

CALIFORNIA TRAINING BENEFITS PROGRAM

The California Training Benefit (CTB) program allows eligible California Unemployment Insurance (UI) claimants who lack competitive job skills to compete for jobs in the California labor market, to receive their UI benefits which might otherwise not be allowed while attending a training or retraining program approved by the Employment Development Department (EDD). Under the CTB program, the traditional role of UI changes from that of partial wage replacement while the individual looks for work, to one of assisting the individual in training or retraining in an effort to return to full employment.

Considering CTB Participation

Individuals who are approved by EDD to participate in the CTB program do not have to meet the following eligibility requirements during the period of approved training:

- Look for work.
- Be available for work.
- Accept suitable work.

There is an extension of UI benefits available only for eligible CTB participants, which is known as a Training Extension (TE) claim. A TE claim may be available when regular UI benefits run out before the period of approved training is completed and Extended Benefits (EB) are not available. However, there is no guarantee that regular UI benefits, a TE claim, or EB will be sufficient to cover the entire period of approved training.

The California Unemployment Insurance Code (CUIC) provides the eligibility criteria for the CTB program and TE benefits which EDD staff must follow in order to approve CTB participation and allow the filing of TE claims. The EDD is prohibited from pre-determining CTB eligibility until the individual has started to attend school or training.

Base period employers are notified when an individual is approved for the CTB program, which provides the employers the right to contest the individual's need for training or retraining. When employers contest or appeal the CTB eligibility determination, it may result in a reversal of the original eligibility finding. If the original eligibility is reversed, the claimant has the right to appeal the disqualification.

CTB Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for CTB program participation, an individual must be eligible to receive California UI benefits, and notify the EDD as soon as the school or training attendance begins. Once the EDD has been notified, an eligibility interview is scheduled and conducted by EDD staff to gather information to determine if CTB can be approved. CTB may be approved if the individual is a verified participant and attending training authorized by one of the following programs and meets all other eligibility criteria:

- Workforce Investment Act (WIA), a federally funded program.
- Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA), a federally funded program.
- Employment Training Panel (ETP), a state funded program.
- California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs), a state/county funded program.

Otherwise, CTB can only be approved when EDD determines that the individual is:

- Unemployed or partially unemployed for four or more continuous weeks, unemployed due to a plant closure, substantial reduction in workforce, mental or physical disability, or technological changes in their occupations;

AND

- Unemployed due to a lack of sufficient current demand for the individuals' skills within the local labor market area or the individual's occupation is seasonal and the individuals have no other skills in current demand;

AND

- Reasonably expected to complete the training or retraining successfully.

AND

EDD determines the training or course of instruction is:

- In an occupation that is in demand in the individual's local labor market in this state or is willing to relocate within California to an area where the labor market demand exists;

- AND
- Specifically trade-related for individuals who are journey level union members;
- AND
- Taken at an approved school or facility and completed within one year from the EDD approval date, including scheduled breaks and vacation breaks;
- AND
- Full-time as defined by the school and EDD, and intended to provide skills to obtain immediate employment, but not primarily to obtain a degree. (typically 20 hours per week or 12 units per semester or quarter);
- AND
- Beginning three years or more since the beginning date of any prior CTB participation.

Training Extension (TE) Eligibility Criteria

Individuals are approved for TE claim if they are eligible for CTB and inquired about CTB or have a CTB eligibility interview prior to receiving the 16th week of regular UI benefits. If the individuals's UI claim is less than 16 weeks, the inquiry or the eligibility interview must be made before the individual receives his or her last benefit payment.

Benefits Available

- Individuals participating in CTB who are otherwise eligible for UI benefits may receive their regular UI benefits during the period of CTB, approved training. The amount of the claim award, not the length of training, determines how long UI benefits can be paid while participating in the CTB program.
- The maximum amount of potentially payable TE benefits is equal to 52 times the weekly benefit amount of the regular UI claim on which the CTB was approved, reduced by the maximum benefit award of the regular claim and any subsequent new claim, and amounts paid on any federal or state EB and TE claims. The TE benefits are payable until either the training is completed, the maximum TE amount is paid, or the individual qualifies for a new claim or any EB; whichever occurs first. However, TE payments may not be payable during the summer months when individuals are not attending the approved training for three or more weeks.

- Individuals who qualify for a new claim or EB claim in California or any other state must file and be paid from the new claim or EB claim, even if the weekly benefit amount is lower. The requirement to be paid from the new or EB claim may not apply to TAA participants.

Tuition, Books, and Fees

The CTB program does not cover any educational or training-related expenses such as tuition, fees, books, supplies, or transportation. If you are unemployed, you may be eligible for federal financial aid, such as Pell Grants. For more information on federal financial aid, visit the Web site at www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov.

Approval Authority for CTB

CTB eligibility is based upon legislation contained in Article 1.5 of the California Unemployment Insurance Code, Sections 1269 and 1271, respectively. Information on how these laws are applied by EDD staff making CTB eligibility decision can be found in the Miscellaneous Benefit Determination Guide, Section 85, through this link: www.edd.ca.gov/UIBDG/Miscellaneous_MI_85.htm.

Finding Training

The CTB program does not provide assistance in assessing training needs or identifying potential sources for training. The Labor Market Information section of the EDD Web site provides career information and can help identify occupations with the greatest demand now and in the future. Visit the EDD Web site at www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov.

For More Information

For more information about CTB, or to report that you have started training, please contact EDD through the Contact UI link on the menu on the EDD Web site at www.edd.ca.gov or by telephone at:

- English 1-800-300-5616
- Spanish 1-800-326-8937
- Cantonese 1-800-547-3506
- Mandarin 1-866-303-0706
- Vietnamese 1-800-547-2058
- TTY (non-voice) 1-800-815-9387

EDD is an equal opportunity employer/program.
Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.