

Commissioner Approved Training

FACT SHEET

Commissioner Approved Training (CAT) allows an eligible unemployment insurance claimant to collect regular unemployment benefits while attending a full-time vocational training program.

By law, an individual who is collecting unemployment benefits is required to search for work and must be immediately able to work and available for full-time employment. This work search requirement is waived for anyone who is approved for CAT.

CAT participants receive the same weekly unemployment benefit they would receive if they were not in the program. But, unlike those admitted to the Training Benefits program, CAT participants do not receive extended weeks of benefits. (Note: Training Benefits is a separate program that waives the work search requirement and allows extended weeks of unemployment benefits while enrolled in approved training. Its eligibility requirements are different than CAT.)

The CAT program pays only unemployment benefits. Participants are responsible for tuition, books, fees and other training costs – although financial aid may be available from other sources. Individuals approved for CAT can receive unemployment benefits for up to 26 weeks. For this reason, students might run out of

benefits before completing training. Students are asked to review their financial situation before enrolling in this program, since they are responsible for any costs necessary to complete training.

Pays weeks of “regular” unemployment benefits while attending approved job training

Eligibility

To be eligible for CAT, individuals must be:

- Eligible for unemployment benefits.
- Unlikely to return to work due to diminishing demand for their skills or a surplus of workers with similar skills in the labor market; or laid off due to technological advances; or show that they’re unlikely to return to work in fields in which they have experience or skills because of illness, injury or other unique individual circumstances.
- Attending a full-time program at a training facility that is accredited or recognized as legitimate by the relevant industry.





- Enrolled in a training program that provides skills in an occupation for which there are reasonable job opportunities in the labor market where they intend to work. CAT is not primarily intended to meet the requirements of a bachelor's or higher degree.
- Able to show the Employment Security Department that they have the financial resources to complete their training if they run out of unemployment benefits before they complete their training.

The CAT Program does not extend an individual's benefits. Generally, an approved training program is vocational and has a short duration.

How to apply

- Online through eServices, or
- By paper application found on esd.wa.gov (search for commissioner approved training), or
- By calling the Unemployment Claims Center at 800-318-6022 and asking for a CAT application, or
- By visiting your local WorkSource office. Locations are listed on worksourcewa.com.

Submit applications:

- Online through eServices.
- Drop off at a WorkSource office.
- By fax or mail:

Fax to: 800-301-1796

Mail to:

Unemployment Insurance Imaging
P.O. Box 19019
Olympia, WA 98507-0019

