

OREGON EMPLOYMENT DEPARTMENT

DECEMBER 2024 LEGISLATIVE DAYS

House Interim Committee on Education
Tuesday, December 10, 2024

Lindsi Leahy, Unemployment Insurance Director

Karen Madden Humelbaugh, Paid Leave Oregon Director

Unemployment Insurance

What is Unemployment Insurance?

- Federal-State partnership with U.S. Department of Labor
- Weekly payments for people who lose their job and meet program eligibility requirements
- Benefit amounts are based on the amount earned during the base year
- Up to 26 weeks of benefits during a 52-week benefit year





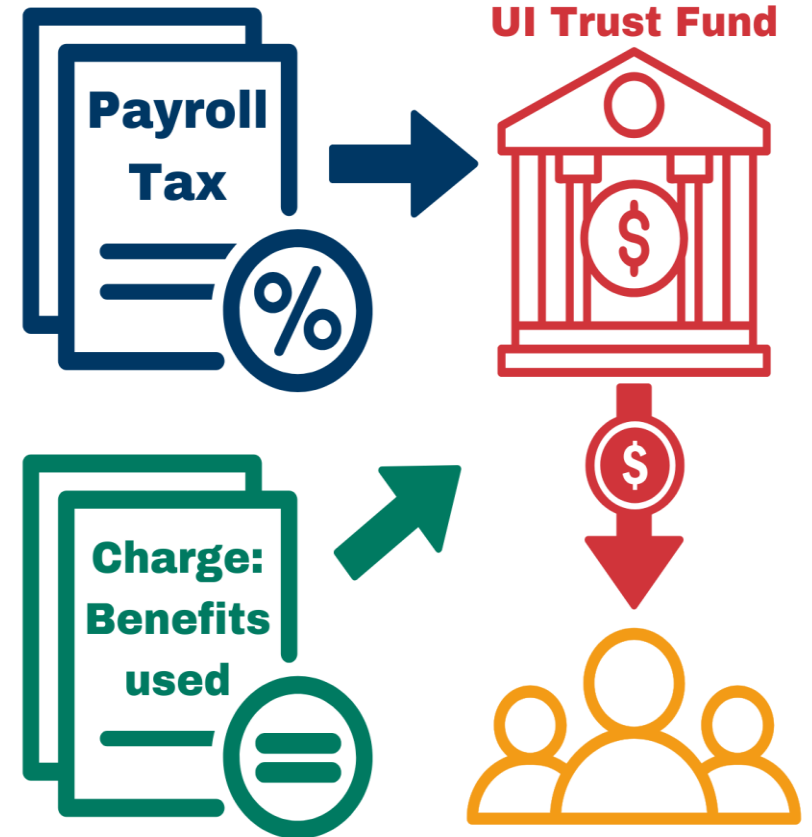
To be eligible for benefits:

- Worked 500 hours or paid \$1,000 by an employer during a base year
- Unemployed through no fault of your own
- Able to work
- Available for work
- Actively seeking work

Unemployment Insurance

How employers contribute to benefits:

- **Contributory (tax-paying)**
 - Pays payroll taxes
 - Most employers are in this category
- **Reimbursing**
 - Pays back benefits dollar for dollar
 - Most schools are in this category
- **Local Gov. Employer Benefit Trust Fund (LGEBTF)**
 - Hybrid of contributory and reimbursing
 - Small number of Oregon employers



School employees during breaks

Federal law

- Prohibits benefits during breaks for "professional" school employees who:
 - Work in “an instructional, research, or principal administrative capacity”
 - Have “reasonable assurance” to return to work in the same capacity after the break





Senate Bill 489 (2023)

- Removed the "reasonable assurance" requirement for "non-professional" school employees
- Allowed more "non-professional" employees to collect benefits during school break periods

Things to know

- Determining factor: job duties
- "Non-professional" is not the same as "classified"
- Seeking work: Need to look for work during the break to cover the break period

Senate Bill 489 (2023)

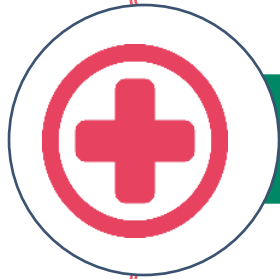
	2023*	2024*
Initial Claims (School Employees)	3,782	7,431
School Employees Paid at Least One Week	1,503	4,846
Total Benefits Paid to School Employees	\$8.9 M	\$24.8 M
Average Weekly Benefit Amount	\$495	\$440

*Data for customers who filed an initial claim between March 1 – October 31 who have school employee wages in their base year.

What is Paid Leave Oregon?



Family Leave



Medical Leave



Safe Leave

Eligibility requirements



- ❖ You are employed and your work is located in Oregon.
- ❖ You earned at least \$1,000 in wages in the base year before your qualifying life event.
- ❖ You contributed to Paid Leave through payroll deductions.
- ❖ You experience a qualifying life event.

Who is covered by Paid Leave Oregon?



Employers

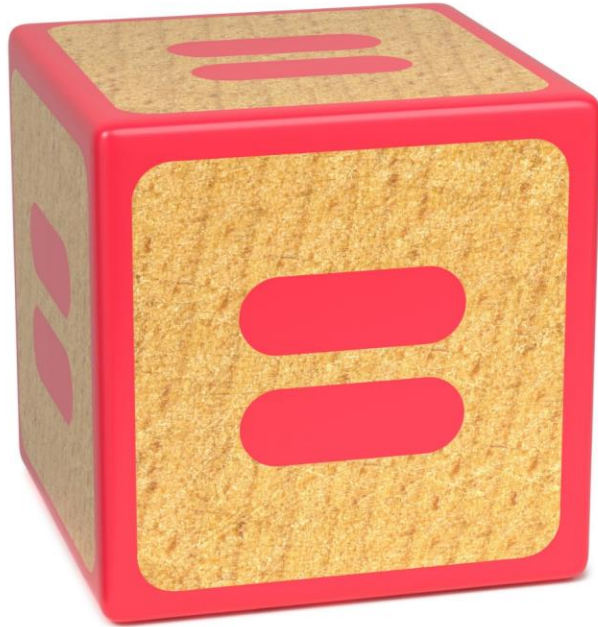
- All employers with at least one employee working in Oregon

Employees

- All employees working in Oregon

Elective Coverage

- Self-employed individuals and independent contractors
- Tribal governments



- ❖ **Equivalent plans must:**
 - Be approved by the department
 - Limit withholdings from employees to 60% of the contribution rate
 - Provide equal or greater benefits to employees
- ❖ **Equivalent plan employers:**
 - Must report wages
 - Do not pay contributions
- ❖ **Two types of equivalent plans:**
 - Employer-administered equivalent plans
 - Fully insured equivalent plans

Breakdown by Leave Type*

Leave Type	% of Total	Average Number of Weeks Taken**
Bonding Leave	31.2%	10
Family Leave	16.0%	5
Medical Leave	51.6%	6
Safe Leave	1.1%	8

*From August 12, 2023 (launch of Paid Leave Oregon) to November 30, 2024

**Accounts for consecutive leave schedule only

QUESTIONS?