

OREGON WORK SHARE – AT-A-GLANCE REFERENCE

What is the Oregon Work Share Program and How Does It Work?

Many states, including Oregon, have some form of a work share program. The program's intent is to provide a way for employers to avoid lay-offs and allow employees to continue working and remain benefits eligible, even if at a reduced schedule, while employers reduce payroll expenses. The reduced schedule comes in the form of furloughs one to two days per week (20-40%). For each week where an employee is furloughed, they will receive unemployment insurance for their furlough days and regular pay for days worked. **The Work Share program requires the employer submit weekly furlough reports, so the employee does not have to file for unemployment.** The employee only needs to submit to OHR an Initial Claim Form and then record furlough time on their time records. OHR turns over weekly reports to the State and the state processes the unemployment payments.

Oregon Tech Is Participating in The Work Share Program Because...Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, state funding has been cut. This means we have a budget shortfall—unless we make changes, we would spend more money than we have and we can't do that. Oregon Tech must make budget cuts and labor costs are one of the costliest recurring expenditures that we have. By furloughing employees, we save on payroll expenses for those days. This option is also appealing because employees will still receive partial payment for days they don't work (in the form of unemployment), while remaining employed and receiving their regular salaries for days worked and their full benefits. Additionally, through July 25, the federal CARES Act provides a \$600 weekly supplement for any week where the employee is furloughed at least one day. Unemployment plus this CARES Act supplement, in many cases, will make the employee largely "whole".

Who is Participating? At present, all classified and unclassified staff are expected to participate, with only a few exceptions.* Furloughs are scheduled every week, so there could be some weeks where an employee is not scheduled to furlough. There could be other weeks where the employee is scheduled to furlough two days. Unemployment and the temporary CARES Act supplement only apply on weeks where the employee furloughs at least one day. If an employee works the full week, they get paid as normal.

***Exceptions:** Any employee who performs work that is critical to the extent their supervisor does not think they can be furloughed in any given week must get VP approval to be exempted from that week's furlough schedule. Employees must have been employed full time for at least 6 months (or half time for 12 months) to qualify. Student workers and temporary workers do not participate in the program.

What's the Catch? The state is completely responsible for processing unemployment payments and, processed separately, the CARES Act supplement. Oregon Tech will file its weekly furlough reports, but after that, the process is out of our control. We understand from other employers that the state has been overwhelmed with Work Share program applications. We should all reasonably anticipate delays in employees receiving both unemployment payments and the CARES Act supplement. Oregon Tech will have no control over this part of the process and we realize this may be a point of frustration for employees. We want to be up front and transparent that this is something we need to expect.

Where can I get more information? Oregon Tech has established a Work Share Program Toolkit on the [COVID-19 webpage](#). You can learn more about the Work Share program [here](#) and the CARES Act [here](#).