

Do you help others apply or file for Unemployment Insurance?

Here's What You Need to Know

Sometimes a person needs a helper to apply for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits. The person who receives UI benefits (a "claimant") may need help to apply for benefits, file for weekly benefits, or answer questions that might come up. A helper may be a friend, relative, attorney, or other advocate.

The claimant may have trouble using our Telephone Claim Center or web site for many reasons.

Some reasons are:

- They don't speak English well.
- They don't understand English.
- They don't read well.
- They have a disability, such as hearing loss or a speech problem.

The NYS Department of Labor has taken steps to help everyone use our services. These include providing language translation services and services for people with disabilities.

This fact sheet is for people who help another person with their UI benefits. It tells how you can help, what you can and cannot do, and how we handle privacy issues.

What You Can Do as a Helper

You can get information for a claimant, translate it, and help the claimant apply and file for weekly UI benefits.

You **MUST** remember that you should act only as a go-between for the claimant and Department of Labor staff. Do not argue a point of view for a claimant or answer questions for a claimant without asking them first.

The claimant should do anything he or she can for their claim. This includes talking with a Telephone Claim Center staff person.

Privacy and the Claimant's Personal Identification Number (PIN)

The claimant must create a PIN to apply for UI benefits. They must use that PIN to file for weekly benefits.

If a claimant cannot enter his or her own PIN, he or she may tell you their PIN. **However, the claimant must be with you every time you contact the Telephone Claim Center or use the web site for them.**

When you call the Telephone Claim Center, the operator will first ask to speak with the claimant. They will ask for the claimant's permission to speak with you. They will then ask you these questions:

- What is your name?
- What is your relationship to the claimant?
- How did you get the PIN?
- What services did you use with the PIN?

Your answers will be recorded.

The operator will tell the claimant that they are responsible for what their helper does. The operator will remind both of you that the claimant's PIN is their electronic signature. **This means that the claimant must be with you when you do anything regarding their claim.**

If you call the Telephone Claim Center when the claimant is not with you, the staff will tell you they cannot speak to you. Privacy rules do not allow them to give claim information to anyone but the claimant. That is the law.

How to Contact the NYS Department of Labor

To apply for unemployment insurance benefits:

From within New York State:
Call toll-free **1-888-209-8124**.

From outside New York State:
Call toll-free **1-877-358-5306**.

Or, use our web site at **www.labor.ny.gov**. Click on the "Unemployment Assistance" tab at the left.

To file for weekly benefits:

From within New York State:
Call toll-free **1-888-581-5812**.

From outside New York State:
Call toll-free **1-888-864-9920**.

Or, use our web site at **www.labor.ny.gov**.
Click on the "Unemployment Assistance" tab at the left.

If you have questions about your claim or about unemployment insurance:

From within New York State:
Call toll free **1-888-209-8124**.

From outside New York State:
Call toll-free **1-877-358-5306**.

Follow the prompts to speak with a staff person.
Many questions can also be answered on our web site
at **www.labor.ny.gov**.

If you do not speak English well:

Call toll-free **1-888-209-8124**. Listen to the prompts
for services presented in your language, or for trans-
lation services.

If you are hearing impaired:

If you have Telephone Device for the Deaf (TTY/TDD)
equipment, you can file a claim by calling a relay
operator at **1-800-662-1220** and asking the operator
to call **1-888-783-1370**. This number only works with
TDD equipment.

PROTECT *all Workers*
ASSIST *the Unemployed*
CONNECT *Employers and Workers*

www.labor.ny.gov

