



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Oregon Employment Department Reminds Employees and Employers of Resources Available During Statewide Freeze

**Nov. 20, 2020 (Salem, OR)**--The Oregon Employment Department is reminding Oregonians of resources available to help them during the Statewide Freeze.

Oregonians whose employment is impacted by efforts to curb the exponential spread of COVID-19 will need to either restart a stopped claim or file a new claim. The Department is making resources available for employers who may need to cut hours or lay employees off as a result of the freeze.

To avoid laying off their workforce, employers are encouraged to use [Work Share](#). The program allows employers to keep skilled employees by reducing hours, and supplements employee wages with regular unemployment insurance benefits. Eligible staff whose hours are reduced get a portion of their regular unemployment insurance benefits to make up for the lost wages. If employee hours are reduced by 20 to 40 percent for the week, they will potentially receive regular unemployment insurance (UI) benefits for the reduced hours.

The Work Share program has been in high demand since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Department staffing levels have increased to help people quickly receive benefits. The Employment Department has also [developed a new tool](#) to make reporting easier for employers participating in the program.

Employers who lay employees off because of the freeze are encouraged to use the [Employer Layoff Reporting Form](#) to submit information about the employees they are laying off. This form allows businesses to provide information about their employees in bulk, and will allow the Employment Department to process those employees' claims more quickly.

Many Oregonians who have been laid off or had their hours reduced may need to restart their claim. Claimants can restart their regular UI claims by going to the [Online Claim System](#) and selecting *Restart Your Claim* (the eighth button down). Those needing to restart a PUA claim, as well as those who see an error message or are unable to restart their claim using the Online

Claim System should restart their claim via the [Contact Us form](#) and select the *Restarting my claim* option.

The Employment Department has compiled these resources to aid claimants who are restarting their claims or filing a first claim:

- [FAQ on how to restart a claim](#)
- [Step-by-step instructions](#) for restarting a claim using the Online Claim System
- [Eligibility Quiz](#) to determine which benefit program to apply for (if this is a first claim)

The Employment Department is prepared for an increase in claims as a result of the statewide freeze. The National Guard is supporting the department's more than 1,000 employees focused on claims, which is in addition to the 300 adjudicators.

Claimants needing assistance or more information can visit the Employment Department's mobile-friendly website, which is available in 16 languages: <https://unemployment.oregon.gov/>

The best way for claimants to get in touch with the department is by submitting a message via the [Contact Us form](#). Messages are reviewed within one week. Anyone needing assistance in a language other than English should email [ued.LanguageAccess@oregon.gov](mailto:ued.LanguageAccess@oregon.gov) or call the language access hotline at 503-606-6969.

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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.