

Unemployment Compensation Benefits

Approving Unemployment Benefits

Although most, if not all, employees who are laid off will be granted unemployment benefits, it is important that employees understand that the County is not the decision maker. The state in which the employee files for unemployment benefits determines whether the employee will be granted benefits.

Applying for Unemployment Benefits

Employees can file for unemployment benefits online, over the phone, or in person. Employees should be referred to:

[State of Oregon](#) – (877) 877-1781

[State of Washington](#) – (800) 318-6022

Responding to Unemployment Claims

All inquiries regarding claims for unemployment benefits should be referred to Labor Relations. Labor Relations, typically, does not contest claims when the employee is listed in SAP as a layoff.

It is important that departments communicate to Labor Relations any time work is offered to a laid off employee who may be receiving unemployment benefits and the employee refuses or declines the work. When an employee refuses work, including temporary or on-call, s/he is ineligible for benefits for a period of time that is determined by the state s/he files for benefits in.

Similarly, if an employee is offered a position at a lower level and refuses the position, s/he is deemed to have voluntarily resigned and may be ineligible for benefits. Labor Relations should also be notified if an employee declines recall or reinstatement.

Unemployment Benefits for Voluntary Layoffs

If the county accepts a voluntary layoff from an employee after soliciting for volunteers, the county does not contest unemployment benefits since we would

have been liable for the unemployment benefits of another employee if the employee in question had not volunteered for layoff.

Limited Employee Assistance Program (EAP)/ **Unum Work-Life Balance Program**

Employee assistance support is provided through Unum Work-Life Balance Program which offers consultation and counseling about a wide range of topics including grief and loss and adjusting to change. To access this free service, employees should call the Benefits Office at (503) 988-3477 or Unum at (800) 854-1446.

Employees who are impacted in layoff may access UNUM for **30 days** following their date of termination. For example: if an employee is laid off on 6/30/09 that employee has coverage to use EAP services until 7/30/09. Once the consultative process begins it will continue until the impacted employee completes their maximum allotment of three visits.

If an employee is already using EAP consultative services prior to being laid off, the impacted employee would continue with the process until they complete their maximum allotment of three (3) visits.