

How do I file for unemployment benefits?

You may apply for unemployment compensation with the Virginia Employment Commission in three ways.

1. **By Internet:** Go to www.VaEmploy.com and complete the online application.
2. **By phone:** to file a new claim, the toll-free number is 1-866-832-2363. To file a weekly claim, the toll-free number is 1-800-897-5630.
3. **By Mail:** If your claim is not accepted online, you may print a claim application form (VEC-B-10), fill it out and mail it to your nearest VEC office.
4. **In person:** You can find your nearest office at www.vec.virginia.gov/find-a-job/vec-local-offices.

How do I find out if I am eligible for unemployment benefits?

To receive unemployment benefits, you must be **ELIGIBLE AND QUALIFIED** for benefits. Qualification depends upon the circumstances that caused you to lose your job.

To be eligible for unemployment benefits, you must have earned at least \$2,700 in the two highest quarters of the base period (combined). Your base period is the first four of the last five completed

calendar quarters prior to the effective date of your claim.

A calendar quarter is any of the following periods: January – March, April – June, July – September, and October – December. If you don't have enough earnings in the first four of the last five calendar quarters, the last four calendar quarters will be used.

Am I qualified to receive unemployment benefits?

To be qualified for unemployment compensation, you must have lost your job through **no fault of your own**. Therefore, you can't get unemployment benefits if you quit your job without good reason, if you were discharged for work-related misconduct, or you don't apply for or accept suitable work. Any of these reasons will keep you from getting unemployment compensation.

If you're disqualified, you can't get unemployment compensation until you get another job for at least 30 days for one employer and lose the job through no fault of your own.

How soon can I start collecting weekly benefits and how will I receive them?

There is a one-week waiting period which cannot begin until the claim is filed. You must meet all eligibility requirements to receive credit for the waiting period

week. Additionally, you must file a weekly claim for **EVERY WEEK** you want to receive benefits. You will be paid either by direct deposit or debit card for each week that you claim benefits and meet the eligibility requirements.

How much will my benefit be?

Benefit amounts range from \$54.00 to \$378.00 per week. When you file your claim you will receive a computer printout called a monetary determination, which lists your employers and wages for the base period, your weekly benefit amount, and your maximum total benefits.

How long can I receive benefits?

Benefit durations range from 12 weeks to 26 weeks. The duration of your benefits will also be found on your computer printout. Under certain special circumstances, you may be entitled to benefits for a number of weeks beyond 26.

What do I have to do to meet the weekly eligibility requirements?

Each week you claim benefits, you must be able to perform work, be available for work while placing no undue restrictions on your availability, and be

actively seeking work. In addition, you must accept all offers of suitable work, be registered for work with a VEC Workforce Center, accept any VEC referrals to work, report to the VEC when directed to do so, and report your income from any source.

What does “actively seeking work” mean?

“Actively seeking work” means that you personally visit several employers each week to find work. You are required to provide the VEC, when requested, with information about each employer or company you visit while seeking work. These visits are called job contacts.

Is anybody going to check or verify my job contacts?

Yes. All job contacts are subject to verification. You are required to maintain a record of your work search. If your information concerning any job contact found to be FALSE, you can be **disqualified** from receiving benefits for one year and thereafter if the falsely claimed benefits are not repaid in full.

How much can I earn and still receive benefits?

You must report any gross wages, not net wages, during the week they are earned, not paid. If the gross wages you

earned are less than your weekly benefit amount, you may receive unemployment benefits. If your gross wages are equal to or more than your weekly benefit amount, you will not be paid benefits for that week.

What if I’m working but my hours have been reduced?

You may be eligible for partial benefits. A partially unemployed person is one who was employed by a regular employer and had earnings that were less than his weekly benefit amount and who worked less than his normal customary full-time hours because of lack of work. To be eligible, you must not miss work to report on your claim, and you must work all hours offered to you.

This brochure is intended for information purposes only and is NOT a suitable substitute for legal advice from a certified attorney.

If you have a specific question, please consult Legal Aid WorksSM at:

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www.LegalAidWorks.org



Legal Aid WorksSM

Fredericksburg Office

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