



What Teachers and Other School Year Employees Should Know About Unemployment Benefits

If you work for an educational institution, CESA or for a governmental unit, Indian Tribe or non-profit organization that provides services to an educational institution and lose your job though no fault of your own, you might qualify for unemployment benefits. Eligibility for benefits is determined on a case-by-case basis.

Teachers and other school year employees generally **do not** qualify for unemployment benefits during scheduled breaks in the school year **when** they have a contract or reasonable assurance of having a job after the breaks.

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is a school year employee?

An individual employed by an educational institution such as teachers, substitute teachers, coaches, school secretaries and janitors. A school year employee can also be an employee of a governmental unit, Indian Tribe, or non-profit organization providing services to an educational institution such as a school crossing guard employed by the city or a cafeteria worker employed by a non-profit organization.

I'm a school year employee. Can I get unemployment benefits?

- You must have lost your job through no fault of your own. For example, your contract was not renewed or you were laid off. Getting fired due to misconduct will disqualify you from receiving benefits.
- You must have earned enough past wages to [qualify for benefits](#) and meet other eligibility requirements

What is reasonable assurance?

Reasonable assurance is a written, implied or verbal agreement that you will be performing services after the break period ends similar to the services performed in the period prior to the break. Although reasonable assurance may not be an actual contract or a guarantee of employment after the break period ends, the employer does need to notify you of their intent to utilize your services after the break period. Reasonable assurance can be with your current employer or a different school year employer.

Why is reasonable assurance important?

You must have earned enough wages in your base period to qualify for benefits. Reasonable assurance determines whether you can use the wages in your base period that were earned while working for an educational institution or working for a governmental unit or non-profit organization that provides services to an educational institution.

- If you have reasonable assurance, you cannot use these wages to compute your benefits and you may not have enough wages to qualify for benefits during the break period.
- If you do not have reasonable assurance, you can use these wages to compute your benefits, so you may qualify.

You must notify the department when you receive reasonable assurance.

What are the scheduled break periods?

These are the periods when the educational institution is not in session that occur between two academic years or terms as well as Thanksgiving, Christmas and Spring break periods.

Can I use wages I earned in non-school year employment to qualify for unemployment benefits?

If you have sufficient wages from non-school year employment you may qualify to receive unemployment benefits if otherwise eligible.

DWD is an equal opportunity employer and service provider. If you have a disability and need assistance with this information, please dial 7-1-1 for Wisconsin Relay Service. Please contact the Unemployment Insurance Division at (414) 435-7069 to request information in an alternate format, including translated to another language.