

Applying for unemployment benefits

An application for benefits can be made by telephone or over the internet. Once an initial claim is filed, an OES-617, Notice of Application for Unemployment is mailed to the last covered employer for whom the claimant worked at least 15 working days. The claimant must continue to file claims each week as directed by the Oklahoma Employment Security Commission. On each continued claim filed, the claimant must certify as to his/her eligibility to receive unemployment compensation.

Requirements for receiving unemployment benefits

In order to be eligible for unemployment benefits, a claimant must be all of the following.

- Separated from work or working less than full time
- Registered and diligently seeking work during each week in which he/she applies for benefits
- Able to work and available to perform work duties in keeping with education, training and experience

A claimant's self-employment cannot interfere with their availability for employment or the type of work they are seeking. In addition, all self-employment wages must be reported. The claimant cannot be working on a commission or receiving or seeking unemployment benefits from another state or the United States.

Maximum unemployment benefit amounts

The unemployment benefit amount is determined by the qualifying wages paid to a claimant during the claimant's base period. The benefit amounts are calculated each year. In Oklahoma, weekly payments range from a minimum of \$16 to the current year's maximum. Computation of the maximum benefit amount changes each year based on the conditional factor associated with the state's Unemployment Insurance trust fund. The number of weeks a claimant can receive unemployment benefits during his/her benefit year is limited to a maximum of 26 weeks.

Voluntary quits and unemployment benefits

A claimant who voluntarily leaves their last job without good cause connected to the work is subject to disqualification from benefits. The burden of proof for good cause connected to the work in a voluntary quit is on the claimant. For a claimant to establish benefits after a disqualification, they must be re-employed and earn wages equal to or in excess of 10 times their weekly benefit amount. However, there exist certain circumstances that are not work related that will result in allowance of benefits.