

How to Complete the Continued Claim Form Transcript

Welcome to the printing and distribution center for the Employment Development Department. I'm Loree Levy, Deputy Director here at EDD. And this is where we print, sort, and mail upwards of more than 200,000 Unemployment Insurance checks a day to people who have lost their jobs.

At the height of the recession, we've paid out more than \$80 million dollars a day in these valuable benefits: money that is critical to you, your family, and to your local community.

We know how important it is that you get these benefits on time, about every two weeks during the course of your unemployment. And there's something you can do to help us reach that goal. Make sure you fill out your continued claim form completely and correctly before you mail it.

Every day, EDD receives stacks and stacks of continued claim forms in the mail. We rely on technology to help us get these claim forms opened, scanned, and processed as quickly as possible. Yet, every day upwards of 30 percent of the forms arrive incomplete, or including some kind of error.

That slows down the process and can cause your claim form to be routed back to a representative for further follow up and clarification from you, delaying the issuance of your check.

To help us all avoid such delays we've developed a tip sheet for you with some important Dos and Don'ts of filling out the continued claim form. You can find the Summary Tip Sheet on the Unemployment section of our EDD Web site at www.edd.ca.gov. Hopefully, it will be helpful for you to have it handy when you fill out your form. You can also refer to your handbook, *A Guide to Benefits and Employment Services*, for an explanation of each question on the claim form. The handbook was sent to you after EDD processed your application and an Internet copy can be found on our EDD Web site.

Within about 10 days of EDD processing your application for UI benefits, you will receive your FIRST claim form, which you will need to fill out and return to us. You must meet all eligibility requirements and only then will your first benefit check be issued along with another Continued Claim form. You must complete and submit a Continued Claim form every two weeks.

Now let's look at tip number one for filing out your form: be sure to use only blue or black ink. No pencils or pink or red ink, because those are difficult for our scanners to read.

Tip number two: Then mark the answers by completely filling in the box. It's hard for our scanners to read an X or a check mark.

Tip number three: Also be sure to answer every question. A lot of people skip a question and that requires us to send you another form to fill out which delays your benefits.

The first question asks if you were sick or injured during the dates listed at the top of the row. If your answer is "yes," mark the number of days you were sick or injured. The law requires you to be well enough to work every day in order to receive benefits, so we must reduce your benefits one-seventh for each day you cannot work.

The second question asks, "Was there any reason (other than sickness or injury) that you could not have accepted full-time work each workday?" You must remain ready and willing to accept work that matches your skills and background. If you do mark yes, then you could be determined ineligible to receive benefits for that week in which the conflict prevented you from being ready to accept a job.

For the third question, you must tell us if you looked for work during the dates listed at the top of the row. You can look for work in a number of ways such as over the phone or on the Internet. Follow the instructions you received on your Notice of Unemployment Insurance Award. And, if the box under question number three is marked with an "X," like for those claiming FED ED extension benefits, then you must complete Section B on the back of the claim form and tell us some details about your work search. Union members should follow instructions provided by their union.

Question four asks if you've refused any work during the dates listed at the top of the row. If you did refuse work then you will be scheduled for a follow-up phone interview to determine your continued eligibility for benefits.

The next question refers to any school or training attended. Answer yes ONLY if you BEGAN attending school or training during the dates listed at the top of the form. After that, answer yes only when a new term begins or you start new classes during one of the weeks. Since attendance in school or training during your available work time may affect your eligibility for benefits, a phone interview will be scheduled to determine your continued eligibility.

Question six asks if you worked or earned money in the two-week period. If you did, then you have to complete sections "a" and "b" directly below. All hours worked and your gross wages (monies earned before taxes) must be reported in the week you actually worked, regardless of when the paycheck is received. All earnings must be reported, even if the source of income is something like Back Pay, Holiday Pay, Severance Pay, or Workers' Compensation.

In this example, let's say you worked five hours on Sunday, four hours on Tuesday, and three hours on Friday that week and the hourly rate of pay was \$10. Twelve hours x \$10 per hour = \$120. \$120 is the earnings amount you would post in item 6a. You would also fill those hours in under item 6b, along with the name and complete mailing address of the employer you worked for. In this case, Friday was the last day of work with the employer because that was the end of the work available, so you would fill in that information on the form as well.

However, if you are still working for that employer, you would fill in "still working full-time" or "still working part-time." If you report working 40 hours or more, or noted here still working full-time, you will not be mailed a subsequent claim form. If you then become unemployed or your hours are reduced, you will need to reopen your claim and you can find out more about that on EDD's Web site.

If you fill in "still working part-time," you still may be able to receive some UI benefits, even if your earnings are higher than your weekly benefit amount. Just report your gross wages (monies earned before taxes) and EDD will figure the amount to deduct from your benefits.

For question number seven, tell us if you would like to have federal income tax withheld for the week(s) on the claim form. This can be selected, or not, on each two week claim form. Remember, unemployment insurance benefits are taxable income.

And for question number eight, if you had a change of mailing address or phone number, mark this block and complete Section D on the back of the form. You must report a change of mailing address to avoid delay in receiving your benefit checks.

The next tip: Don't forget to sign the form and keep your signature within the space provided. Many times signatures accidentally mark question number seven or number eight, which could result in the scanner marking those answers as yes. This could result in a delay and reduction in your payment. After providing your signature in the space provided, then, carefully remove the perforated portions of the form, fold it only where it was folded when you received it, insert the form into the provided envelope, and make sure the EDD address appears in the envelope window.

Do NOT send the form to any other address or send via overnight mail as this could delay your payment.

Also, please don't include any other forms or correspondence with the continued claim form. We understand you may have questions or concerns you want to share about your claim. We strongly encourage you to submit your questions to us online by using the "Contact Us" feature on our Web site. If you have any

questions on forms or correspondence, contact EDD. We'll give you some contact information in a moment.

Finally, make sure you complete and mail in the continued claim form on the date shown on the front of the form. Benefits cannot be paid until a properly completed and signed form is submitted.

DO NOT mail the claim form early: the check will not be processed. You will be mailed a duplicate claim form to be completed and mailed again, which will delay your check.

Also, DO NOT mail the claim form late. If you mail it more than 14 days after the mail date listed at the top of the form, we will have to do a follow-up phone interview with you to determine why. Again, this can result in a delay or maybe even denial of your benefits.

We are happy to report that despite the unprecedented volume of unemployment claims EDD is processing, a vast majority of our customers are receiving their valuable benefits on time. We are working hard to continue to meet that goal and hope this video will help make you an active partner in that effort.

If you need to contact us, you can:

- Access our Web site at www.edd.ca.gov for more information,
- Use the Contact Us and Ask EDD feature on our Web site and submit a question about Unemployment Insurance, or
- Call toll-free at 1-800-300-5616.

Thank you and don't forget to access our Web site or visit a local office if you would like assistance with your job search.