

N E W S R E L E A S E

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EDD to Resume Work Search Requirement to Obtain Unemployment Benefits

Assistance Available to Help Connect Californians with Suitable Careers

Sacramento—As California reopens following the pandemic, the Employment Development Department (EDD) today announced that starting July 11, 2021, Californians receiving unemployment benefits should begin looking for work to maintain their eligibility. EDD will be sending notices to claimants to inform them of the reinstatement of this requirement and what it means for them.

“California offers many resources to help people to find safe and suitable careers and training opportunities that keep the economy moving,” said EDD Director Rita Saenz. “We want to make sure those on unemployment have enough lead time to start searching for work so they can remain eligible for benefits as they seek their next career opportunity.”

The requirement to search for work has been a part of the unemployment insurance program since its inception. During the pandemic, the federal government temporarily allowed states to waive this requirement, and since March 2020 the work search requirement has been suspended in California. When claimants were asked if they had looked for work when completing their weekly certification for benefits, they could answer “No” and maintain their eligibility for benefits. As California reopens, most claimants will need to answer “Yes” next month to maintain eligibility.

EDD offers many services to assist people looking for safe and suitable work and get training. That includes the [CalJOBS](#) online labor exchange system, as well as the job search assistance, resume and interview preparation, and access to job training available through [America’s Job Center of California](#) (AJCC) locations throughout the state.

[CalJOBS](#) is a no-cost virtual job center with hundreds of thousands of job postings and tools to help people find work. It is also an excellent resource where employers can post job openings and find qualified job seekers to fill their positions. CalJOBS includes over a million job listings from dozens of private job boards and recruitment sites, Fortune 1,000 companies, educational institutions, thousands of local, state and federal agencies, hundreds of healthcare organizations and many more public, private and non-profit employers.

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Different Work Search Requirements for Different Claim Types

Different work search requirements apply for those collecting benefits on a regular unemployment insurance (UI) claim or extension, or on Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA).

PUA is a federal program created to support individuals impacted by the pandemic who did not qualify for regular UI because they were, for example, self-employed or a small-business owner.

Claimants can determine the type of claim they are on by referring to EDD notices or visiting the new [Return to Work webpage](#) for tips on how to identify their claim types in UI Online. The page will also include printable fact sheets in many languages, a video with guidance on the work search requirements, and other valuable resources and information for job seekers.

In addition, those certifying every two weeks in UI Online will see new help text and guidance to help claimants assess whether they can answer “Yes” to the bi-weekly certification about looking for work. Those certifying by paper will see inserts with this helpful guidance.

Work Search Requirement for Unemployment Insurance

Claimants on regular unemployment or extension claims are expected to search for work in order to maintain eligibility for benefits. This requirement applies to finding suitable work that is safe to return to and is comparable to the worker’s skills, experience, usual occupation, age and health.

EDD will be sending notices to claimants in the coming weeks about any requirements on their specific claims. Individuals starting new claims on or after July 11 will also be notified by mail that they must register on CalJOBS--the largest job board in California.

Examples of reasonable efforts to search for suitable work each week include activities such as:

- Prepare for Job Searches – Set up an account on CalJOBS, participate in reemployment services, post a profile on various job search or networking sites.
- Expand Networks – Let friends, prior employers, or community members know you are looking for work. Participate in networking, job fair events or clubs.
- Apply for Suitable Work – Apply for positions with employers reasonably expected to have suitable openings matching skills and experience, including government jobs and exams.
- Participate in Training – Engage in permissible education and training opportunities that assist in obtaining employment and do not interfere with an ability to accept suitable full-time work.

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Claimants who engage in any of these activities can answer "Yes" to the question "Did you look for work?" that is asked every two weeks when certifying for benefits. A person who answers "No" will be asked further questions and may be scheduled for an interview to determine benefit eligibility for that time **period**.

Work Search Requirement for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

Most PUA recipients must also take action to restart their businesses or look for work starting next month. They will receive notices in the coming weeks on what's required. PUA claimants will not have to register on CalJOBS, however doing so is recommended because it has many useful tools including job training and networking opportunities.

A variety of activities can meet the PUA work search requirement each week, including:

- Rebuild Businesses – Pursue new or additional clients, market the business, or research, prepare or submit a bid on a new contract.
- Expand Networks – Attend networking events, participate in relevant workshops, or expand business.
- Establish Accounts – For independent contractors who participated in an online platform, establish an account on another platform that matches the individual's qualifications.
- Participate in Training – Enroll in training or education courses that will help the business and does not interfere with an ability to return to full-time self-employment.

A person on a PUA claim who no longer wants to continue self-employment (or was previously employed but not eligible for regular UI benefits) can look for work just like a regular UI recipient. In addition, there may be pandemic-related exemptions to the work search requirement for PUA recipients such as providing primary care to a person diagnosed with Covid-19 or a child who cannot attend school because of a Covid-19 health emergency.

Expanded Employer Resources to Bring Back Skilled Workers

If an employer furloughed or laid off workers during the pandemic, the Work Sharing Program can help bring these employees back at reduced hours. These employees can continue collecting the additional \$300 a week in federal unemployment benefits, and a portion of their wages is subsidized by the regular unemployment benefits. The federal government covers 100 percent of the costs of Work Sharing benefits.

EDD recently automated the Work Sharing application and weekly certification process in California, making it faster and easier for employers and workers to take advantage of this valuable program.

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Visit [Work Sharing Program](#) for more information. The [Employers: Reopening Your Business and Hiring Employees](#) page can also offer guidance and resources designed to help employers find qualified job candidates to fill their openings.

These improvements to the Work Sharing program aim to help more employers and employees participate in this important program as the economy continues to reopen.

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