



Re-employment services for unemployment claimants

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Returning unemployment claimants to work is high priority

WorkSource quickly connects unemployment claimants with job information and services

Claimants who don't look for work can lose their benefits

The Employment Security Department makes it a high priority to help unemployment claimants return to work as quickly as possible. Keeping periods of unemployment short benefits workers, since unemployment benefits cover only a portion of their lost wages, and it helps keep employers' unemployment-insurance rates affordable. It also saves money for the unemployment trust fund, and productivity is better when employers' vacancies are filled quickly.

Programs and services

Re-employment services are available at WorkSource offices throughout Washington. Claimants are registered automatically at WorkSource when they file their initial claims. This allows claimants to be matched with job openings listed with WorkSource from the beginning of their claims.

Claimants must document three job-search activities each week. These activities can include contacting employers about jobs and/or participating in WorkSource workshops.

During the first five weeks of their claims, claimants who are identified as "most likely to exhaust their unemployment benefits" are scheduled for a mandatory Job Preparation and Orientation Workshop. Nearly 66,000 claimants took the workshop in 2007. Those who fail to report for the workshop or other mandatory services can lose their unemployment benefits. The workshop includes:

- Information about employment services available at WorkSource.
- Employability and skill assessments.
- Labor-market information.
- Job referrals.
- Referrals to programs for more-intensive services and retraining opportunities, when appropriate.

All told, about 70,000 claimants got jobs after participating in WorkSource services last year.

Further background

The state legislature enacted the Job Search Review Program in 1998. Claimants are scheduled to report to WorkSource on a random basis for a review of the employer contacts they have recorded on their job-search log. In addition to the log review, their identification information is verified, a plan to return to work is developed with the WorkSource staff, and they are given referrals to jobs. Employment Security provides these services using a combination of state and federal funds.

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