617) 626-6563

To select or reset your DUA 4-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN)

DUA Pin Selection Line

(617) 626-6943

Boston Walk-In Center

You can go to the Walk-In Center to get in-person help on your application.

Charles F. Hurley Building
19 Staniford St.
Boston, MA 02114

Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

MassHire Career Centers

Career Centers throughout the state of Massachusetts can offer support and training as you search for a new job.

To find a Career Center

Visit mass.gov/how-to/find-a-masshire-career-center

Or call (617) 626-5300

Monday – Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

To schedule a Career Center Seminar

Schedule online through JobQuest at jobquest.detma.org/jobquest/Default.aspx

Or call 1 (800) 653-5586

Or contact a Career Center directly

If you need language assistance to schedule the seminar, please call (888) 822-3422