



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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OED Hosts Listening Sessions on Work Availability Temporary Rule

Oct. 5, 2021 (Salem, OR) – The Oregon Employment Department is seeking public comment on a temporary rule and proposed changes to the permanent rule that expand eligibility to receive unemployment insurance benefits under certain circumstances.

[Temporary rule OAR 471-030-0036](#) clarifies when workers are considered available to work and eligible to receive unemployment insurance (UI) benefits. It provides benefits for some workers who might have been denied under the pre-pandemic availability rules due to their limited work availability.

Under the temporary rule, a claimant must be available for suitable work for at least 40 hours per week or one shift per day, if their work is shift based, to maintain eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits.

This means, if someone has barriers preventing them from returning to their work – such as caring for a sick family member or a lack of child care – they may still be eligible to receive unemployment insurance benefits if they are willing to seek an alternate type of work for which they are available at least one shift per day and 40 hours per week.

This proposed permanent rule change fulfills the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program's purpose of replacing part of the income lost when workers become unemployed through no fault of their own in two ways.



First, it may help provide economic stability to local communities where there is a large number of people whose work schedules have been restricted by the pandemic, including those with underlying health conditions who may need to limit their exposure to COVID-19.

Second, it may provide workers, who are unemployed through no fault of their own, greater access to Unemployment Insurance benefits, replacing part of the worker's lost income.

Listening Sessions

OED has scheduled six virtual listening sessions in October and November 2021 to hear what local communities, workers, businesses, and labor unions think about the temporary rule and proposed changes to the permanent rule. These listening sessions are being conducted before the formal rulemaking process will begin.

The listening sessions will be simultaneously translated into Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian, and Cantonese.

The Statement of Need and Justification for the current temporary rule that is in effect, including proposed rule language are available [on the OED website](#).

Listening session dates and times

Register to attend at unemployment.oregon.gov/webinars.

Worker-focused listening sessions

2:30 p.m., Thurs., Oct. 14

Noon, Tues., Oct. 26

6 p.m. Thurs., Nov. 9

Employer-focused listening sessions

6 p.m. Wed., Oct. 20

Noon Wed., Nov. 3

9 a.m. Thurs., Nov. 17

Please note that, although these sessions are each scheduled for 90 minutes, the session will end earlier if participation stops before the scheduled end time.

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