

To File a New Claim for Unemployment Benefits in Vermont

Call toll-free

1-877-214-3330

Please have the following information available when you call, to help speed the claims filing process:

- 1) Social Security Number
- 2) Address (mailing and home address, if different)
- 3) Telephone Number (including area code)
- 4) Banking Information (for enrollment in Direct Deposit)
- 5) Alien Registration Number (if not a U. S. citizen)
- 6) Amount and duration of any separation pay you may receive (vacation, severance, wages in lieu of notice)
- 7) Recall Date (if you expect to be recalled to your job)
- 8) Valid Driver's License Number
- 9) Military Form DD-214, Member 4 Copy (if you were in the military in the past 18 months)
- 10) Form SF-8 (if you worked for the Federal Government during the past 18 months and received one)
- 11) The following information for every employer you worked for during the last 18 months:
 - complete name and address
 - payroll address (if different)
 - telephone number (including area code)
 - first and last date of employment
 - reason for separation

TTY Direct Access If you have a hearing impairment or are a TTY user, you can contact the Department directly through our TTY system toll-free at 1-800-650-4152. A TTY Customer Service Representative will assist you in filing your claim, provide you with general information or provide answers to questions you may have.

Claim Center Core Hours

Monday through Thursday:
8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

To file a **NEW CLAIM** for
Unemployment Benefits:

Call toll-free 1-877-214-3330

For **CLAIMANT ASSISTANCE** or
to Obtain Answers to Any Questions:

Online at

www.labor.vermont.gov

or

call toll-free 1-877-214-3332

To file a **WEEKLY CLAIM** for
Unemployment Benefits:

Online at

www.labor.vermont.gov

Equal Opportunity is the Law.

*The State of Vermont is an Equal Opportunity/
Affirmative Action Employer. Applications from women,
individuals with disabilities, and people from diverse
cultural backgrounds are encouraged. Auxiliary aids
and services are available upon request to individuals
with disabilities. 711 (TTY/Relay Service) or
802-828-4203 TDD (Vermont Department of Labor).*

*Interpretative services are available for limited
English proficiency customers.*

For more information please visit:

[http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/
ISpeakCards.pdf](http://www.dol.gov/oasam/programs/crc/ISpeakCards.pdf)

Unemployment Insurance

**Information about
Vermont's Unemployment
Insurance Program**



 **VERMONT**

VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

www.labor.vermont.gov

What is Unemployment Insurance?

Unemployment Insurance has been in existence since 1939. It is designed to provide short-term replacement of lost wages to individuals who are unemployed through no fault of their own. It is not intended to be a permanent source of income.

Do I qualify?

If you have worked in Vermont any time in the past eighteen months and are unemployed through no fault of your own, you may be eligible. You must have been paid at least the Minimum Wage Qualifier in one of the four calendar quarters being used. This figure is subject to change in July of each year. You can contact the toll-free Claimant Assistance Line at 1-877-214-3332 to obtain this information.

How much will I receive?

The amount of your benefits are based on wages you were paid over the last eighteen months or six calendar quarters. The department uses four calendar quarters to determine eligibility. This is called a BASE PERIOD. Generally the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters are used. The highest quarter of the four quarters being used must meet the Minimum Wage Qualifier. The remaining three quarters must equal at least 40% of the highest quarter.

Once the department has determined which four consecutive quarters are to be used, the two highest quarters of wages are added together and divided by 45. This provides an amount that is a little over half of your normal earnings, up to the Maximum Weekly Benefit Amount. Your established Weekly Benefit Amount will never exceed the Maximum Weekly Benefit Amount in place with the department. The Maximum Weekly Benefit Amount is subject to change each July based on average annual wage increase in Vermont. You can contact the department to obtain the current Maximum Weekly Benefit Amount.

How long can I receive Unemployment Insurance payments?

When you file for Unemployment Insurance benefits, you will establish a benefit year. This benefit year lasts one year from the time the claim is made effective. If you meet all eligibility requirements, you will be able to draw benefits up to the Maximum Benefit Amount allowable on your claim.

How Do I File a Claim?

Filing a new claim for Unemployment Insurance benefits has never been easier. Simply call the toll-free Initial Claims Line at 1-877-214-3330 and answer a series of questions by using your telephone keypad.

If you do not understand the questions or English is not your primary language, stay on the line and your call will be routed to a customer service representative.

Once the system has taken the information needed to start your claim, you will be connected to a Customer Service Representative who will assist you in completing the Initial Claim process. You will also be provided with information to assist you in filing your claim for benefits for each week you are totally or partially unemployed.

If you need to re-open a pre-existing benefit year that is still valid, you may do so online at www.labor.vermont.gov or by calling the Initial Claims line at 1-877-214-3330.

Weekly claims can be filed using the department's website or by calling 1-800-983-2300.

To file your weekly claim for unemployment, go to www.labor.vermont.gov

(In left sidebar under Unemployment Insurance, click on Claimant Applications)

When can I expect my first payment?

When you file a new or additional claim for Unemployment benefits, we obtain employer and separation information from you. If the reason for separation from your last employer is due to lack of work and all other eligibility requirements have been met, you can generally expect to have the first payment

processed within 11 days from the date you file your claim. If the reason for separation is not due to lack of work or you have received separation pay, your claim will need to be reviewed to determine if benefits can be paid.

What is required of me while I'm filing for and receiving benefits?

One of the requirements the department places on individuals is Work Search. Unless you have a definite return to work date occurring within 10 weeks with a specific employer AND have been excused by the department from conducting an active work search, you are REQUIRED to make at least three (3) job contacts for each week you file a weekly claim. You must be realistic in your search for work. Apply for jobs you are qualified to do and are willing to accept. Applying for the same jobs more than once in a five-week period does not count as a valid contact. Telephone calls ARE NOT considered valid job contacts. The department will be conducting random checks of job contacts. If you do not make contacts as required, you will be liable to repay benefits improperly paid. Please reference the claimant handbook for more information on what constitutes a valid job contact.

We encourage you and you may be required to participate in re-employment services at the nearest Resource Center. If you refuse to participate, you may be denied further benefits.

The Vermont Department of Labor has a number of programs available to assist you in finding new employment. Please visit the nearest Resource Center and register for services. As a job seeker, you are required to create a Vermont JobLink account on-line at www.VermontJobLink.com and browse our available job listings.

The department's policy requires that, at the time you file your Initial Claim for benefits, you will be willing to accept up to 10% less than you were earning before you filed. After five weeks you must be willing to accept 20% less than you were previously earning. After filing for ten weeks, you must be willing to accept the prevailing wage. The prevailing wage is the average wage, among all employers in your area, for the type of work you are seeking.