



KEEP IN MIND:

Even if you get frustrated trying to obtain unemployment benefits—never accept assistance from persons or companies who may charge a fee to help you complete or file Unemployment Insurance claims (UI claims).

Even if they say they have a connection to the NYS Department of Labor-- **THIS IS FALSE**. You should still file your claims for unemployment through the UI website or the Telephone Claims Center.

Obtaining Unemployment Benefits in New York State: What you should know if you do not speak English

If you do not speak English, the New York State Department of Labor (NYSDOL) must provide assistance to help you access their programs and services. While the NYSDOL does provide some language assistance, there are still challenges. This resource provides a checklist of the free language assistance currently available when obtaining your unemployment benefits and problems you should be aware of.

CHECKLIST: Free language assistance available for you

- Unemployment benefits applications are available in Spanish, Russian, Cantonese, Mandarin and Creole.
- To file an application by phone call the **Telephone Claims Center** toll-free at 1-888-209-8124 from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday (if you live outside of NYS, call toll-free at To 1-877-358-5306). An automated voice will offer you the choice of filing an application in English, Spanish, Russian, Cantonese, Mandarin, Creole, or "all other languages". If you select "all other languages" you will be connected to a free service called Unemployment Language Line which can provide language assistance in 170 languages. You can use the Language Line to file a new claim, complete a claim you have already filed, or obtain general information about your unemployment insurance or claim status.
- The NYS Unemployment handbook is translated into Spanish, Russian, Cantonese, and Mandarin, Albanian, Arabic, Bengali, French, Italian, Polish, and Korean. You can download it from the website: <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/ui/claimantinfo/Claimant%20Handbook%20-%20Languages.shtm>
- If you speak English or Spanish you can claim your weekly benefits by phone using **TEL-SERVICE** at 1-888-581-5812 for New York Residents or 1-888-864-9920 if you live outside of New York State.
- If you speak English or Spanish you also have the choice to claim your weekly benefits online at <https://ui.labor.state.ny.us/UBC/home.do>
- If you speak Russian, Chinese, or Creole you can mail in coupons to claim weekly benefits. If you do not speak any of these languages and want to find out how to claim your weekly benefits, contact the **Telephone Claims Center** at the toll-free number above.

Challenges you may encounter

- If you were denied eligibility, the NYSDOL may not always provide this information to you in a language you understand.
- If you think you were denied eligibility or have received paperwork from the NYSDOL that you do not understand, **DO NOT WAIT!** Visit an unemployment office near you and request language assistance. Remember the NYSDOL has a responsibility to help you access their programs and services. **Visit:** <http://www.labor.state.ny.us/businessservices/Agency%20Counties.shtm> to find an unemployment office near you.
- You have the right to appeal your denial of unemployment benefits. You must request a hearing in writing within **30 DAYS** of receiving the denial letter.
- **In your hearing request you must also include a request for an interpreter to assist you at the hearing.**



- For languages other than Spanish, the NYSDOL may use a telephone service called Language Line to communicate with you during the hearing. If you prefer an in-person interpreter, the NYSDOL may ask you to drive to a different location.
- After the hearing be aware that the NYSDOL may not always provide you with written translations of the hearing decisions. **Be sure to request a written copy of the hearing decision in a language you understand.**

For additional information about unemployment benefits and related issues, visit the Workers' Rights topic on the legal information website, www.LawHelp.org/NY or www.ayudalegalny.org for the Spanish site to get a listing of free legal programs in your area that may be able to help you and Know-Your-Rights resources.