

Do you need new skills to get a job?

Apply to the Training Opportunities Program (TOP)



The Training Opportunities Program (TOP, for short) allows you to collect unemployment benefits while you attend full-time training for new job skills.

If you qualify, you can:

- Collect unemployment benefits, **without** having to search for a job, and
- Extend your unemployment benefits up to 26 weeks.

Who can be in TOP?

You may qualify if:

- You no longer work for your former employer
- You filed a claim and are eligible for unemployment benefits
- It will be difficult for you to get a new job, unless you get new skills
- You have the skills to complete and benefit from approved training
- Your training program is full-time and approved by the TOP unit

Is there a deadline to apply?

You must apply during the first 20 weeks you receive unemployment benefits.

Tip: Apply for TOP as soon as you know you are eligible for unemployment benefits **AND** have a training course.

What kind of training can I choose?

Choose a training program that will give you job skills that are in demand.

You can choose training for jobs in demand where you live now, or in another place you would commute to or move.

Learn more about the labor market and which jobs are in demand at: www.mass.gov/lmi.

Is the training free?

No. You must pay for the training or find scholarships or grants that can help you pay.

Here are some financial aid resources:

- **MassHire Career Center:** Visit your local center. Ask a job specialist to help you look for grants or loans. Visit www.mass.gov/careercenters to find a center near you.
- **Federal Financial Aid:** To find out if you are available for financial aid, including Pell grants for up to \$5350, and other grants and loans, fill out a **Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**.

If you already have a 4-year college degree, you won't qualify for a Pell grant but you may qualify for other kinds of aid.

- Visit www.opportunity.gov for information about financial aid, and tools to help you explore careers and options.

How do I know if my program is approved?

You can find out what training is DUA-approved by:

- Calling the TOP Unit at (617) 626-5521, or
- Visit any MassHire Career Center, or
- Searching at www.mass.gov/jobquest

The program you choose must be an intensive, full-time vocational, technical or basic skills training program that you can finish within 2 years.

The training program should also:

- Give you job placement opportunities for a specific occupation before the training ends,
- Have proven success in placing similar trainees, and
- Provide proof that the training will help you get a new job.

Type of program	Minimum requirement
Vocational/Industrial Training	20 or more supervised class hours per week See: www.mass.gov/dpl
School- or College-based Training	12 credits per semester at a school or college licensed by the state Department of Education See: www.mass.edu
Distance Learning Training	12 credits per semester, or 20 hours per week – Cannot be self-paced; must follow established curriculum
Internships or Externships	20 or more hours a week, if it is part of the established curriculum
	Call the TOP unit to see if your program qualifies if it is: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Part coursework, part internship or practicum, or• An undergraduate or graduate degree program.

www.mass.gov/dua/top
(617) 626-5521

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The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development
Department of Unemployment Assistance

