



UNEMPLOYMENT & WAGE REPLACEMENT

Updated April 3, 2020

Furlough Information:

All employees working under any of the construction agreements, including Apprentices and Material Handlers, have the right to go on temporary furlough for reasons associate with COVID-19. The national agreement between the International Offices of the IBEW and NECA, called the National Disease Emergency Response Agreement (NDERA), specifically addresses furloughs. The local NECA chapter and IBEW Local 48 have agreed to uphold this agreement.

You can find the joint statement from IBEW Local 48 and Oregon-Columbia Chapter NECA here:
https://www.ibew48.com/sites/default/files/files/neca-ibew_covid-19_statement_update.pdf

You can find the full National Disease Emergency Response Agreement (NDERA) here:
https://www.ibew48.com/sites/default/files/files/final_covid_agreement_between_ibew_and_neca_-_march_16_2020_lrs_signed_002.pdf

Frequently asked questions regarding the NDERA can be found in the two links below:
<https://www.orecolneca.org/assets/QA%20NDERA%20COVER%20and%20QA%203.19.2020.pdf>

https://www.ibew48.com/sites/default/files/files/qa_nedra_cover_and_qa_3.30.2020.pdf

Important links:

Oregon Unemployment:

https://govstatus.egov.com/ORUnemployment_COVID19

Washington Unemployment:

<https://esd.wa.gov/newsroom/covid-19>

<https://www.governor.wa.gov/news-media/inslee-provides-construction-guidance-and-signs-proclamations-ui-rules-healthcare>

Most frequently asked questions:

Q: As an Apprentice do I have a choice to not go in?

A: Yes, all employees covered by the NDERA who believe there is a real risk of spreading or of exposure to COVID-19 can furlough.

Q: As Apprentices we are told not to go on the hook because of our hours for graduation; is this still the case?

A: This is a special circumstance and Apprentices are able request a furlough and it is recommended that they do so if they feel unsafe or feel that they are putting others at risk.



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Q: Will my employer hold a grudge if I furlough?

A: Contractors and the Union have agreed to let employees furlough. If an employee feels like there is retaliation because of the choice to furlough, the employee should contact their Business Representative.

Q: Will employees be eligible for the supplemental unemployment of \$600 as mandated by the federal government?

A: Yes, if an employee is eligible for unemployment benefits, that member should be eligible for the supplemental increase. How those payments will be administered is still being worked out through the Employment Department.

Q: Has there been an indication of when Oregon will waive the waiting week for Unemployment Benefits like Washington did?

A: At this time Oregon has not waived the one week waiting period.

Q: How long is the backlog for filing for UI in Oregon and Washington?

A: Neither state has released the length of their backlog at this time but are urging people to continue to file on a weekly basis.

Q: Can I claim a partial week?

A: Oregon - Yes, you may earn up to ten times minimum wage or one-third of your weekly benefit amount (whichever is more) before your benefits are affected. Any earnings above that amount will reduce your benefit payment dollar for dollar. You **MUST** report all earnings each week you claim benefits.

Washington – Yes, your benefits will be reduce using the earnings deduction chart (gross earnings minus \$5 times 75%).

Q: What are the basic steps to filing unemployment claim?

A: To file an unemployment claim follow the link below and you will be prompted through the steps:

Oregon <https://secure.emp.state.or.us/ocs4/index.cfm?lang=E>

Washington <https://www.esd.wa.gov/unemployment/apply-for-unemployment>

Q: Can I access unemployment if I am sick, quarantined or sent home by my employer?

A: Yes, you may be eligible to collect unemployment benefits.



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WAGE REPLACEMENT

BeneSys is processing Wage Replacement Claims at a normal rate. If an employee's claim is received by Wednesday, it is processed on Friday and checks are mailed the following Tuesday. From the day that the claim is received to the day the employee receives the check is typically about 10 business days. Currently, there is no delay and/or backlog in the BeneSys office.

There is a delay in the Employment Departments that will affect an employee's ability to access wage replacement. The employee is required to show proof of payment from the Employment Department. Therefore, as long as the employee can provide a copy of a screenshot of their claim (as show below) showing the benefit has been paid, BeneSys will process the wage replacement once they have the claim.

The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL 'https://www.ourbenefitoffice.com/Harrison/Benefits/FlexDocuments.aspx'. The page title is 'Employment Department'. Below the navigation bar, there is a 'Print this form with your name' button. The main content area is titled 'Weeks Claimed Information' and contains the following text: 'In most cases, weekly claims that are payable are paid the next business day after they are received. The payment information below shows all payment information for the last twelve months and is current as of 10:22 PM 04/01/2020. Your weekly benefit amount is currently \$ 648'. Below this text is a table with the following data:

| Week Ending Date | Date Received | Claim Status | Amt. Paid | Date Processed |
|------------------|---------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|
| 07/06/19 | 07/10/19 | Waiting Week | | |

Below the table, there is a link to 'Apply to receive your payments by direct deposit or debit card.' and a note: 'If you failed to receive a check, a check tracer may be requested 10 days after the date paid.' At the bottom of the page, there are buttons for 'Claim Status Menu' and 'Exit'.

To file a claim, the employee will need to do the following:

- File for unemployment
- Provide proof of a Paid unemployment claim. This can either be a copy of a check stub or a screenshot from the unemployment website.
- The claim status must say paid, it cannot say processing or waiting week.
- The employee will not be paid for the waiting week.
- The employee will need to fill out the Flex Form found here: (<https://www.ourbenefitoffice.com/Harrison/Benefits/FlexDocuments.aspx>) and return the form to our office. This may be returned via snail mail, email or fax.
- The form must be signed by the employee; an electronic signature is fine.
- The employee can submit a claim every week or a few weeks at a time. Whatever the employee's preference is.



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Wage Replacement Questions:

Q: Can I get my wage replacement if I'm just off for a couple of weeks?

A: Yes, you can access your wage replacement as long as you are collecting your unemployment benefit.

Q: How much can I take out?

A: The benefit amount is \$500/week.