

What do I need to do?

All claimants must conduct *at least* one work search related activity each week. The only exception is for individuals in a temporary medical quarantine due to actual or potential COVID-19 exposure.

What is the Maine JobLink?

All unemployment claimants are required to have an active account on the Maine JobLink: <https://joblink.maine.gov/>. The Maine JobLink is an easy-to-use tool where you can post a resume, search for a job or training opportunity, research labor market information to help target your job search, and much more. You can also use any other methods of searching for jobs in addition to JobLink. Please note, simply browsing the JobLink does not satisfy requirements for work search.

MDOL holds virtual JobLink workshops multiple times a week. These workshops walk participants through how to create and use a JobLink account. More information on how to register for a workshop can be found at <http://www.mainecareercenter.com/employment/workshops.shtml>

What counts as a work search activity?

The Maine Department of Labor is reinstating the traditional work search requirements as of Sunday, May 23, 2021. Maine had temporarily expanded the types of activities that would meet the work search requirement because the sudden business closings, health concerns, school, childcare and other issues brought about by the coronavirus pandemic.

Now people receiving unemployment benefits will be required to actively look for work and to accept positions for which they are reasonably qualified. A refusal to accept an offer of suitable work is grounds for disqualifying a person for benefits.

Beginning on May 23, 2021, acceptable weekly work search activities are:

- Interviewing for a job for which you are reasonably qualified
- Applying for a job for which you are reasonably qualified and willing to accept
- Participating in a job fair hosted by a CareerCenter
- Participating in CareerCenter virtual or in-person reemployment services
- Participating in a CareerCenter workshop related to seeking employment
- Working part-time, building up to your pre-pandemic normal weekly hours
- Contacting an employer about an opening that you are interested in

Note: Browsing the Internet is a good way to find potential job openings or leads but does **not** by itself count as a work search activity. More information on how to register for a workshop can be found at <http://www.mainecareercenter.com/employment/workshops.shtml>

What if I am self-employed?

Self-employed individuals will need to attest to engaging in activities designed to fully reopen their business. Examples of this could include, but are not limited to: marketing your business, attending networking events, participating in relevant workshops, meeting with the [Office of Business Development](#) to understand the resources available to small businesses. If an individual was previously self-employed but has no plans to return to self-employment, they will be required to do a work search or work search related activity.

What if my employer plans to bring me back to work, but hasn't yet?

If you have a definite return to work date within six weeks, you may qualify for a work search waiver. During those six weeks, you would not need to participate in work search activities. If your return to work date is unknown, you would still need to conduct a work search.

Work search activities include:

- Interviewing for a job for which you are reasonably qualified
- Applying for a job for which you are reasonably qualified and willing to accept
- Participating in a job fair hosted by a CareerCenter
- Participating in CareerCenter virtual or in-person reemployment services
- Participating in a CareerCenter workshop related to seeking employment
- Working part-time, building up to your normal weekly hours
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What if my children are home due to virtual learning, or I do not have childcare?

You would still need to participate in work search activities.

Work search related activities include:

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- Participating in a job fair hosted by a CareerCenter
- Participating in CareerCenter virtual or in-person reemployment services
- Participating in a CareerCenter workshop related to seeking employment
- Working part-time, building up to your normal weekly hours

- Contacting an employer about an opening that you are interested in

There are thousands of remote work opportunities listed on the Maine JobLink: <https://joblink.maine.gov/>. To find remote jobs, put 'remote' and 'work from home' in the search bar. The Maine JobLink is an easy-to-use tool where you can post a resume, search for a job or training opportunity, research labor market information to help target your job search, and much more.

Note: Browsing the Internet is a good way to find potential job openings or leads but does not count as work search activity. More information on how to register for a workshop can be found at <http://www.mainecareercenter.com/employment/workshops.shtml>

What if my doctor says I should not return to in-person work due to being high-risk?

You would still need to participate in work search activities.

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- Interviewing for a job for which you are reasonably qualified
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What if I am working part-time?

Working part-time counts as a work search related activity, as long as you are building up to your normal pre-pandemic weekly hours. The weekly certification will ask if you worked

during the week. If you are working, when prompted for the name of an employer you sought work from in your weekly certification, type in the name of your current employer.

A video explaining how partial unemployment benefits works can be found here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ix3-614tU8>

The Department also has a tool on our website that can help calculate how many hours a week a person could work and still collect partial benefits based on their weekly earnings. The calculator can be found on this webpage, under “Looking for work?”:

<https://www.maine.gov/unemployment/>

What if I am in medical quarantine?

If you have been told by a medical professional to quarantine for a set amount of time (typically 14 days) due having been potentially exposed to COVID-19, you do not need to perform work search activities for that period of time. Not working due to being in a high-risk category is not a medical quarantine.

How many searches per week do I have to provide?

You are required to participate in at least one activity each week. You must document your work search contacts and activities on your weekly certification. The bureau recommends you keep a record of your work search activities for weeks filed, as well as any supporting documentation related to the work search activities as you may be asked to provide them at a later time.

How do I prove I have done that job search?

Each week you will identify the type of activity you performed. If you contacted a potential employer, you will need to provide the names of individuals you spoke with and the contact information for the businesses. Work search activities are subject to random audit, so please maintain documentation of your activities. If you are unable to document your activity, benefits may be subsequently denied for that week.

What happens if I do not participate in work search related activities?

The first time you do not complete a work search related activity, you will receive a reminder letter explaining the requirement and options for completing it. If otherwise eligible, benefits would not be denied for that week.

If you do not complete a work search activity a second time, MDOL will contact you for further information about why you didn't complete one of the activities. Based on this fact-finding, MDOL will determine if you are eligible for benefits for the week. If benefits were

already paid on a week that is later denied as a result of this review, the benefits for the week would have to be repaid to MDOL. You have the right to appeal the decision.


Note: Not participating in work search activities for the week would only result in a denial in benefits for that particular week.

What is a work search audit?

MDOL is required to conduct random work search audits to validate the job search activities provided in your weekly claim. You should maintain documentation of your activities. If you are unable to document your activity, benefits may be subsequently denied for that week.

What do I do when I go back to work?

When you go back to work or start a new job, and the hours are comparable to those you worked prior to becoming unemployed, all you need to do is stop filing weekly certifications.

You do not need to call or let the Department know that you no longer need unemployment benefits. If you become unemployed again, please log into your [ReEmployME account](#), and then call 1-800-593-7660  if you experience an issue reopening your claim or need to reset your password.