

Oakland County Furlough and Reduction of Hours FAQs Updated 5/19/20

- **When is the furlough or reduction in hours effective?**
Monday, May 4, 2020.
- **How long is the furlough or reduction of hours lasting?**
Currently, we do not have a definitive answer. Oakland County is following the Governor's orders and addressing operational changes accordingly. Right now, we are able to use the Administrative Leave without Pay for up to 120 days.
- **How many departments are being affected?**
Multiple departments within Oakland County are being affected by furlough and a reduction of hours. It's determined based on the operations and services provided within each department and if the functions are essential or not.
- **Who makes the decision in who is furloughed or receiving a reduction of hours?**
Each department is unique and is making decisions accordingly. If you have questions about your department, please speak with your direct supervisor.
- **Can employees use their annual or personal leave to supplement for the time being?**
Yes. Employees can use their annual or personal leave at their discretion. Please keep in mind however, we don't know what the future will hold. State of MI unemployment benefits have been extended from 20 to 26 weeks. The additional \$600 available provided by the Federal government has only been guaranteed until July 31st. If there is a second wave of COVID-19, County operations will need to be reassessed. Consider your situation and this information when making your decision.
- **Are part-time non eligible employees eligible for unemployment benefits?**
Yes.
- **What will happen with my health care?**
If you are currently enrolled in medical, vision, prescription or dental benefits, your coverage will continue.

For employees experiencing a reduction in hours: your health care contributions will continue to be taken out of your bi-weekly paycheck.

For furloughed employees: your health care contributions will need to be paid back to the County when you return to work and start earning a bi-weekly paycheck again. Please contact Carmen Cargill at cargillc@oakgov.com for further information regarding possible payment options.

- **What will happen with my 401(a), 457(b), PTNE 457(b) and RHS retirement contributions?**
Please see the retirement website at <https://www.oakgov.com/hr/retirement>

for further details on how your retirement contributions will be affected.

- **Will I still earn annual leave?**

For employees experiencing a reduction in hours: Yes, you will receive a pro-rated amount based on how many hours you are working. For example, if you are working 50% of the time, you will receive 50% of your annual leave accrual.

For furloughed employees: No.

- **Am I eligible to retire?**

If you are looking at possible retirement, we encourage you to speak directly with our Retirement unit.

For employees enrolled in the defined contribution plan (401(a)) contact Lisa Villella at villella@oakgov.com

For employees enrolled in the defined benefit plan (pension) contact Dawn Westlund at westlundd@oakgov.com

- **Will I receive holiday pay?**

A non-exempt employee must work/take paid leave at least 4 hours the day before a holiday and 4 hours after a holiday in order to be paid for the holiday.

An exempt employee must work the day before and after a holiday or take paid leave (full days since exempt cannot take partial leave days) the day before and after a holiday in order to be paid for the holiday.

Unemployment Related FAQs

Oakland County does not make any decisions regarding how much money you will receive in unemployment benefits. We can only provide you information on what you MAY be eligible for as we have been informed. If you have questions regarding your specific situation, please contact the State of MI Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) directly.

- **How much am I eligible for?**

This is calculated by UIA. Currently, the UIA maximum State benefit amount is \$362/weekly. Additionally, the Federal government has added the potential to receive an additional \$600/weekly, for a total of up to \$962/weekly.

For employees experiencing a reduction in hours: Your earnings will affect how much you are eligible for. The more you earn in your paycheck, the less benefits from UIA you will be eligible for. Currently, the UIA has posted "underemployment" maximums as \$543/weekly shown here: https://www.michigan.gov/documents/uia/140_-_claiming_underemployment_benefits_in_michigan_392272_7.pdf

For furloughed employees: You will be eligible for the maximum amounts provided by both UIA and the Federal stipend. Your total benefit amount is determined by UIA dependent on your previous wages earned.

- **When will I receive my first unemployment check?**

This is also to be determined by UIA. We have been notified that payments are typically released within a few days of the first wage certification (about 2 weeks after the claim is submitted). This may differ due to the influx of claims UIA is experiencing.

- **How do I set up direct deposit for my unemployment check?**

[Click here to create an online account](#) to set up your preferred payment methods **after receiving notification from UIA** that a claim has been filed for you. Otherwise the UIA will send you a preloaded debit card with your unemployment benefits on the card.

- **How do I certify my wages and how often do I need to certify?**

When you receive your first notification from UIA, you will receive instructions on how and when to certify. Certification is typically completed every 2 weeks. Please refer to your UIA notification or UIA account for specific instructions.

- **What do I need to do when I come back to work to stop unemployment payments?**

You will need to stop providing UIA with wage certification and the claim will close.