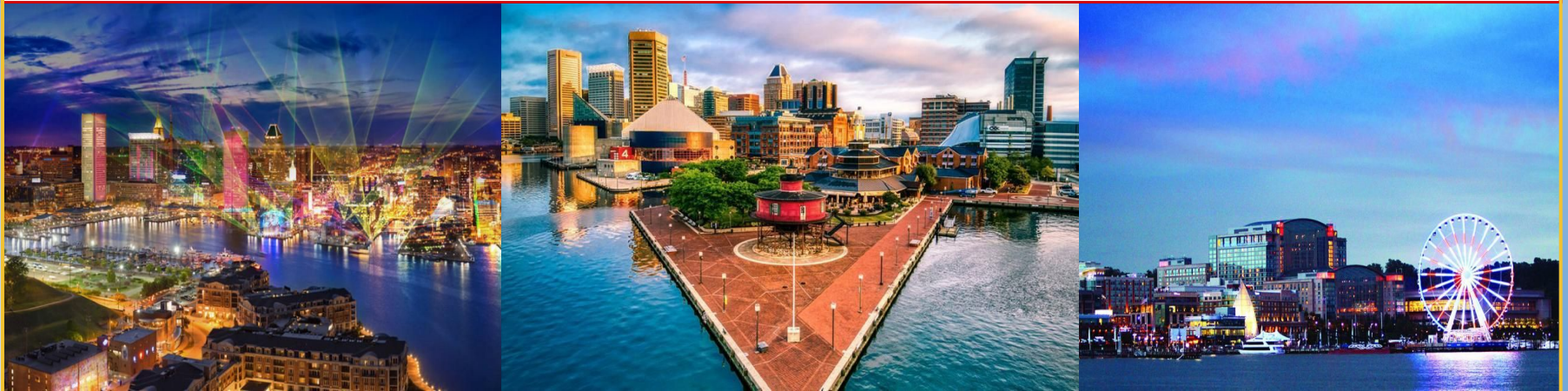




Maryland Unemployment Insurance

What You Should Know



Unemployment Insurance Facts



Unemployment Insurance (UI) began nationwide in the United States on August 14, 1935, when President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Social Security Act.

- In Maryland, the UI program is administered by the Maryland Department of Labor.
- Employers pay into the Maryland Unemployment Insurance Trust Fund, which is used solely to pay benefits to the unemployed.

The UI program aims to:

- pay temporary benefits to displaced employees who are unemployed through no fault of their own and are seeking work,
- help workers find suitable jobs through American Job Centers and other Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) partners.

UI Information for Claimants



Eligibility for UI Benefits

To qualify for UI, an individual must:

- be unemployed through no fault of their own,
- be monetarily eligible,
 - To be monetarily eligible, an individual must have worked and earned sufficient wages in either the:
 - a. **Standard Base Period** (first four of the last five completed calendar quarters before the individual filed an initial claim), or
 - b. **Alternate Base Period** (four most recently completed calendar quarters of wages earned before the individual filed an initial claim).
- be able to work and available for work without restrictions.

See the **Eligibility Requirements FAQs** (labor.maryland.gov/employment/claimfaq.shtml) to learn more.

Applying for UI Benefits

Individuals should file an initial claim to begin the UI process.

After a claimant applies, the Maryland Division of Unemployment Insurance (the Division) will inform them whether or not they are eligible for UI benefits via a *Notice of Benefit Determination*.

File an initial claim either:

- Online in **BEACON 2.0**:
(beacon.labor.maryland.gov/beacon/claimant-page.html), or
- By calling a live agent: **(667) 207-6520**
Note: Claimants **cannot** file an initial claim in-person.

For more information about filing an initial claim, see:

- **Claims Filing - Initial Claims FAQs**
(labor.maryland.gov/employment/claimfaq.shtml)
- **BEACON Account Registration tutorial video**
(labor.maryland.gov/employment/uibeaconvideo.shtml)
- **List of Information and Documents Needed for Claims Filing**
(labor.maryland.gov/employment/uicclaimdocs.pdf)

BEACON 2.0

Modernized UI System

BEACON 2.0, the Division's fully-modernized UI system, launched in September 2020. BEACON integrates benefits, appeals, and contributions functionalities.

- For BEACON claimant features and instructional videos, see labor.maryland.gov/employment/uibeaconvideo.shtml.
- For employer and third-party agent features and instructional videos: see the BEACON 2.0 System section of the Division homepage (mdunemployment.com) and labor.maryland.gov/employment/uitaxapps.shtml#empvideos.

Claimants, employers, and third-party agents can log into their BEACON 2.0 portals to perform several UI tasks online, 24/7.

BEACON 2.0 Claimant Portal:

beacon.labor.maryland.gov/beacon/claimant-page.html

BEACON 2.0 Employer Portal:

employer.beacon.labor.md.gov/

BEACON 2.0 Third-Party Agent Portal:

agent.beacon.labor.md.gov/

Claimant Requirements

To remain eligible for UI benefits, a claimant must:

1. Be able and available for work without restrictions.
2. Actively search for work each week.
See **slide 9** for details.
3. File timely weekly claim certifications to request UI benefit payments.
4. Report all monies received on the weekly claim certifications.
See **slide 8** for details.
5. Be available and/or contact the Division and/or the Maryland Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL) when instructed.
6. Accept all offers of suitable work.

For more information about claimant requirements, see the **Eligibility Requirements FAQs:** labor.maryland.gov/employment/claimfaq.shtml.

Claimant Requirements Reporting Earnings and Payments

You must report all monies that you received, or expect to receive, (e.g., severance pay, vacation pay, pensions, special pay, and etc.) when you file an initial claim.

See the **Claims Filing - Initial Claims FAQs** (labor.maryland.gov/employment/claimfaq.shtml) to learn more.

Additionally, you must report all earnings for any work, including paid training, temporary, or part-time work on your weekly claim certification. Even if you have not been paid yet, you still must report your earnings.

Wages, including tips, must be reported in the week that the money is earned, not the week it was actually paid. Commission payments are reported in the week that they are paid to you.

If you earn more than your weekly benefit amount in a given week, you are not considered unemployed, and your claim will be closed. If you subsequently earn less than your weekly benefit amount in a week, then you will be considered totally or partially unemployed again.

Claimant Work Search Requirements

Claimants must complete a few steps to fulfill the work search requirements. These include:

- 1. Complete a one-time registration with the Maryland Workforce Exchange (MWE).** You may register at mwejobs.maryland.gov/ or at your local American Job Center (labor.maryland.gov/county/)

In MWE, a claimant should also:

- upload/create a résumé;
- make the résumé viewable to employers; and
- maintain an up-to-date résumé in MWE while collecting UI benefits.

- 2. Complete at least three valid reemployment activities each week, which must include at least one job contact.**
- 3. Submit the valid reemployment activities **each week** in the *Job Contact and Reemployment Activity Log*, located in MWE. Submitting your reemployment activities **does not** take the place of filing your weekly claim certification to request benefit payments.**

To learn more about these requirements, see labor.maryland.gov/employment/uirex.shtml.

Claimant Benefit Payments

- The Division will calculate a weekly benefit amount (WBA) for each eligible claimant.
- The WBA is the amount of benefit payments a claimant may be entitled to each week. The WBA is based on the wages the claimant earned during the base period.
- A claimant may receive more or less than the WBA during a benefit week, depending on certain factors. For example, if a claimant performed any work while collecting UI benefits, the claimant may receive less than the WBA in a benefit week.
- Eligible claimants may receive a **dependent's allowance of \$8 per child**, not to exceed five dependent children. Even if a claimant receives dependents' allowance, the claimant's WBA will not exceed the maximum of \$430.
- The **WBA in Maryland** ranges from **\$50 (minimum)** to **\$430 (maximum)**. A claimant must choose whether to receive these payments by direct deposit or paper check when the claimant files an initial claim. **Note: Benefit payments are no longer issued by debit card.**
- Claimants may receive **up to 26 weeks** of Regular UI benefits.
- UI benefits are subject to federal and state taxes. A claimant may choose to have **federal tax (10%)**, **Maryland state tax (7%)**, both, or no taxes withheld from the claimant's UI benefits.

UI Information for Employers



Employer UI Obligations

Covered employment: When an individual performs work for a business entity (employer) in return for wages, the individual is likely covered for UI purposes.

For exemptions, see **Employers' UI Contributions Information and Definitions** (labor.maryland.gov/employment/empfaq.shtml).

Contributory employer: A contributory employer pays quarterly UI taxes based on the employer's benefit charges and the taxable wages the employer reported to the Division.

To learn more, see **Unemployment Insurance Tax Rates** (labor.maryland.gov/employment/uitrustfundpoints.shtml).

Reimbursable employer: Certain not-for-profit organizations and government entities may choose to reimburse the state dollar for dollar for benefits charged against their accounts.

For more information, see **Employers' UI Contributions Information and Definitions** (labor.maryland.gov/employment/empfaq.shtml).

Note: It is illegal for an employer to require an employee to repay, pay into, or waive any UI benefit rights.

Employer Requirements

- **UI Account Registration** - Employers can register for a Maryland UI account in BEACON 2.0 (<https://employer.beacon.labor.md.gov/>).

UI account registration instructions for employers are available on the Division website at labor.maryland.gov/employment/uibeaconemployeraccountregistration.pdf.

- **Quarterly Reports and UI Taxes** - Each quarter, employers are required to report the total gross wages paid on the Quarterly Contribution Report and pay UI taxes. See **Employers' Quick Reference Guide** (labor.maryland.gov/employment/empguide/empguide.pdf).
- **Mass Layoff** - Employers experiencing a mass layoff (affecting 25+ workers) are required to submit a list of impacted workers to the Division at least 48 hours in advance. **Employers can report a mass layoff in BEACON 2.0.**

Employers covered by the WARN Act (dol.gov/general/topic/termination/plantclosings) must provide at least 60 days' advance notice of any mass layoff or plant closure.

Report a dislocation event at labor.maryland.gov/employment/disworkerreport.shtml or call the **Maryland Dislocation Services Unit** at 410-767-2833.

Employer Requirements

- **Request for Separation Information** - When a former employee files a claim for UI, the Division will request separation information from the employer.

Employers can respond to the Request for Separation Information form in either:

- [BEACON 2.0](#),
 - **State Information Data Exchange System (SIDES)** (labor.maryland.gov/employment/uicides.shtml), or via,
 - Mail (to the address appearing on the form).
- **Eligibility Issues** - An employer should be available to provide the Division with information about eligibility issues resulting from claims filed by former employees.
 - **Required Posters** - Employers must display two posters about UI benefits and health insurance coverage in a highly visible area of the workplace. Posters are provided when the UI account is established.
 - **Report New Hires/Job Refusals** - Employers are required to report new hires and rehires in the **Maryland New Hire Registry** (mdnewhire.com/#/public/public-landing/login).

Employers should also inform the Division in [BEACON 2.0](#) when a claimant refuses an offer of suitable work, or a former employee refuses to return to work.

Work Sharing Layoff Aversion Program

Work Sharing (also called Short-Time Compensation) allows employers faced with a short-term decline in business to temporarily reduce employees' hours, as opposed to laying off staff. The impacted employees receive partial UI benefits. The program can also be used to gradually bring back most/all of a temporarily laid-off workforce back to the job.

Some employer requirements include:

- Must have at least two employees per affected unit
- Must reduce a participating employee's hours by **at least 10%**, and **no more than 60%**
- Must be current with UI tax contributions

Benefits for employers include:

- Retaining experienced employees, keeping employee morale high, and maintaining productivity.
- Maintaining stable staffing levels to allow business to return to normal operations when economic conditions improve. Saving the expense and time of recruiting, hiring, and training new employees.

To learn more, visit labor.maryland.gov/employment/worksharing/.

To apply:

- complete the Work Sharing application (labor.maryland.gov/forms/uiwsapplication.pdf) and participant list (labor.maryland.gov/forms/uiwsparticipantlist.xlsx).
- Submit both documents to ui.worksharing@maryland.gov 7-15 calendar days before your anticipated Work Sharing start date.

UI Information for Claimants and Employers



Claimant and Employer Appeals

Claimants - If a claimant receives a determination disqualifying the claimant from receiving benefits, the claimant may file an appeal. The determination will include information about filing an appeal, including the deadline for filing.

Employers - Employers can appeal a liability determination, a benefit charge, or a tax rate assignment within 15 days of the decision. If the decision is appealable, employers will receive information that includes instructions for filing an appeal.

Third-party agents may also file appeals on behalf of their clients.

File an Appeal - Claimants, employers, and agents may file an appeal in BEACON 2.0. Those who do not have BEACON access can email UILowerAppeals.Labor@maryland.gov for filing instructions.

Appeal Hearings - Those notified about a scheduled appeal should make every effort to be available. Appeal hearings are the last step at which either a claimant or employer has the right to present evidence.

Appeal Process - The Lower Appeals Division will hear any initial determination appeals. If an individual disagrees a decision from the Lower Appeals Division, the individual may file an appeal to the Board of Appeals.

For more information, see the **Lower Appeals** (labor.maryland.gov/uiappeals/aplower.shtml) or the **Unemployment Insurance Appeals** web pages (labor.maryland.gov/uiappeals/).

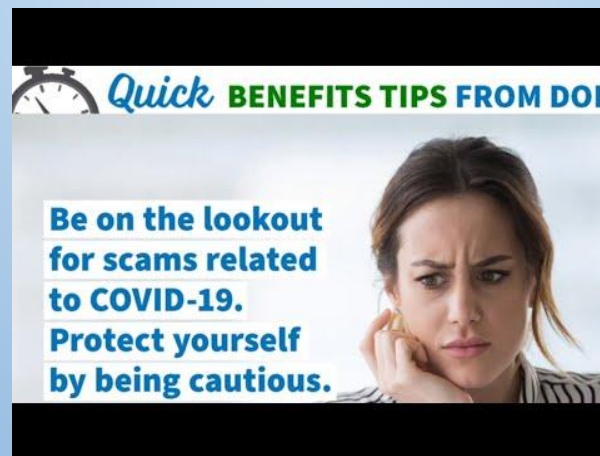
Claimant and Employer Fraud Information

It is considered fraud if an individual knowingly makes false statements, misrepresents, or fails to give important facts to obtain or increase UI benefits. A claimant who makes an innocent mistake when filing a claim should immediately call **667-207-6520**.

To report suspected UI fraud, complete the **Request for Investigation of Unemployment Insurance Fraud** form (labor.maryland.gov/forms/uifraudtipform.pdf) and return via:

- E-mail: ui.fraud@maryland.gov,
- Fax: **410-767-2610**, or
- Mail: **Benefit Payment Control, 1100 N. Eutaw Street, Room 206, Baltimore, MD 21201**

To learn more, see the **UI Benefit Payment FAQs** (labor.maryland.gov/employment/uibpcfags.shtml#fraud).



Video Courtesy of [DOL](https://www.dol.gov)

Claimant and Employer Resources

The Division offers a number of ways for stakeholders and the public to ask questions and to receive more information about UI.

Live Claims Agent: 667-207-6520. File a new claim or inquire about an existing claim. For live agent hours, see labor.maryland.gov/employment/officenum.shtml.

IVR: File claim certification, reset PIN, or check payment status. Available 24/7.

- Baltimore area or out of state: **410-949-0022**
- MD, outside of Baltimore area: **800-827-4839**
- Hearing Impaired: **MD Relay Dial 711**

Virtual Assistant: Chat with an agent or get automated answers to questions. Available 24/7. Live chat available during claims agent hours. Select the “**Chat with Us**” button on the **Division homepage** (mdunemployment.com) to get started.

Employer Call Center: 410-949-0033. Employer call center hours are available online at labor.maryland.gov/employment/contributions.shtml.

Additional information about UI can be found in the:

- **Maryland Unemployment Insurance Claimant Guide**
(labor.maryland.gov/employment/clmtguide/uiclmtmpamphlet.pdf)
- **Employers' Quick Reference Guide**
(labor.maryland.gov/employment/empguide/empguide.pdf)

Thank You!

