



## *How to Apply for Unemployment Insurance*

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The Georgia Association of Educators made you a promise. When you became a GAE member, we promised to be with you every step of the way. That's a promise we aim to keep.

As you know, our school systems have been hit hard with unprecedented budget cuts. And now, to make ends meet, local systems are forced to lay off staff. Thousands of talented and dedicated education professionals are now facing unemployment. To help with this transition, GAE has pulled together some basic resources.

Recently, the Georgia Association of Educators met with the Georgia Department of Labor to discuss resources for school system employees who have been laid off. The Georgia Department of Labor recently added a special link on its homepage for school system employees. **The online claim-filing service for School System Employees will be available beginning May 21, 2010.**

### **Things to keep in mind:**

- You should file for Unemployment Insurance the first day after school is out. Whether an individual will receive unemployment compensation will be determined on a case-by-case basis.
- The Georgia Department of Labor and partner organizations (including GAE) will host a series of employment transition workshops at locations around the state to help school system employees. Laid-off workers will be briefed on how to file for unemployment insurance benefits and the wide-range of support, re-employment, training and career transition services available at the state and local levels. The locations, dates and times are listed below:
  - The Atlanta Marriott Century Center, June 4-5 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
  - Atlanta Airport Marriott, June 4-5 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
  - Marietta Campus, Chattahoochee Technical College, June 4-5 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
  - Macon State College, June 4-5 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
  - Albany, Hilton Garden Inn, June 4-5 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
  - Paulding Campus, Chattahoochee Technical College, June 11-12 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
  - Dalton, N. W. Georgia Trade and Convention Center, June 11-12 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
  - Savannah Hyatt Regency, June 19 at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.

# GAE on the ISSUES

- **The Georgia Department of Labor offers a variety of career center services**—including job search assistance; career counseling; online job listings; complementary access to computers, printers, telephones, and fax machines; employment-related workshops; career resource areas; labor market information; assistance technology; specialized assistance for military veterans; employer tax credits; Georgia Work\$ (a unique training initiative for job seekers receiving unemployment insurance benefits); specialized reemployment programs; unemployment insurance benefits; and referrals to supportive services.
- Plans are underway to establish permanent transition centers strategically located across the state to offer a comprehensive array of employment related information, resources and services.

## Websites to keep handy:

[www.dol.state.ga.us](http://www.dol.state.ga.us)

[www.gae.org](http://www.gae.org)

## What is Unemployment Insurance?

Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits is temporary income for workers who are unemployed through no fault of their own and who are either looking for another job, have definite recall to their jobs within six weeks of the last day worked, or are in approved training. The funding for unemployment insurance benefits comes from taxes paid by employers. Workers do not pay any costs. Eligibility for benefits is determined based on past wages, reason for job separation, and availability and job search requirements. Claims for unemployment insurance may be filed at any Georgia Department of Labor Career Center.

*When filing a claim, you should bring:*

- Your social security number. A claim cannot be filed without a social security number.
- Employer-issued separation letter or notice, if one was provided.
- Names and addresses of all employers for the last 18 months and the dates worked for each.
- Proof of immigration status if not a U.S. citizen.
- Personal check with account number and bank routing number if you want benefits deposited directly into to a checking or savings account.
- Claims are effective on the date they are filed and are not retroactive to the last day worked.



## **A Few Common Questions About Unemployment**

For more information, go to the [Georgia Department of Labor](#).

### **How do I qualify for unemployment insurance benefits?**

- You must have earned money in the base period to set up a claim (the first four of the last five calendar quarters completed at the time you file your claim.)
- You must be unemployed through no fault of your own.
- You must be able to work, be available for work, and be actively seeking work each week you claim benefits.

### **What are the minimum and maximum weekly benefits paid in Georgia?**

- Effective July 1, 2007, the minimum is \$44 per week. The maximum is \$330 for claims filed on or after July 1, 2008.

### **What do I need to bring with me when I file a claim?**

- Bring your social security number. You cannot file your claim without it. If you received a separation notice or letter from your former employer, bring it with you when you file your claim. In some cases this will help speed up the process of determining your eligibility for benefits. You will need the names and addresses of your employers for the last 18 months, and the dates you worked at each place. Bring proof of your immigration status if you are not a citizen of the United States. You may have your benefit checks deposited directly to your checking or savings account. If you wish to have this done, bring a check with your account number and your bank's routing number. If you separated from the military in the last 18 months, bring DD214 Member 4. If you worked for the federal government in the last 18 months, bring Standard Form 50 and Standard Form 8. If you do not have Standard Form 50, please bring a W-2 form or pay stubs and your wages will be estimated.

### **When do I get my first check?**

- Usually issued about 14 to 21 days after the day you file. Your first check will usually be mailed on the same day as the written decision. You must claim benefits each week prior to receipt of your determination in order to receive payment for those weeks.

### **What is the maximum length of time I can draw benefits?**

- The maximum number of weeks for any claim is 26. The minimum number of weeks is 6. The actual number of weeks depends on your earnings in the base period.
- There is the possibility that these benefits will be extended beyond 26 weeks. Contact your federal legislators to urge them to vote for the approval of this extension.

# GAE on the ISSUES

## Can I draw benefits if I resign from my job?

- You may be eligible to draw benefits if you can show that you resigned for good work-connected reason(s), i.e., material change in working conditions, material change in working agreement, nonpayment for work, and similar reasons.
- If you become unemployed for no fault of your own, and meet the requirements for wages and time worked during a certain period, you likely will qualify for benefits.

## What if I am denied benefits from my employer?

- You have the right to file an appeal within 15 days after determination.
- **Contact your [GAE UniServ Director](#) for assistance and representation.**

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Even in these tough economic times, many districts are still planning to rehire educators or hire new educators. In the event you leave your current school system and move on to a new one, be sure to transfer your coverage by completing a new membership form. Secure your legal protection and benefits by maintaining your active membership in GAE. Although GAE is a statewide organization, each school system has its own payroll process. Contact the Association Representative (AR) in your building or [your local UniServ Director](#) for more details. You can also call the appropriate GAE Service Center for assistance.

**CONNECT with other GAE members &  
SHARE your experiences at  
[www.voicesforrealchange.org](http://www.voicesforrealchange.org).**