



Key Steps for Filing for Unemployment Benefits

1. Prepare to File an Initial Claim

Applying for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits (also called filing an initial claim) is the first step in your UI process. To file a claim, you will need:

Personal Information and Employment History - When you file, you will provide information, such as your employment history for the last 18 months, Social Security number, residential and mailing address, etc.

For more, see [Information and Documents Needed for Claims Filing](#).

Payment Information - You must report any payments (severance, vacation, holiday, bonus, pension, back pay, special payments, etc.) you received/know you will receive.

- If you receive these payments after filing an initial claim (except for the first pension payment, if not reported previously), call **667-207-6520**.

When you receive your first payment from a pension after filing an initial claim (and you did not report it previously) report it on your weekly claim certification. You are **NOT required** to report **Social Security** income.

For more, see the [Claims Filing - Initial Claims FAQs](#).

2. File an Initial Claim

You can file an initial claim either:

- **online** in the **BEACON** UI system (beacon.labor.maryland.gov), 24/7; or,
- **by calling 667-207-6520** (Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.).

For more, see the [How to Apply for UI Benefits in BEACON](#) webpage.

Filing in BEACON - BEACON is an online UI system that you can use to complete several UI tasks and access information about your UI claim, 24/7.

- If you **do not have a BEACON account**, go to the **BEACON** claimant login page, select the **Get Started with BEACON** link, and follow the prompts.
- If you **have a BEACON account**, log in to **BEACON**, select **Apply for Benefits** from the left menu, and follow the prompts.

For more, see the [BEACON Claimant FAQs](#) and [BEACON System Overview](#) page.

Important: If you knowingly make **false statements, misrepresent, or fail to give important facts** to obtain or increase UI benefits, you may be determined to have **committed UI fraud**. For more, see [Audits, Overpayments, and Fraud FAQs](#).

- **If you make a mistake** when filing an initial claim, call a claims agent at **667-207-6520** as soon as possible.

3. Review Your Statement of Wages and Monetary Determination

After you file, the Division will send you a **Statement of Wages and Monetary Determination** which will include:

• whether you are eligible for UI benefits ;
• weekly benefit amount (a fixed payment you will receive, if eligible for UI benefits);
• your employers and wages during the base period (one-year period that occurred within the last 18 months).
○ For more about the base period, see the Claims Filing - Initial Claims FAQs .

This notice will be sent through your preferred communication method (email, text message, mail) and available in [BEACON](#).

- You select your communication method when you file an initial claim. For more about changing your method, see [How to Complete Common UI Tasks in BEACON](#).

If you think your **Statement of Wages and Monetary Determination** should be corrected, call **667-207-6520** (Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.) immediately.

4. File Your Weekly Claim Certification

After you file an initial claim, you must **file a weekly claim certification to request benefit payments** for that week. You may file weekly claim certifications:

• online in BEACON ; or,
○ To file in BEACON , log in to BEACON, select "Weekly Certification" from the left menu, and follow the prompts.

• by phone (410-949-0022 or 800-827-4839 , available 24/7).

- When you file, **you will answer questions** about the last completed benefit week (Sunday to Saturday time period).
 - You may file your claim certification (following the completed benefit week) from Sunday at 12:01 a.m. until Saturday at 11:59 p.m. **Example:** To request payment for the week of Sunday, May 9, through Saturday, May 15, **file your claim between Sunday, May 16, and Saturday, May 22.**

Weekly Certification Questions

You must answer questions on your weekly claim certification, including whether you are able and available for work, searched for work, earned money, etc.

- You are required to **report all payments you received or know you will receive** on your weekly claim certification. You must report your gross earnings (all earnings before taxes or deductions are taken out) from permanent and temporary work, part time work, self-employment, commission payments, odd jobs, tips, etc.

NOTE: Wages, including tips, must be reported **for the week that the money is earned**, not the week it was actually paid. However, **commission payments** must be reported in the week that they are paid to you.

- If you received your first payment from a **pension** that you did not already report, you must also report it on your weekly claim certification.

NOTE: If you begin working full-time, you are not eligible for UI benefits (since you are not unemployed). If you get a full-time temporary job and become unemployed after the job ends, you may reopen your claim (if you have remaining benefits).

- **If you make a mistake** on your weekly claim certification, **call a claims agent at 667-207-6520** as soon as possible.

For more, see [**How to File a Weekly Claim Certification**](#) webpage.

5. Meet Your UI Requirements

After you apply, you must meet UI **eligibility requirements**, which include:

- **being able, available, and actively seeking work** each week.
 - See section #6 for details about the work search requirement.
- **filing weekly claim certifications** (see #4 above to learn more).
- **reporting all payments** you received or know you will receive on your **weekly claim certification**. You must report your gross earnings (all earnings before taxes or deductions are taken out) from temporary work, part time work, self-employment, commission payments, odd jobs, tips, and etc.

- If you received your first payment from a pension/annuity that you did not already report, you must also report it on your weekly claim certification.
- See section #4 above, **File Your Weekly Claim Certification**, for more.
- being **available and/or contact the Division and/or the Maryland Division of Workforce Development and Adult Learning (DWDAL)** when instructed.
 - You may be selected to participate in a Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) workshop. **If selected, you are required to complete the workshop.**
- accepting an offer of **suitable work**.

For details, see the [Information for New Claimants](#) webpage.

6. Complete Your Work Search Requirements

To fulfill the work search requirements, you must:

- **register** in the [Maryland Workforce Exchange \(MWE\)](#) system;
- **upload or create a résumé** in MWE, **make the résumé viewable to employers**, and **maintain an up-to-date résumé** in MWE;
 - After you register in MWE, check your MWE inbox frequently for weekly tasks you are required to complete. Failure to complete these activities may result in a delay or denial of your UI benefits.
- complete at least **three valid reemployment activities** each week, including at least **one job contact**; and,
- keep a **detailed weekly record** of all completed job contacts and valid reemployment activities. You are urged to use the MWE Job Contact and Reemployment Activity Log to keep this record.

See the [Maryland Work Search Requirements](#) webpage for details.

For more about UI, see the resources at [MDUnemployment.com](#) or call a claims agent (667-207-6520, Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.).