

Applying for Unemployment Benefits During a Layoff Due to the Federal Government Shutdown

Arkansas Division of Reemployment considers workers affected by the government shutdown to be “laid off – finished work” from their jobs.

Below are some questions you may have about how to apply for unemployment benefits and what to expect when you apply.

NOTE – if you are paid retroactively for the shutdown period, you will have to repay the benefits you received.

Can I apply for UI benefits?

Yes, your agency has agreed to assist in making this process as smooth as possible for its employees. [You are eligible to complete and sign this form](#) and the claim will be filed electronically on your behalf. This will remove the requirement to provide ID at a local office and fast track the decision process.

If you would rather you can file your own claim via the standard process at <https://ezarc.adws.arkansas.gov/home>

How will I know if I qualify for benefits?

Once your claim is filed, we will send you a *Notice of Monetary Determination* that tells you whether you have enough **past wages** to receive benefits. The letter also tells you the amount of benefits we can pay each week.

There are other qualifications required to qualify for unemployment benefits, if additional information is needed you will be contacted at the address provided, and a decision will be mailed to the address of record.

What do I need to do after my claim is filed?

Once you have received that “Notice of Monetary Determination”, you can log on to ArkNet Launch at <https://jobseeker.launch.arkansas.gov/> to create an account to file your weekly certifications. You can also go to Launch to change your payment option to Direct Deposit.

You must file weekly certifications in order to receive benefits. The questions asked during the weekly certifications only apply to the specific week listed in Launch. A week of unemployment starts on Sunday and ends on Saturday. Please review the questions carefully before answering. If you make a mistake, simply log out and log back in to begin again.

What do I do if I have a part-time job?

If you work part-time in addition to the employer from which you were laid off, you will need to report your work and gross earnings for the weeks you are filing for benefits. Gross wages are the wages you earn prior to taxes being withheld.

Do I have to make job contacts while I am off work due to the government shutdown?

Yes. Arkansas law requires that you must make at least five (5) job contacts per week while claiming benefits. These job contacts can be reported in Launch and saved for the week you are claiming.

What if I get retroactive pay after the shutdown is over?

If your employer pays you retroactively for the time you missed during the shutdown, you must repay the benefits you received.

- Your employer can deduct the unemployment benefits that were paid to you from the amount of the retroactive pay. The employer is then responsible for refunding the Division of Reemployment for the benefits that you received.
- If your employer **does not deduct** the unemployment benefits from your retroactive pay, **you are responsible** for repaying the benefits you received.

Do I get benefits if the shutdown is only a few days or one week?

No. The first payable week on unemployment benefits is known as a valid waiting period week. No unemployment insurance benefits will be paid during a valid waiting week. Please note that if retroactive payments are made to workers impacted by the federal government shutdown, it could potentially result in an overpayment of unemployment insurance benefits for any benefits paid while on furlough.

What if I decide I do not want to be paid unemployment benefits?

If you do not wish to pursue your claim, do not file your weekly certifications. Your claim will shut down automatically.