

Employee

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



- **What is the Work Share program?**

Work Share is part of the regular unemployment program. It lets employers reduce employees' work hours by 10% to 50% instead of laying them off. Employees who qualify can receive a portion of regular unemployment insurance (UI) benefits to compensate for reduced wages. **The program does not directly replace wages lost due to reduced hours from your employer,** but instead offers partial unemployment benefits that match the percentage of hours your schedule was cut.

- **What are my (the employee's) responsibilities while in the program?**

You are responsible for managing your own claim. This includes setting up your Frances account, filing your initial unemployment claim, filing weekly claims, checking the status of your claim, and responding to any requests from the Oregon Employment Department. You do not need to look for other work while in the program. However, if you have secondary income, you must report it on your weekly claim. You must also stay able and available to work your normal work schedule with your Work Share employer.

- **How much can I earn as an employee through the program?**

How much you can earn through Work Share depends on three things:

1. Your regular unemployment claim (your Weekly Benefit Amount).
2. The amount your hours are reduced (between 10% and 50%).
3. Any other income you earn that week from outside the Work Share employer:

Example:

- Jim usually works 40 hours a week and earns **\$1,150**. His **Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA)** for unemployment is **\$750**.
- Jim's employer **cuts his hours by 20%**, so he now works **32 hours** and earns **\$992** that week.
- Because his hours were reduced by 20%, the **Work Share program will pay him 20%** of his weekly benefit:
 $20\% \times \$750 = \150 .
- So, that week, Jim earns **\$992 from work + \$150 in Work Share benefits = \$1,142 total**.

For a full breakdown and exact calculations, please visit our webpage.

- **How does the program affect benefits from my employer?**

There is no change to employer-provided benefits. To qualify for the program, employers must continue offering benefits (such as health care and retirement) under the same terms and conditions as when the employee worked their regular hours.

- **Does vacation, sick time, PTO or other time off affect the weekly claim?**

Oregon employment law requires that claimants are able, available and actively seeking work to receive benefits. Work Share claimants are already employed, so “actively seeking work” is not relevant. However, if you are absent due to taking leave, you may not be considered “available” and may not qualify for benefits. The OAR 471-030-0071 statute allows for some absences, including: jury duty, bereavement leave, illness, caring for a member of the employee’s immediate family who needs medical care, or in response to a declared emergency. Other absences need to be reviewed to decide if they would qualify for the week claimed.

If a weekly claim certification shows a missed work opportunity, the week will initially be denied during processing, and an automated letter of denial is mailed to you. However, an adjudication review is required for all missed work opportunities, and the denial may be overturned after the initial letter is sent. If you believe you have been wrongly denied, you should verify that you were paid for the week first, to be sure the denial was not already overturned before contacting us.

If you used vacation, sick time, PTO or other time off to cover a day you were scheduled to work, you should indicate that you did not accept all work offered by your employer on the weekly claim certification.

For more help, see the “How to Submit a Weekly Claim” guide available on Oregon.gov/Workshare.

- **Is there an informational webinar for employees to attend?**

Yes, there is an employee webinar held each Friday from 1 to 2 p.m., except on state holidays. Spanish versions of the webinar are provided on request.

A link to the webinar is available on Oregon.gov/WorkShare.

- **What steps do I need to follow to apply for Work Share and to administer the program?**

1. You can create an online account in Frances.Oregon.gov. There is a guide for this process on Oregon.gov/Workshare. This is optional but strongly encouraged.

2. File an initial claim. Once you have created a Frances Online account, you can file an initial claim directly by selecting “File an Unemployment Insurance claim” or by calling the Special Program Center at (503) 947-1800. File your initial claim either before or during the first week that your hours have been reduced, **not** during the week that follows. There is a guide for this process on Oregon.gov/Workshare.
3. File Weekly Claim Certifications. You can do this directly in Frances or by calling the Special Program Center at (503) 947-1800. Weekly claims must be filed from Sunday through Saturday of the week that immediately follows the week you are claiming. There is a guide for this process on Oregon.gov/Workshare.
4. Monitor your mail, email and your claim status. You will likely receive mail or email from the Oregon Employment Department that requires action. Your Frances account will also likely alert you about required tasks that need to be completed. To stay eligible, you must meet all requirements within the specified timeline.
5. Monitor your claim so you know the status. Items such as the claim expiration date, benefit payments and balances, payment methods and tax withholding information can be viewed on Frances.Oregon.gov.

- **Why does my Frances Online account show: Regular Unemployment Insurance?**

Work Share is a part of the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and is administered together with a regular UI claim. It’s different since it follows an additional set of rules that apply only when you are participating in an active Employer Work Share plan, and your work hours have been reduced by 10% to 50%. If the hours reported fall outside that range, the claim for that week will be handled as a regular UI claim.

- **How many weeks am I able to claim?**

A UI claim is valid for 52 weeks. As long as there is Maximum Benefit Amount balance, you can claim all 52 weeks until the claim expires.

- **Can I claim Work Share if I am on Workers’ Compensation?**

If you are receiving Workers’ Compensation, select “yes” on your weekly claim certification when asked “did you apply or receive workers’ compensation for an on-the-job injury?” Afterward, the Employment Department will contact you for more information about your situation, which may affect your eligibility for Unemployment Insurance benefits.

- **Can I claim Work Share and Paid Leave Oregon at the same time?**

You can file a weekly claim for both programs, but you cannot receive benefits from both at the same time. If you qualify for UI or Work Share benefits in a given week, you are not eligible for Paid Leave Oregon benefits for that same week.

Frances Access

- **How do I request access to Frances Online?**

To create a Frances account, please visit Frances.Oregon.gov. You can find a step-by-step guide to create your account in the claimant resources section of Oregon.gov/Workshare.

- **How long do I have to wait for my access letter?**

Frances access letters are mailed via USPS the day after the date they are requested. The time it takes for your mail to arrive will vary based on U.S. Postal System delivery times.

- **How long do I have to complete my registration if I request a letter?**

The information on the Frances access letter expires 14 days from the day it was mailed. If you have not completed the registration before it expires, you need to request a new letter through Frances.Oregon.gov.

Initial Claim

- **How do I apply?**

You can apply directly in Frances by clicking on “File an Unemployment Insurance Claim” or by calling the Special Program Center at (503) 947-1800. File your initial claim either before or during the first week your hours have been reduced, **not** during the week after the reduction in hours. There is a guide for this process on Oregon.gov/Workshare.

- **Why can't I find a way to file a Work Share initial claim?**

Work Share is not separate from a regular Unemployment Insurance claim. Instead, it is an additional set of rules applied to a regular UI claim that is only applied if you are on an active Employer Work Share Plan and your hours have been reduced between 10% and 50%. If you report outside of that reduction percentage, your claim will be processed as a regular UI claim. Work Share claimants file initial claims by clicking on “File a Regular Unemployment Insurance Claim”.

- **What are the timeliness requirements for submitting an initial claim?**

When an initial claim is filed, your claim will begin on the Sunday of the week it was filed. An initial claim establishes the claim account and is not the same as a weekly claim. Any period prior to the week an initial claim is filed is not available for weekly claims.

- **If I answer a question wrong on an initial claim or weekly claim, can that be corrected?**

Mistakes happen and can be corrected. If you make a mistake on your initial claim or any of your weekly claims, please contact the Special Programs Center at (503) 947-1800 for help correcting it.

Weekly Claim

- **How do I claim a week in Work Share?**

You can do this directly in Frances or by calling the Special Program Center at (503) 947-1800. You must submit your weekly claims between Sunday and Saturday of the week immediately following the week being claimed. There is a guide for this process on Oregon.gov/Workshare

- **How long does it take to process a weekly claim?**

Typically, it only takes a few minutes to file your weekly claim. If there are no issues that need to be adjudicated, benefits are usually paid to you in 3-5 business days. However, if there is an issue requiring adjudication, there may be delays.

- **What if my hours are reduced outside of the 10% to 50% reduction range?**

Weekly claims outside of the 10 to 50% range process using regular unemployment rules, where your earnings are compared to your Weekly Benefit Amount. For a full breakdown and exact calculations, please visit our webpage at Oregon.gov/WorkShare.

- **Do I report both my hours and earnings or does Frances already know my hourly wage?**

When you file your weekly claim certification, you must enter both the number of hours that you were paid, or "Hours Worked", as well as the gross earnings you are due for the week. The "Hours Worked" block should be the sum of the actual hours worked as well as any sick, vacation, PTO, or paid holiday hours that were used. The "Earnings" block is the total gross earnings that you are owed for the "Hours Worked". The "Other Pay" block is used for earnings that are not directly included in the number of "Hours Worked", this includes earnings such as tips, commissions, and bonuses.

- **What is “Other Pay”?**

The “Other Pay” block should be used for earnings that are not directly included in the number of “Hours Worked” and would include gross earnings such as tips, commissions, and bonuses. It is not used for earnings from a different employer or any non-employment activities such as rental income, pension, or annuity payments.

- **When do I need to submit my weekly claims?**

Submit your weekly claims between Sunday through Saturday of the week immediately following the week being claimed. If you submitted a claim today, it is for your employment situation last week, Sunday through Saturday. Weekly claims cannot be submitted for a week before the start date of your UI claim.

- **What does “Did you fail to accept any offer of work last week” mean?**

If you were scheduled to work, but did not work, you failed to accept an offer of work. This includes any absences, even if they were pre-approved or covered by vacation, sick, or PTO. Paid holidays are not included, since you are not expected to work on those days.

- **How do I fill out the weekly claim if I am paid for a holiday during the week?**

All hours that you are paid are included in the “Hours Worked” section. Pay earned for the paid holiday is also be included with the “Earnings”. On your weekly claim, a paid holiday should not appear as anything different than normal hours worked.

- **How do I fill out the weekly claim if I use Paid Time Off (PTO) during the week?**

If you used vacation, sick, or PTO during the week you claimed because you were absent from work, mark your weekly claim certification to show that you did not accept all work offered by your employer. The number of leave hours used is added to any hours physically worked with the sum entered in the “Hours Worked” block. The pay earned for the leave is included in the “Earnings” block. For more help, please visit the “How to submit a Weekly Claim” guide found on [Oregon.gov/Workshare](https://www.oregon.gov/Workshare).

- **How do I fill out the weekly claim if the business was closed due to weather or an unexpected event?**

Here are some examples:

1. If your employer is closed, no work is offered for the entire week, and you did not use vacation, sick, or PTO hours to cover for the hours lost, answer “yes” to the question “Were you temporarily laid off for the entire

week by your Work Share employer?”. Also note that your “Hours Worked” were “0” and your “Earnings” were \$0.

2. If your employer is closed for the entire week due to a temporary layoff, and you **did** use vacation, sick, or PTO hours to cover for the hours lost, use the number of leave hours you used as “Hours Worked” with the compensation amount as the “Earnings”.
3. If your employer is not closed, but you are unable to be physically present at work during your scheduled hours, you would answer “Yes” to the question “Did you fail to accept any offer of work last week?”. If leave was used to cover the absence, include the number of hours of leave used as “Hours Worked” with the compensation amount as the “Earnings”.

- **Do I need to file a weekly claim each week?**

You can choose to file weekly claims as needed or you can choose to file each week. If you claim each week, you can claim each week directly. However, if there is a break in weekly claiming, you need to “Restart your claim” to continue to claim after the break. If you submit weekly claims with any regularity, we suggest that you claim each week whether you have worked a full schedule or not, to avoid the need to restart your claim. Find more information about weekly claiming and restarting your claim with step-by-step instructions on [Oregon.gov.Workshare](https://www.oregon.gov/Workshare).

- **What is a waiting week?**

The waiting week is the first week you file a weekly claim and meet all requirements. Before you can start receiving benefits, Oregon law requires that you serve one waiting week per claim. You must claim the ‘waiting week’ although you won’t be paid any money for that week.

You will **not** earn waiting week credit if any of the following are true:

- You did not meet all eligibility requirements.
- You worked full time.
- You earned more than your weekly benefit amount.
- You didn’t claim the week timely.

- **Can I view past weekly claim information I have submitted in Frances?**

Yes, follow these instructions:

1. Log into Frances Online
2. Navigate to your claim and click on “View or change benefit details”
3. Click on “More...”
4. Click on the “UI Weekly Claim” for the date the claim was submitted

Restart

- **If I restart my claim, is there an additional waiting week?**

The waiting week is only applied once through the life of each Unemployment Insurance claim. Restarting your claim will only require a waiting week if it had not previously been credited to your claim.

- **When do I need to restart my claim?**

When there is a break between weekly claims, a restart is needed to resume claiming. If you report working 40 hours in a week, you may need to restart your claim before you can continue filing weekly claims.

Identity Verification

- **If I already verified my identity online when I requested Frances Online access and filed my initial claim, do I still need to verify my identity in person at the Post Office?**

Yes, you still need to verify your identity in person. Frances uses a robust identity verification system to protect you from fraud and identity theft.

Throughout the life of your claim, you may be required to complete several identity verification tasks. These requirements are in place to protect your identity.

- **If I do not have a Frances online account, how can I verify my identity at the Post Office?**

If you have computer access to a computer, go to unemployment.oregon.gov and:

1. Click on "Contact Us".
2. Select Unemployment Insurance.
3. Select "No" to "Are You Replying to a Message?"
4. Enter your email and click "Verify Email".
5. Check your email and type in the response code provided.
6. Enter "ID Verification Documents" in the subject field.
7. Type your message. Include your name, address, phone number, and either your social security number or claim ID. The claim ID is located at the top right-hand corner of any physical letters you have received from the Oregon Employment Department.

8. Click “Add Attachment” and enter a description of the document you are adding, then upload the document.
9. Repeat step 8 until all required documents have been added to the message.
10. When complete, click “Send Message”.
11. Please allow up to 7 days for review and response.

If you do not have internet access or aren't able to complete the instructions above, please go to your local WorkSource office to complete your ID verification. If you need more information, please go to <https://unemployment.oregon.gov/verify-identity>.

- **I already verified my identity, why do I have to do it again?**

If you have made any major changes to your claim, Frances Online may request you to verify your ID again.

Examples of major changes to your claim can include:

- Updating your payment method
- Updating your tax withholding selection
- Updating your address
- Trying to reopen your claim after a gap in claiming

To avoid delays in processing your claim, be sure to check your Frances Online account and mail throughout the duration of your claim.

Problems

- **Do I need to answer the Action Items/Questionnaires that are sent to me?**
When you have an action item, there is an indicator on your claim that requires review by an adjudicator. If you have an indicator that needs your response, be sure to provide that response. If you need help understanding questions or requests, please call us at (503) 947-1800. If you have an indicator that needs your attention, but there are no questionnaires there, either the adjudicator was able to complete the review without your involvement, or you failed to meet the response due date.
- **Why do I get regular Unemployment Insurance weekly claim questions?**
You may receive regular unemployment insurance questions on your weekly claim for several reasons. This can happen if there are errors in your employer's Work Share plan, if the plan has expired, or if there are mistakes on your weekly

claims. The fastest way to resolve the problem is to call us at (503) 947-1800.

- **Why isn't the last week in my Frances online account available to claim?** If the previous week is not available for you to claim, it is likely because you had a break in claiming, or your claim has expired and a new claim needs to be filed. The fastest way to resolve this issue is to call us at (503) 947-1800.
- **What are my re-payment options if I have an overpayment?**
If you have an overpayment, you should receive a letter with repayment options. For more information about overpayments, please visit <https://unemployment.oregon.gov/overpayments>.
- **What do I do if I am no longer employed with my Work Share employer?** If you are not employed with your Work Share employer and are not receiving regular Unemployment Insurance claim questions on your weekly claim, please contact us immediately to ensure you have been released from your previous employer's Work Share plan.
- **What do I do if I missed filing a week of benefits?**
If you want to file a weekly claim for a past week you cannot access, call us at (503) 947-1800 so we can explain your options.
- **Why does the letter I received after I filed my initial claim say that I need to look for work?**
Some letters that come from Frances Online may not show information as you expect. We are constantly working to improve that in Frances. A requirement of all Unemployment Insurance claims is that you are seeking full-time employment. In the case of Work Share, "looking for work" is the same as "accepting all work offered from your Work Share employer".
- **What happens to my unemployment benefits when I miss work?**
If you missed a day you were scheduled to work, note on your weekly claim certification that you did not accept all work offered by your employer. When using leave, add the number of leave hours used to any hours physically worked with the sum being entered in the "Hours Worked" block. The pay you received for the leave should be included in the "Earnings" block. For more information, please visit the "How to submit a Weekly Claim" guide found on oregon.gov/workshare.
- **How long do I have to file an unemployment claim after I have been laid off?**

The workweek in which you were separated from your employer (Sunday through Saturday) is not eligible for Work Share but will only be evaluated against regular Unemployment Insurance. There is no change to the weekly claim timeliness requirements. If you were laid off and still receive questions on your weekly claim about Work Share, please call us at (503) 947-1800.

- **What happens if I get laid off from my Work Share employer with no return to work?**

The workweek in which you were separated from your employer (Sunday through Saturday) is not eligible for Work Share but will only be evaluated against regular Unemployment Insurance. There is no change to the weekly claim timeliness requirements. If you were laid off and still receive questions on your weekly claim about Work Share, please call us at (503) 947-1800.

- **If I no longer work for my Work Share employer, do I need to seek other work?**

If you separate from your Work Share employer, regular Unemployment Insurance rules will apply. You will be required to complete work search activities each week. These include two direct employer contacts and three other work-seeking activities.