**Filing for Unemployment in Illinois**

**Unemployment Insurance**

Unemployment insurance is a state-operated insurance program, administered by the Illinois Department of Employment Security (IDES) designed to partially replace lost wages when you are out of work. Like fire, accident, health and other types of insurance, it is for an emergency: when you are temporarily or permanently out of a job, or if you work less than full time because of lack of work.

The program ensures that, if you meet the eligibility requirements​​ of the law, you will have some income while you are looking for a job, up to a maximum of 26 full weeks in a one-year period, depending on when the claim was ​established. Link to [Unemployment Insurance Benefits Handbook.](https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/IDES%20Forms%20and%20Publications/CLI105L.pdf)

If your unemployment is a result of COVID-19 work stoppages, you could be eligible for unemployment benefits, provided that you were able to work and work was not provided to you due to a COVID-19 work stoppage.

**COVID-19 Update**

Under traditional unemployment insurance rules, an individual who qualifies for unemployment benefits would have had to experience a one week waiting period before receiving unemployment benefits. In light of the COVID-19, this rule has been suspended.

**When to Apply for Unemployment Benefits**

You should apply for unemployment benefits as soon as your employment status has changed. If you are laid-off, or are working less than 8 hours per week, you should consider filing for unemployment benefits. IDES will process unemployment application in the order they are received, so you are encouraged to file a claim for unemployment benefits at the time your employment status has changed.

**Applying for Unemployment Benefits**

To apply online for unemployment benefits in the State of Illinois, you will need to go to:

<https://www2.illinois.gov/ides/individuals/UnemploymentInsurance/Pages/default.aspx>

You will be prompted to create an account with the Illinois Department of Employment Security. You will want to keep your username and password on file as you will need to log-in periodically if your unemployment continues beyond longer one week.

**Information needed to file an Internet Claim - Online**

* Your Social Security Number and Name as it appears on your Social Security card;
* Your Driver License / State ID (this will provide your weight, which is required);
* If claiming your spouse or child as a dependent​, the Social Security Number, date of birth and name(s) of dependent(s);
* Name, mailing address, phone number, employment dates, and separation reason for all the employers you worked for in the last 18 months;
	+ Wage records (W-2 form, check stubs, etc.) from these employers may be necessary.
* If you worked since Sunday of this week, the gross wages earned this week;
	+ You must report all gross wages for any work performed, full or part-time;
	+ Gross means the total amount earned before deductions, not "take home pay", including wages in the form of lodging, meals, merchandise or any other form;
	+ Gross wages must be reported the week in which they are earned, not the week in which you receive the wages;
	+ If your gross wages earned in any week are less than your weekly benefit amount, you still may be eligible to receive a full or partial benefit payment);
* Records of any pension payments you are receiving (not including Social Security);
* If you are not a United States citizen, your Alien Registration Information;
* If you are a recently separated veteran, the Member 4 Copy of the DD form 214 / 215;
	+ Other copies of the DD Form 214 / 215 are acceptable, but the Member 4 copy is the most commonly available.
* If you are separated from work as a civilian employee of the federal government, copies of your Standard Form 8 and Personnel Action Form 50.​

**Receiving Unemployment Benefits**

Once your unemployment benefits have been approved you should expect to receive your benefits within two to three business days. This timeframe may be slowed due to the volume of unemployment benefit applications that IDES is processing due to the anticipated increase in unemployment benefit applications due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

There are two primary ways to receive unemployment benefits. You can provide your bank account information to IDES and the funds will be directly deposited into your bank account. The other primary form of receiving unemployment benefits is to have your unemployment benefit deposited onto an IDES prepaid debit card. There are fees associated with the utilization of the IDES prepaid debit program if you choose this method of delivery of your unemployment benefit.

If you have questions about your application or need additional information- regarding your eligibility for unemployment benefits, please contact IDES at: 1-800-244-5631.