Instructions- this is a template that you may use to create your notice for your WorkShare participating employees. Maine law requires employers provide notice of employer’s participation in WorkShare to employees. Please modify it as needed and delete this box.

Dear Employees,

Our company is experiencing a temporary decline in business and is faced with reducing staff. However, instead of layoffs, we have opted to apply for the WorkShare program through the Department of Labor and included information about this program below. Our application is under review and if it is approved, we will notify you. If you have questions regarding our plans, please contact our representative, [Employer Workshare Representative], at [contact information].

**What is WorkShare?**

WorkShare is an unemployment program administered by the Maine Department of Labor that is designed to minimize the impact of a situation that might otherwise require a layoff. Under WorkShare, all employees who work in similar jobs or in the same work unit, will experience a temporary reduction in work hours, rather than laying off a portion of the workforce. To help offset the impact of a temporary, reduced work week, WorkShare participants can receive partial benefits through unemployment, assuming all other eligibility criteria are met. Your partial unemployment benefit is based on the percentage of your reduction in workhours rather than your gross earnings, so the wages you earn from the remaining hours you work will not reduce your benefit further.

**How does WorkShare benefit you?**

* Everyone remains employed
* Unemployment benefits are available to help offset some of your lost pay
* You do not have to look for work to receive unemployment benefits
* Weekly wages earned from your reduced work week (or other employers) do not reduce your unemployment benefit payment
* You retain benefits such as health insurance and 401K or other pension benefit

**How WorkShare Works**

Instead of layoff, you would work a reduced number of hours and receive a portion of your weekly unemployment benefit payment to reduce your pay loss. The WorkShare unemployment payment is based on the percentage of reduced hours. You continue to file a weekly unemployment claim, but you do not need to look for work.

**Please see example below**

John normally works 40 hours per week and earns $15 an hour in regular pay, for a total of $600 per week. If laid off, John could be eligible for $354/week in regular unemployment. Instead, under a WorkShare plan, John’s hours are reduced by 25% to 30 hours per week and John would receive his pay for 30 hours work plus 25% of his weekly unemployment benefit. WorkShare unemployment provides for a higher benefit and offsets some of his lost wages. Below is an illustration of how this works. (Calculations are estimates based on pay and should be used as a guide only.)

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **100% Layoff Unemployment Compensation (UC)** | **25% Work Reduction** **WorkShare Unemployment** |
| 0 hours regular pay = **$0** + Weekly UC benefit = **$354** Total Weekly Income: **$354** | 30 hours regular pay **$450**+ WorkShare Payment **$88**Total Weekly Income **$538** |

**A pay difference of $184 dollars per week with the WorkShare Program from the 100% layoff**

**Our (proposed) WorkShare Plan:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Planned reduction in %/hours** | **Start Date** | **End Date** |
| **<X> % OR <Y> hours** | **mm/dd/yyyy** | **mm/dd/yyyy** |

**Maine Department of Labor WorkShare Program**

**Visit** [**https://www.maine.gov/unemployment/workshare/**](https://www.maine.gov/unemployment/workshare/)