


State of Vermont
Department of Labor

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Senate Committee on Economic Development, Housing, and General Affairs
FROM: Cameron Wood, Director of Unemployment Insurance, Vermont 
Department of Labor
DATE: January 24, 2022
SUBJECT: 2021 Unemployment Charge Relief Application Update

Act 51 of 2021 authorized the Department to allow employers to apply for benefit charge relief for qualifying COVID-19 related separation reasons during the calendar year 2021, as outlined in Sec. 7 of Act 51.

The application was published online in September 2021, and employers were able to submit applications through the end of October 2021. Employers received direct email notification that the application for charge relief was available online for them to complete. The Act also required the Department to notify claimants of their rights within the legislation. Claimants were sent an email outlining how they may notify the Department if they were laid off for a qualifying COVID-19 reason and were not offered their position back or rehired.

In total, there were 159 employer applications seeking charge relief (note: this does not translate to unique employees, applications could include multiple employees). There were 161 claimants who responded to the Department's inquiry regarding the rehire provision of the Act.

The Department has begun the application review process. First, the Department is working to conduct a crossmatch to determine if there are discrepancies between the claimants who reported information and the employers who requested charge relief. Next, the Department will begin making determinations on applications. At this time, the Department has not approved or denied any application.

Any charges incurred or waived for calendar year 2021 will not impact an employer's rate of contribution until the start of fiscal year 2023. The Department will issue all determinations no later than March 31, 2022, to allow for employers to appeal decisions if appropriate. This timeline will ensure the Department is able to complete the necessary calculations to determine the employer's tax rating for the following fiscal year.

Copies of the email communication sent to claimants and employers are attached to this memo for reference. It is important to remember that all information submitted by employers and claimants may only be considered if the separation occurred prior to the end of the Governor's State of Emergency. Any initial unemployment insurance application submitted by a claimant after that date will not qualify for charge relief.



Link to 2021 Employer Charge Relief page on the Department's website:

<https://labor.vermont.gov/unemployment-insurance/2021-employer-charge-relief-due-covid-19>





Unemployment Insurance | September 24, 2021

2021 UI Benefit Charge Relief due to COVID-19

You are receiving this email to inform you of the process to apply for **unemployment insurance benefit charge relief for 2021 UI charges attributed as a direct result of COVID-19**. The application is now live on the Department of Labor's website and will remain open until October 31, 2021.

Please remember, this application is specific to unemployment insurance charges for calendar year 2021 only. Benefit charges for calendar year 2020 have been automatically relieved and you do not need to complete this application for those charges.

You may apply for charge relief for claim charges incurred in 2021 as a direct result of COVID-19. New claims for UI benefits submitted after the expiration of the Governor's declared State of Emergency, June 15, 2021, will not be eligible for charge relief.

Learn more or submit an application for charge relief by clicking below.

[More on Employer Charge Relief](#)

Vermont Department of Labor | <https://labor.vermont.gov/>





Unemployment Insurance | October 5, 2021

Information for 2021 UI Claimants

You are receiving this email because you have been identified as someone who has filed a claim for unemployment insurance benefits in calendar year 2021.

Act 51 of the 2021 legislative session authorizes the Department to provide benefit charge relief to taxable employers for layoffs that are related to COVID-19 if the employer offers to rehire the laid off individual within a reasonable time.

If you were laid off due to COVID-19 and your employer has not provided you with an opportunity to return to work or a future return to work date, you may notify the Department by completing our [‘No Offer to Return to Work’](#) form.

PLEASE NOTE: *The Department cannot ensure you will retain your former employment, but the Department can ensure your former employer is not able to benefit from refusing to return you to your former position.*

CURRENT FILERS PLEASE NOTE: *If your employer laid you off from work (because of COVID or another reason) and contacts you letting you know that the business has reopened and you may return to work, you are required to return to work unless you have a qualifying reason not to. By refusing to return to work without a qualifying reason, you may be disqualified from benefits or required to repay a portion of the benefits you received but were not entitled to.*

More information

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