



NEW WORK SEARCH REQUIREMENT FOR PEOPLE RECEIVING UNEMPLOYMENT

You are now required to provide information to the Maine Department of Labor about work search to receive unemployment benefits.

Here are some step-by-step instructions for how to meet the work search requirement:

When you open your weekly certification, you will see a work search questionnaire.

Here is a copy of what you will see:

A screenshot of a web-based 'Work Search Questionnaire' form. The form is titled 'Work Search Questionnaire' with a sub-header '* Required Information'. It contains three input fields: 'Claimant SSN', 'Claimant Name', and 'Address'. Below the input fields, it asks the user to answer questions for the week of 'Sunday, July 12, 2020 – Saturday, July 18, 2020' and includes a warning: 'Providing false information is punishable by law'. There are two questions with radio button options for 'Yes' and 'No':
1. Were you self-employed and do you plan to return to self-employment?
2. Are you in contact with your previous employer about returning to work in the future?
At the bottom, there is a warning: 'Failure to actively look for work, unless self-employed or returning to previous job, may result in denial of benefits for the week claimed' and a 'Next >' button in the bottom right corner.

If you are self-employed or you expect to go back to work for your old employer, you do not have to perform a work search. Just check the appropriate box “yes.”

If you answer “no” to these questions, you need to check on the button marked “next” in the lower right-hand corner of the screen



This is the screen you will see next:

WC-600

Work Search Questionnaire
* Required Information

Claimant SSN Claimant Name

Address

Answer the following questions for the week of:
Sunday, July 12, 2020 – Saturday, July 18, 2020
Providing false information is punishable by law

1. * During the week claimed, did you look for work?
(This includes applying or interviewing for a job for which you are reasonably qualified) Yes No

2. * During the week claimed, did you participate in one of the following? Yes No

- a) Attending a job fair/virtual job fair hosted by a CareerCenter
- b) Participating in CareerCenter virtual reemployment services
- c) Participating in a CareerCenter virtual workshop
- d) Applying for a job for which you are reasonably qualified
- e) Interviewing for a job for which you are reasonably qualified
- f) Contacting an employer to inquire as to whether the employer is hiring
- g) Participating in professional job-related education or skills development
- h) Participating in networking events related to a job or occupation for which you are reasonably qualified

a. If yes, please select from the following:

3. If you answered No to both Question 1 and Question 2, explain why you did not look for work.
(Must not exceed 1000 characters)

Failure to actively look for work, unless self-employed or returning to previous job, may result in denial of benefits for the week claimed

Work search means that you applied or interviewed for a job OR you participated in one of the programs listed in section 2 of the screen.

For a list of the programs and to sign up for one of the programs listed in Section 2 of the screen go here:

<https://www.mainecareercenter.com/employment/workshops.shtml>.

If you do not use a computer, you can call the Career Center for help finding options to fulfill the work search requirements.



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If you did not do any of these activities during the week, you have to explain why in section 3 on the screen. You will need a significant COVID – 19 related reason, such as “I am sick with COVID-19”.

WHAT IF I AM NOTIFIED THAT I DID NOT COMPLY WITH THE WORK SEARCH REQUIREMENT?

If you are receiving unemployment benefits and are told by the Department of Labor that you no longer qualify for benefits because you failed to comply with the work search requirement you will continue to receive benefits until a fact-finding conference. The fact-finding conference is held to decide if there were grounds for you not to perform a work search or accept a job.

WORK SEARCH DOESN'T MEAN YOU HAVE TO ACCEPT AN OFFER OF EMPLOYMENT

You can meet the work search requirement even if you are not able to accept a job due to COVID-19 related reasons. Here is a list of COVID-19 related reasons:

- My income from self-employment has decreased due to COVID-19;
- My workplace is closed as a direct result of COVID-19;
- I have been diagnosed with COVID-19 OR have symptoms and am trying to get a diagnosis;
- A member of my household is diagnosed with COVID-19;
- I'm caring for someone diagnosed with COVID-19;
- I'm providing care for a child or other household member whose school or day care or work is closed due to COVID-19;
- I am quarantined or have been told by a health care provider to self-quarantine;
- I was scheduled to start a new job but don't have a job now, or can't reach my workplace because of a COVID-19 outbreak;
- I've become the breadwinner for my household because the head of household has died as a direct result of COVID-19; OR
- I had to quit my job as a direct result of COVID.



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If you are afraid to accept employment because of concerns about COVID-19, please see Maine Equal Justice's [I don't feel safe going to work; can I still get Unemployment?](#)

If you need legal assistance, please contact:

Maine Equal Justice: <https://maineequaljustice.org/people/legal-assistance-contact/>

(207) 626-7058, extension 205

Pine Tree Legal Assistance: <https://ptla.org/contact-us>

Maine Volunteer Lawyer's Project: <https://www.vlp.org/contact-us>