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CONTACTS

Initial Claims Data

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Record Initial Claims for Unemployment Benefits Continue in Oregon

During the week starting March 22, the Oregon Employment Department received 92,700 initial claims for Unemployment Insurance benefits. That represented a 21 percent increase from the previous record during the week starting March 15. By comparison, the agency received 4,900 initial claim filings during the week starting March 8. The Employment Department continues to take proactive steps to meet the unprecedented need for unemployment benefits, which is largely due to reduced hours and layoffs related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Initial Claims

The Employment Department has detailed information for 45,800 of the claims processed during the week starting March 22. The leisure and hospitality sector, which includes hotels and restaurants, saw the greatest number of initial claims for unemployment benefits (15,500). This reflects impacts of additional public health and safety measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Many initial claims also came from workers in health care and social assistance (7,600) and retail trade (4,600).

Multnomah (10,900), Washington (5,300), and Lane (4,200) were the counties with the largest number of claims. The largest percentage increases in initial claims over the week occurred in Harney and Tillamook counties. More initial claims data by industry and area can be found on the [QualityInfo.org COVID-19 page](#) (also see tables on next page).

Helping Oregonians

Over the past two weeks the Employment Department doubled the number of staff dedicated to taking claims, and is in the process of tripling it. The agency employees processing claims are doing so at a record rate. We also continue adding secure phone lines to take more calls while also protecting the personal information of those filing claims. Still, the truly unprecedented and sudden level of initial claims has caused delays and frustration for Oregonians who need our help, especially by phone.

The Employment Department encourages anyone who can file an [online claim](#) to do so. The agency's website includes [a video](#) with step-by-step instructions for filing online claims specific to COVID-19 situations. Filing an initial or weekly claim online helps those who must file their claim by phone. Calls to follow up on the status of successfully filed claims also allows fewer new initial claims, which require the most time and work, to be received by phone. The Employment Department has started sending automatic confirmations for successfully filed claims with an e-mail address provided. Other automatic fixes and guidance, discussed in this [video conversation](#), have been implemented to address common online claim errors and reduce the need for follow-up.

Oregon Unemployment Insurance Initial Claims by Sector

Week Beginning

Sector	March 8, 2020	March 15, 2020	March 22, 2020	March 15-March 22 Change
Natural Resources and Mining	156	225	526	301
Construction	858	1,246	3,393	2,147
Manufacturing	428	1,313	3,835	2,522
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	614	2,312	6,535	4,223
Wholesale Trade	108	227	876	649
Retail Trade	299	1,359	4,564	3,205
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	207	726	1,095	369
Information	112	319	480	161
Financial Activities	155	276	884	608
Professional and Business Services	539	1,296	3,283	1,987
Education and Health Services	396	2,695	8,491	5,796
Educational Services	78	561	890	329
Health Care and Social Assistance	318	2,134	7,601	5,467
Leisure and Hospitality	599	10,654	15,514	4,860
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	78	654	1,269	615
Accommodation and Food Services	521	10,000	14,245	4,245
Other Services	144	915	2,796	1,881

Source: Oregon Employment Department
 Industry details are not available for all claims.

Oregon Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims by County

County	Week of March 8-14, 2020	Week of March 15-21, 2020	Week of March 22-28, 2020	March 15-22 Change	County	Week of March 8-14, 2020	Week of March 15-21, 2020	Week of March 22-28, 2020	March 15-22 Change
Baker	12	61	129	68	Lake	-c-	13	22	9
Benton	46	270	695	425	Lane	343	1,881	4,244	2,363
Clackamas	367	1,769	4,105	2,336	Lincoln	33	301	695	394
Clatsop	28	340	713	373	Linn	144	517	1,218	701
Columbia	47	221	466	245	Malheur	18	40	115	75
Coos	66	250	665	415	Marion	331	1,282	3,053	1,771
Crook	31	140	242	102	Morrow	10	28	23	-5
Curry	17	80	164	84	Multnomah	898	6,193	10,855	4,662
Deschutes	135	1,322	2,945	1,623	Polk	58	260	662	402
Douglas	107	385	954	569	Sherman	5	6	10	4
Gilliam	-c-	-c-	-c-	-c-	Tillamook	26	103	320	217
Grant	14	40	52	12	Umatilla	62	222	670	448
Harney	6	14	45	31	Union	21	281	307	26
Hood River	20	112	292	180	Wallowa	10	16	36	20
Jackson	198	1,054	2,420	1,366	Wasco	25	130	228	98
Jefferson	22	81	184	103	Washington	403	2,103	5,254	3,151
Josephine	72	372	726	354	Wheeler	-c-	-c-	-c-	-c-
Klamath	63	216	503	287	Yamhill	91	388	1,007	619

-c- data is suppressed for confidentiality
 Source: Oregon Employment Department

To file an online claim for unemployment benefits, go to Oregon.gov/employ or call 1-877-FILE-4-UI. For help finding jobs and training resources, contact your local WorkSource Oregon center or go to WorkSourceOregon.org.

Equal Opportunity program — auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact: (503) 947-1794. For people who are deaf or hard of hearing, call 711 Telecommunications Relay Services.