



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

CHARLES D. BAKER  
GOVERNOR  
KARYN E. POLITO  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

ROSALIN ACOSTA  
SECRETARY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MAY 20, 2021

**Massachusetts Announces Reinstatement of Unemployment Work Search Requirements  
Beginning Week of June 15**

BOSTON – The Baker-Polito Administration today announced that work search requirements will be reinstated for all regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants effective the week of June 15, 2021. This requirement applies to UI claimants receiving Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) and those on Extended Benefits (EB). Massachusetts temporarily suspended these work-search requirements in March 2020, following updated federal guidance at the outset of the pandemic.

The Commonwealth is set to lift all COVID-19 restrictions and complete the reopening process on May 29, 2021. The statewide COVID-19 state of emergency will terminate on June 15, 2021. With more than 200,000 jobs at Massachusetts employers advertised in the MassHire JobQuest, claimants are encouraged to learn more about finding employment opportunities through tools like the [MassHire Career Centers](#).

The reinstatement of the work search requirement for UI claimants means that beginning with the benefit week of June 13, 2021 through June 19, 2021, claimants must attest each week that they are making at least three work-search activities per week and provide proof of work search activity to the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) if requested. These requirements will be necessary to maintain eligibility for UI benefits. Examples of valid work-search 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.

Most claimants will be entitled to continue to receive partial or reduced UI benefits—and the full amount of the special COVID-related \$300 weekly stipend offered through Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) program—even as they return to employment.

Claimants who report wages from new employment will have their regular UI weekly benefit proportionately reduced to offset new wages, but in most circumstances claimants will remain eligible for the \$300 weekly stipend until their regular wages exceed 133 percent of their regular weekly benefit amount (calculated without including the \$300 weekly stipend). The Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) program will end in the first week in September.

Under the work search requirements, claimants will need to keep a [detailed written log of their work search activities](#). Claimants may also be called upon to attend a Career Center related activity and will be required to bring printed completed copies of their work search activity logs. Claimants may also be asked to provide their work search information to DUA upon request and must keep proof of their work search documents for 1 year after they stop requesting benefits. Claimants should not mail the work search logs to DUA unless requested.

Massachusetts is set to complete its reopening process on May 29, 2021, when all COVID-19 restrictions will be lifted. Massachusetts remains a national leader in vaccinations and is on-track to fully vaccinate more than 4 million people by the first week of June, and the Commonwealth recently launched a [new program](#) to make it easier for employers to help get their workers vaccinated. As of April 2021, there were nearly 200,000 job-postings across Massachusetts, the highest that figure has ever been in history.

Effective the week of June 15, regular UI claimants will not be able to cite COVID-related reasons to waive work search requirements and must accept suitable employment, if offered. Refusing work because a UI claimant would rather collect more money in unemployment benefits is not reasonable in any circumstances and is considered fraud. Employers may report any furloughed employees who refuse to come back to work by emailing [UIReturntowork@detma.org](mailto:UIReturntowork@detma.org).

Claimants who need assistance looking for their next job are encouraged to contact their local MassHire Career Center. MassHire Career Centers offer unemployed workers a wide array of reemployment services and tools that will assist them in preparing for their next employment opportunity. Claimants can contact a MassHire Career Center nearest them by visiting the Career Center website or calling their local Career Center. Claimants can locate a Career Center near their home by using the MassHire Career Center locator [here](#). More than 200,000 jobs at Massachusetts employers are advertised in the MassHire JobQuest. Click [here](#) to look for jobs.

## **Employer Resources:**

### *WorkShare*

If an employer had furloughed workers during the pandemic and wants to call them back, the employer may want to consider using the Commonwealth's WorkShare program. Workshare helps employers bring employees back part-time while allowing them to maintain the additional \$300 a week in federal UI benefits as well as continuing to subsidize a portion of

their wages. For more information on WorkShare go to <https://www.mass.gov/workshare-for-employers> or call (617) 626-6877.

#### *Virtual Career Fairs*

Employers may also contact their local MassHire Career Center to set up a free virtual recruitment event to assist with reaching out to unemployed individuals in their area. Employers can contact their local MassHire center to discuss their options [here](#).

###