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## **Work Share gives Oregon employers an alternative to layoffs**

SALEM, Ore. — Oregon employers considering layoffs can turn to the Oregon Employment Department's [Work Share program](#) to reduce short-term costs and retain skilled employees. When business slows down, participating employers can reduce staff hours but continue to support their employees with partial Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits to help offset reduced wages.

“Work Share gives employers of all sizes the opportunity to strategize, not downsize,” OED Director Andrew R. Stolfi said. “When times are tough, it offers more options to reduce staffing costs, and that flexibility is a critical tool in any industry. Work Share keeps valuable teams together and helps businesses ramp back up quickly when conditions improve.”

The program protects employees from many of the hardships of a full layoff, including keeping benefits intact despite work hours dropping below full-time. Unlike traditional Unemployment Insurance, Work Share does not require claimants to search for jobs while receiving benefits, but they must remain fully able and available to work for their employer each week.

“Being a specialty surgical practice, we have many ups and downs, and Work Share has helped us avoid multiple layoffs,” said Chelsea Brown of Portland-based Oregon Weight Loss Surgery. “Most of our staff have been here for 10 years or more, so they’re critical to our business. Work Share has helped us keep all of them.”

There are currently more than 500 employers enrolled. To be eligible, employers must have at least three employees who are paid Oregon wages; however, seasonal

and temporary workers may not participate. There are no program fees and no obligation to use the program after signing up for Work Share.

“We recommend applying proactively so employers have a plan in place if they need it,” Unemployment Insurance Division Director Lindsy Leahy said. “When business is slow, being able to access the program’s benefits quickly can bring some peace of mind. We want all Oregon employers to know that Work Share is here to provide a viable alternative to layoffs.”

OED hosts a weekly Work Share informational webinar for employers at 10 a.m. on Tuesdays, or employers can call 503-947-1800 to ask questions or schedule a consultation. Once signed up, employers and claimants can also attend weekly webinars for guidance on navigating the program. More information is available on the [Work Share website](#).

## **About Unemployment Insurance**

Oregon’s Unemployment Insurance Program supports people and communities when facing economic uncertainty. For those who are unemployed through no fault of their own, the temporary, partial wage replacement offers financial security while seeking new work. Funded by employer payroll taxes, benefit payments also soften the local economic shock caused by layoffs and help keep skilled workers in their communities. Learn more at [unemployment.oregon.gov](http://unemployment.oregon.gov).

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