



**DEPARTMENT OF UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE
UI POLICY & PERFORMANCE
INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**

Date: May 20, 2021

Rescission(s): UIPP 2020.15

Reference No.: UIPP 2021.04

TO: All DUA and MassHire Managers and Staff

FROM: Emmy Patronick, Director of Policy and Performance

SUBJECT: Work Search Requirements

1. PURPOSE:

To inform staff that the work search requirements of G. L. c. 151A, § 24(b) will be re-instated as of June 15, 2021.

2. ATTACHMENTS:

- None

3. BACKGROUND:

In March of 2020 DUA waived work search requirements for regular UI claimants as part of changes made due to the pandemic and the impact of COVID-19 on the workplace. A combination of federal policy guidance, state emergency regulations, and DUA policy guidance created the option in March of 2020 to waive work search for individuals impacted by COVID-19.

On November 25, 2020, DUA informed staff again that work search requirements of G. L. c. 151A, § 24(b) were waived for all claims filed or re-opened during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, so long as such claimants remained ready to return to work once the pandemic measures have been lifted. DUA waived work search requirements until such time as the COVID-19 emergency measures have been lifted.

Claimants were presumed to be ready to return to work once the pandemic measures were lifted. While the labor market in Massachusetts remained severely affected by emergency pandemic measures and public health restrictions, UI claimants were not considered to have effectively withdrawn from the labor market.

On May 17, 2021, the Baker-Polito Administration announced that the Commonwealth is on track to meet the goal of vaccinating 4.1 million residents by the first week of June and all remaining COVID-19 restrictions will be lifted and all industries will be permitted to open effective May 29, 2021. With the exception of the remaining face-covering requirements for public and private transportation systems and facilities housing vulnerable populations, all industry restrictions will be lifted, and capacity will increase to 100% for all industries. Face coverings will also remain required indoors for staff and students of K-12 schools and early education providers. The gathering limit will be rescinded. Governor Charlie Baker will end the State of Emergency on June 15, 2021.

Effective June 15, 2021, given that COVID-19 emergency measures will be lifted, work search requirements will be reinstated for anyone who requests unemployment benefits after that date.

Staff should be aware of DUA's work search requirements, which will be in effect on June 15, 2021. In order to maintain eligibility for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits, claimants must:

- Make at least 3 work search activities per week. Some examples of what DUA constitutes as valid activities include, but are not limited to:
 - Completing a job application in person or online with employers who reasonably may be expected to have an opening for suitable work.
 - Registering for work and reemployment services with a local Mass Hire Career Center
 - Using other job search activities, such as reviewing job listings on the internet, newspapers, or professional journals, contacting professional associations, and networking with colleagues or friends.
- Keep a [detailed written log of work search activities](#).
- If a claimant is required to attend a Career Center activity, they should remember to bring printed completed copies of all work search activity logs.

- Provide their work search information to DUA upon request. Keep all work search documents for 1 year after they stop requesting benefits.

If staff receive inquiries from claimants regarding this change, they should remind claimants that this is one of the weekly requirements in Massachusetts, in order to receive benefits.

MassHire Career Centers offer unemployed workers a full array of reemployment services and tools that will assist them in preparing for their next employment opportunity. If claimants need assistance looking for their next job, direct them to contact a MassHire Career Center nearest them by visiting the Career Center website or calling their local Career Center. Claimants should be directed that they can locate a local Career Center's website and phone number by using the MassHire Career Center Locator at:

<https://www.mass.gov/masshire-career-centers/locations>

4. ACTION:

Effective June 15, 2021, any work search issue created as a result of certifying for benefits the week after this date is a valid issue and should be adjudicated based on the work search requirements of G. L. c. 151A, § 24(b.)