

# **Training Opportunities Program**

## **Section 30 Brochure**

**Applying for  
Approved Training  
While You Are Collecting  
Unemployment Insurance**



**Executive Office of Labor  
and Workforce Development  
Department of Unemployment Assistance**



**If you need to acquire new skills in order to become re-employed, you may be eligible for Section 30 benefits. Section 30 of the Massachusetts Employment and Training Law provides two key benefits:**

1. It allows the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) to waive an active work search for claimants who meet certain eligibility requirements. This means that claimants can continue to collect their unemployment insurance (UI) benefits while in agency-approved training.
2. Additionally, it allows claimants to receive up to another 26 weeks of extension benefits while attending school full-time.

## Eligibility Requirements

You may be eligible for approved training if you:

- Have an eligible claim for unemployment compensation benefits, and
- Are permanently separated from your previous employer, and
- Are unlikely to obtain suitable employment based on your current skill level, and
- Need training to become re-employed, and
- Possess sufficient aptitude and skills to successfully complete and benefit from approved training, and
- Maintain attendance and make satisfactory progress in the selected training required for continued eligibility in the training program

## Training Program Requirements

In order for DUA to approve your training program, your selected program must provide you with skills that are in demand in your labor market area (go to [www.mass.gov/lmi](http://www.mass.gov/lmi) to learn more), or in any other areas to which you would either commute or relocate.

## To be considered for approval, a training program must:

- Be full-time.
  - At least 20 hours or more per week of supervised class hours for vocational/industrial training.
  - At least 12 credits per semester in a program offered by a recognized college. Schools and colleges must be licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Education. Learn more at [www.doe.mass.edu/ops/licensure](http://www.doe.mass.edu/ops/licensure).
  - At least 20 hours per week or 12 credits per semester at an approved distance learning program. You must abide by the distance learning program requirements and curriculum. Training cannot be self-paced.
- Be intensive so that you can complete it within 2 years or within 3 years if the program combines Basic Skills with vocational/technical training. The 2- or 3-years time frame includes vacations, class breaks, internships/externships etc. Internships/externships **must** be a minimum of 35 to 40 hours a week and part of a scheduled course curriculum. If the program is offered as part practicum or internship and part classroom hours, the program will be approved only for the time needed to complete state or federal certification or licensing requirements, or the time deemed necessary by the DUA Section 30 Director to allow the claimant to become employable in the occupation for which the training has been provided. Placement should occur prior to the end of regularly scheduled classes..
- Have a successful job placement rate for participants of the same program for the past 12 months:
  - of at least 70% when unemployment rate is at or below 7%
  - of at least 60% when unemployment rate is above 7% and up to 8%
  - of at least 50% when unemployment rate is above 8%. The Training Facility Director can also provide other evidence that successful completion of the program is likely to lead to reemployment.
- Provide vocational/technical or basic skills training.
- Clearly identify the occupation for which you will be trained.

## Basic Skills Enhancement

If it is determined that, as part of your re-employment plan, you need “basic skills enhancement”—English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE) or General Equivalency Diploma (GED) preparation—that course is usually taken as part of a vocational or technical training program.

When basic skills enhancement is part of your vocational plan, the overall length of both programs may exceed the two year maximum. However, you will not be eligible to collect more than your maximum benefits under the regular state program plus the 26 weeks of additional benefits allowed by law.

## Applying for Approved Training

There are two steps needed to complete the application process, if you are applying for an extension of your benefits in addition to the waiver of the work search activities.

1. Find approved training that will prepare you for the job market. You can receive assistance from any One-Stop Career Center, or search on JobQuest – [www.mass.gov/jobquest](http://www.mass.gov/jobquest).
2. Once you have chosen your program, you must complete a Training Opportunities Program Application Form 1622. This form asks for information on the type of training; school(s) offering the training; and the start and end dates of the program. Your school must complete a section of this form, providing information on the start and completion dates of your training, class hours per week and the school's placement rate in jobs related to the training program completed. Remember to submit all of your paperwork at least three weeks prior to the start of training. A decision will probably take at least two weeks.

## How To Pay For Training

The Department of Unemployment Assistance does not provide funding for your training. DUA's approval of your training means only that DUA will waive the requirement that you look for work while you are collecting unemployment insurance, and that you may be eligible for up to an 26-week extension of your UI benefits while you are attending training. You should visit a One-Stop Career Center to inquire about the possibility of receiving funding for your training program. A job specialist can help locate resources to pay for your training, including federal or state grants and loans.

## How To Choose The Right Training

If you are not sure of how to find appropriate training or you are unable to decide what training course is right for you, you can receive assistance in evaluating your present skills, in order to choose the best vocational training course. Career Center staff will provide you with information on current programs that have been pre-approved and will help you complete the training application process.

If you need help, resources are available at One-Stop Career Centers. To find a Career Center near you, go to [www.mass.gov/careercenters](http://www.mass.gov/careercenters) or call **1-877-US 2 JOBS** (1-877-872-5627).

## Applying for Section 30 Benefits

Before applying for approved training and Section 30 benefits, here are a few questions for you to consider:

- What training is right for you?
- How much training do you need?
- Will you be able to complete your training before your benefits end?
- What if your training program extends beyond the duration of your regular benefits?
- How will you pay for your training?

**Important:** If you plan to attend training while collecting unemployment benefits, it is important that you apply for Section 30 benefits as soon as you are approved for UI benefits. You may be approved for only one training program in a benefit year.

1. You must file an application with DUA for **approval** of your training.
2. If your approved training program extends past the duration of your benefits, you may be eligible for an extension of your benefits while you are completing your full-time training. **The extension can be no longer than 26 weeks or through the last week of your training program, whichever comes first.**

## Remember These Important Points:

- Select the training program that is best for you and that will help you find employment in your new occupation.
- **DUA does not fund your training costs.** If you need financial assistance to pay for your training program, check with your One-Stop Career Center for availability of grants or loans.
- Submit your Section 30 Application at least three weeks prior to the start of training. A decision will probably take at least two weeks. If you are seeking funding assistance through the One-Stop Career Center, your application process will take longer, depending on the availability of funding for the specific program you plan to enroll in – please plan accordingly.

## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

### What training will be right for you? How much training do you need?

A One-Stop Career Center job specialist can help you select in-demand occupations for your labor market area and appropriate schools for you to receive training but only you can decide what is the right training for you. The amount of training will be determined by the occupation type and program (college credit, certification, etc) you select for training.

### Will you be able to complete it before your benefits end?

To ensure that you can complete your training before your benefits end, you should apply for Section 30 benefits as soon as you are approved for UI Benefits.

### Are Section 30 benefits affected by UI extended benefits?

Section 30 monetary benefits will be paid after all eligible federal and state extended benefits are exhausted provided you are still in Section 30-approved training. Section 30 benefits can be no longer than 26 weeks or through the last week of your full-time training program, whichever comes first.

### What if your training program extends beyond the duration of your regular benefits?

If it does, you can apply for an extension of your unemployment insurance benefits. The extension is a maximum of 26 weeks of benefits or until the completion of your training, whichever comes first.

To qualify, your training program must be on the Section 30 list of approved training programs. Application for Section 30 approved training to attend undergraduate or graduate degree programs will be reviewed individually. Find approved training programs on JobQuest: [www.mass.gov/jobquest](http://www.mass.gov/jobquest).

### Where can I get information about Section 30 benefits or assistance with completing the application?

You can talk to a job specialist at a local One-Stop Career Center. To find a Career Center near you, go to [www.mass.gov/careercenters](http://www.mass.gov/careercenters) or call **1-877-US 2 JOBS** (1-877-872 -5627).

### How long does it take for my Section 30 application to be approved?

Your application will be approved in approximately two weeks, if you are eligible, and there are no issues with your application. If you do not hear from us after 3 - 4 weeks after you submit your application, please call **617-626-5375**.

### When will my Section 30 benefits stop?

Your Section 30 benefits will stop when your unemployment insurance benefits stop or you complete your training, whichever comes first.

### Under what circumstances, do I need to contact Section 30 while in approved training?

You should contact DUA Section 30 Unit under the following circumstances:

- When you are not attending training.
- If you completed training earlier than projected.
- When there are issues with your school or program.

### Once in approved training, can my Section 30 benefits be stopped?

Yes, your Section 30 benefits may be stopped if you stop training without completing your program, or you do not adhere to the course hours, credit or program requirements.

## Questions and Answers for Schools (Training Facilities and Colleges)

### Once a student has been approved for Section 30 training, under what circumstances, does the school have to contact Section 30?

The school should contact DUA Section 30 Unit when there are changes – such as the student's start date changes, the student drops out of class, the school's break lasts for longer than 3 weeks, or the course/program has changed affecting the student's completion of the training.

### What happens if a student needs to take a break or is unable to complete training?

The claimant may be removed from the Section 30 program. Depending on circumstances, the student may be able to return to the program later.



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