

File a Claim

If you've lost your job in Illinois, you can File a Claim at the [Illinois Department of Employment Security's website](#).

Eligibility

You must be unemployed through no fault of your own, as defined by Illinois law. Here are the three primary ways you may lose your job and how each relates to your Eligibility for benefits:

- **Layoffs** due to "downsizing" or a reduction-in-force will qualify you for benefits.
- **Firing** for reasons related to misconduct makes you ineligible for benefits. However, if you're fired simply because you weren't a good fit or lacked the skills to perform the job, you may be able to collect.
- **Quitting** your job will make you ineligible for benefits unless you can prove a change in your wages, hours, or working conditions work was so compelling, you were forced to leave.

You must have made a certain amount of money before losing your job, which is calculated by your base period. Your base period is the earliest four of the five completed calendar quarters before you filed your benefits claim. For example, if your claim was filed on Oct. 10, 2019, your base period would be the 12-month period beginning July 1, 2018, and ending June 30, 2019. In Illinois, in order to be eligible, you must meet the following wage requirements:

- You were paid \$1,600 or more in wages during your base period.
- You were paid at least \$440 of your total outside of your highest quarter.

Illinois offers an alternative base period for people who don't qualify for the main base period. The alternative is the last four completed quarters before the person files for unemployment.

You must be able to work, available to work and seeking employment. If you find a suitable position, you must accept it. Suitability varies depending on your skill set, training, salary and more. Over time, if you still haven't found work, you may have to compromise on a job that doesn't quite match what you were doing before.

Duration of Benefits

Illinois residents can collect unemployment benefits for a maximum of 26 weeks.

Weekly Benefit Rate

You may receive up to \$471 per week.