**Workshare Webinar 4/3/20**

List of speakers:

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Contact info and websites:

[www.colorado.gov/cdle](http://www.colorado.gov/cdle)

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www.myuiemployer.coworkforce.com

**Workshare Program Overview**

Workshare is an alternative to laying off your employees where if you need to reduce hours you go ahead and continue employing your workers for at least 60% of their normal work schedule and then unemployment insurance can pick up a portion of those remaining hours. It’s not full replacement but it is something. It gives a little bit of uncertainty when there is so much uncertainty.

Workshare allows employers to reduce at least 10% but not more than 40%. This is between 4 and 16 hours. We pick up a portion of the wages they are missing for those hours. An employer to be eligible they have to have positive percent of access, which means that they have paid more into UI premiums than Unemployment has paid out to their former employees in the form of benefits.

[www.myuiemployer.coworkforce.com](http://www.myuiemployer.coworkforce.com) gives access to info including that percent of rate.

We mail in November the annual rate notice to each employer.

The plan must reduce the hours of at least 2 employees either in the whole business or in a department. There is no cap for the number of employees on work share plans. Say you need to reduce one group’s hours more than another, you can have a separate workshare plan for each. If you have multiple plans, everybody in a workshare plan group has to be reduced by the same percentage. So if you have 5 people and you are reducing by 20%, they have to apply the same percent reduction to them. They don’t have to work the same hours, they just have to be reduced by the same percent. You get to keep producing, keep quality of standards, and keep the people you’ve invested so much time, money and training in . We can provide some certainty to your workers when everything is so uncertain right now. They are still get to be employed and we’re picking up those benefits they’ve missed. They are still getting the most of their regular hours and we are picking up some of the difference. Overall, it can help with morale issues. Then once you are able to bring your people back to a full-time schedule, you don’t have to wait to spend time training, they can just come back. It does offer a lot of benefits in that way.

Unemployment normally covers 55% of the average salary of the employee. For workshare they take the % that you are reduced in working (up to 40%) and give you that % of the 55% average that you would normally get.

Example

Generally, for a regular unemployment insurance claim, we are replacing approximately 55% of a person’s average weekly wage. For workshare, we take that regular weekly benefit amount and we pay the percentage of that weekly benefit amount that corresponds. So, if you got a 40% reduction, we pay 40% of that weekly benefit amount. So, if someone has a weekly benefit amount of $450, say, and they are on a 20% reduction, we can pay $90 a week for a workshare benefit. The online platform www.myuiemployer.coworkforce.com. It is a really good system. Employers can report your quarterly wages and premiums and you can access your unemployment insurance rate. You can respond electronically.

It’s only going to work for W2 employees who have been have been reporting the past for UI. There are additional benefits for 1099 workers through the pandemic system, but we do need folks to hold off filing claims for that until we’ve received all of the guidance we need from the U.S. Dept of Labor.

The employer submits a request with all of the information we need including the socials of all employees they’d like to include and we give back an approval letter. Part of the process is we ask how they intend to notify their employees about the workshare plan. The employer is responsible for notifying their employees. Some employers may simply reduce employee hours and not participate in the workshare program. It works best if the employer submits the plan before the worker files a claim. We can transition if an employee begins the claim first, but it works best if the employer does their part first.

The workshare plan request form is a 3-page form, is relatively simple, and may not apply to everyone especially if they have a union. So, it’s mostly a set of simple yes or no questions. Next, it asks how you are going to notify employees, and then it asks for all of the information about each employee.

If you make the decision to do a workshare plan, we have a separate email to send those requests to CDLE\_UI\_Workshare@state.co.us, of Fax - 303-318-9206.

We are statutorily required to respond within 30 business days, but we are quicker and usually respond between 5-10 business days. We give an approval or denial, and more often an approval. Once the workshare plan is approved, your employees can file claims for benefits. We are strongly encouraging employees to file online. There is a schedule to file on certain days by the first letter of their last name since it’s so busy. The call center is busy. The best bet is to file online. Once that claim is filed, employees need to make a request for benefits every 2 weeks. This is different from a regular claim in that a workshare employee only needs to report hours and earnings for that employer. The worker doesn’t need to actively look for work and they are job attached to that job; they are not being asked to go out and find other positions. It is good for one year from the date approved. Effective dates are always Sundays. Workers can file up to 26 weeks of benefits. We can cover them for a significant time and they are job attached for the entire time. The only requirement is that they are available and able to work full time when the employer transitions them back to regular hours.

The employment guide, we have it under business services on our website, we have a transition and layoff page right now. All resources are on our website. Email ppwbrg@elpasoco.com, ericaromero@elpasoco.com directly so we can get it to you.

Fill it out, keep a copy for your files and leave the questions blank if you don’t know the answer.

**Tracy Marquez Exec Director and CEO for the Pikes Peak Workforce Center**

We cover El Paso and Teller counties. We are your local boots on the ground, your go-to. We have business services with resources to help people directly. We have a team of over 40 people to help both job seekers filing for unemployment and businesses of all sizes to help when they file for unemployment.

The state’s system is overwhelmed right now.

Stay tuned to learn when the 1099 option becomes available. The Tri-Lakes Chamber will update you.

Save every page you go to online to be able to have access later. 719-667-3700. We may not have all the answers, we may connect you to the right resources. We connect, convene, and collaborate. There’s a lot of misinformation going around. A great resource is the Pikes Peak SBDC for information and small business loans. The BBB is another helpful organization. The Pikes Peak Workforce Center is as well. There are scams out there, so be careful.

**Erica Romero\_with the Business Services Department**

We have a business team to help businesses navigate through layoffs and we can help with a layoff aversion. Give us a call because we want to give you a customized service. The biggest thing to know is you are being able to help your employees. We ask about the size of your business and whether or not you have healthcare. We provide resources on how people can transition that. We ask about life insurance and 401K options. We tell them what workforce centers can do for them.

The biggest question is how do people file for unemployment? We have a guide.

We have specific days employees can apply. We provide strategizing. This is a very emotional time for owners and employees. We have different guides for what to do right now. How to make sure your finances are in place. How to make sure you are not making rash decisions in the moment that have long lasting consequences.

We have a mass layoff sheet. If you have 10 or more employees you have to separate from, we help you with a sheet, and you send it in. Then every one of your employees don’t have to call you. Is this a job attached layoff? Is this a permanent layoff? It is very hard and confusing, but the business team is here to help you do what’s best for you with resources.

Am I an essential business? I’ve been working one-on-one to determine that. That language gets confusing. The business team is here to help you navigate.

The nice thing is we can go up to a state or federal level.

**Employees Filing Claims**

Make sure you check your regular mail because your PIN comes through the mail in a plain white envelope. People just toss their mail since they think it is junk mail. Call the unemployment hotline but there’s a 45 minute to 1.5 hour wait time. You do need that PIN to request payment. It takes a while, unemployment hired 90 brand new people. It’s hard to be patient. You will be able to go back to when your initial claim was. You are not losing out. There was one week where everyone had to wait, but they eliminated that. They’ll back date it to your initial claim date.

Our customer service line can help out with these questions. We are not unemployment but we can give direction on what to do and we’ll tell you when to call Unemployment but we will do all we can to negate some of those questions. We can also look and see if your information has been received. This is helpful. Everything is going to be back dated.

**1099s**

Even if for yourself on a 1099, it is all backdated.

The Cares Act for the 1099 information is still coming. There will be a press release. We will update our local website. We want you to join our business newsletter to stay updated.

**Sole Proprietors**

If you set up your company as an S corp., you may already be eligible for unemployment. That is something to take a look at.

They are hoping to have the pandemic help up and running soon and we will send the information directly to the Tri-Lakes Chamber of Commerce.

Ppwfc.org is where you can sign up for the business newsletter.

**Marijuana**

 I’ll have to look a little bit further. Federally marijuana is still not a recognized industry. In the state, CBD and hemp have different procedures. Let’s have a one-off to see where that specific company falls.

719-667-3814 is PPWFC business line.

**Lindsey Behringer PPWFC – Unemployment Vs. Workshare**

If you are looking at reducing hours more than 40%, workshare is not an option, but if you are looking at between 40 and 10 there can be benefits as opposed to partial unemployment. The Colorado Unemployment Act considers 32 hours full time, which is comparable to a 20% reduction. In that 20 – 40 % range where you are looking at partial unemployment vs. workshare, it’s possible workshare would pay out more in unemployment benefits than a partial unemployment plan because of how you report hours. As long as the employee is working at the agreed upon hours, we will be able to pay a percentage benefit amount. For a partial unemployment they may or may not receive how the amount they need. Workshare is potentially a better option if you are simply reducing hours and you are not reducing it more than 40%.

Steps: First the employer sets it up. Second, the employee files a claim and then every two weeks they file again. The workshare program information for both employees and employers and how to file are on the website.

**Business Loans**

The Payroll Protection Program is coming out today and we can send you the application for the emergency loan (called the EIDL loan) and you can receive an immediate $10K and you can request more. General grant information is on the SBDC site which links to the SBA site. The SBDC has good local information on how to apply.

**The Future of Unemployment Rates for Employers**

How hard is this going to affect Unemployment rates down the road? We can’t answer with any specificity since there are too many moving parts but if a claim is a result of COID-19 we are not charging those benefits to an employer. It will not impact your rate directly. However, overall if the trust fund dips far enough that could result in everybody’s rates going up. Individual employers will not see benefit claims increase their rates. It will not be charged to your individual experience rating record.

**Employees Who Quit vs Layoffs**

People may quit jobs due to stress vs a layoff because of a lack of business. We will be looking at all information submitted by employers. For some of that, I would ask if I can get back to you. My unit is employer services related and I don’t want to get into the ins and outs of claims. We are looking at the information to determine the outcome, we are going through the education process.