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Ahead of New Unemployment Insurance System Rollout, Employment Department Shares What Claimants Can Expect

Unemployment Insurance Benefits go live in Frances Online on March 4

FEB. 14, 2024 (SALEM, ORE.) - The Oregon Employment Department (OED) announced more details of what Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants can expect when benefits go live through Frances Online on Mon., March 4. The new system, Frances Online, will provide better service for claimants and employers.

“With any new technology, there is going to be a learning curve,” said Lindsy Leahy, director of the Oregon Employment Department’s Unemployment Insurance Division. “We are communicating early and often about what claimants can expect come March 4th to ensure minimal disruption to benefits. We’re excited to highlight some of the specific features that will be new for claimants, and will offer a better user experience online.”

Frances Online offers features that will provide a better online customer service experience. It’s also mobile-friendly. UI customers will be able to do a lot more things online through self-serve features, instead of waiting for a letter in the mail or calling the UI Contact Center.

Video of OED’s media briefing on Feb. 14, 2024 is available at: <https://youtu.be/NwRjkOHMYjE>

What’s Changing for UI Claimants

Here are some of the highlights about what is going to change for UI claimants on March 4:

- **New system and URL** for filing UI benefits online, called Frances Online. The URL for the new UI online system will be live on March 4 at unemployment.oregon.gov.
- **New or improved self-serve features** such as checking the status of a claim, uploading supporting documents directly into the system, responding to questions about eligibility, sending and receiving secure messages, live chat, filing an appeal or completing a payment plan application.
- **Claimants will need to create a Frances Online account before an initial or weekly claim can be filed (but they shouldn’t do this until March 4).**
- Customers will see **enhanced fraud protections**.
- **Some information will still have to come by mail, even if a customer selects to receive electronic communication.**

More details about these changes are available at unemployment.oregon.gov/frances.

What's Staying the Same for UI Claimants

While there are several changes coming, many of the services and contact pathways will remain the same:

- The UI Contact Center number is the same: **1-877-FILE-4-UI**.
- The automated Weekly Claim Line number is the same: **1-800-982-8920**.
- Customer service information, including unemployment and Frances Online guides, videos, and frequently asked questions, **will still be available at unemployment.oregon.gov**.
- **UI eligibility rules and program requirements** (welcome process, job search, filing weekly claims, etc.) are the same.
- If a UI customer has a current claim, **their preferred payment method (direct deposit or ReliaCard), will stay the same**.
- Frances Online is available only **in English and Spanish** right now. Call the UI Contact Center at 1-877-FILE-4-UI for help in other languages.

Customer Service Tips

Below are several customer service tips leading up to the migration through the first few weeks of the UI system launch. Visit unemployment.oregon.gov/frances for a full list of what customer service options will be available before, during and after the migration of UI benefits:

1. **Check online before contacting us.** Many questions will be resolved quickly through the new self-serve features in Frances Online when the system goes live. You can also find how-to guides, videos, and answers to frequently asked questions at unemployment.oregon.gov. We encourage UI claimants to try using those before calling the UI Contact Center or visiting a WorkSource Oregon center. Call wait times will likely be long in the first few weeks after Frances Online goes live.
2. **Make sure to check the mail daily.** Important letters with due dates may arrive in the mail. If a UI claimant misses these due dates, their benefits will be delayed or denied.
3. **Know where to get help.** Visit unemployment.oregon.gov/frances for more details to ensure the best possible customer service.

Important Dates to Avoid Benefit Delays

As a reminder, OED will migrate UI benefits to Frances Online beginning at 5 p.m. on Tues., Feb. 27, through 8 a.m. on Mon., March 4. This means that customer service options during this time will be very limited.

- **The due date to file a weekly UI claim for Feb. 18-24 is 5 p.m. on Wed., Feb. 28.**
- **The due date to file a new initial UI claim is 5 p.m. on Tues., Feb. 27.**
- **All UI phone lines will be temporarily offline on Wed., Feb. 28 through Fri., March 1.** If UI customers do not file their weekly claim by this due date, **their benefits for that week will be delayed**. They will need to wait until the new system launches at 8 a.m. Mon., March 4.

OED encourages current UI claimants to check their mail daily, review all letters and messages, check unemployment.oregon.gov/frances, and follow OED on social media for important updates about the migration. Paid Leave Oregon claimants can visit paidleave.oregon.gov in the coming weeks to learn more about these impacts.

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