

BACK-TO-SCHOOL CHECKLIST



for parents & caregivers

Parents in Oregon have always struggled to care for a family while also providing for one. COVID-19 has only made this harder. Additionally, major changes to our education system have not been met with major changes to the way we expect parents to work.

This is a problem. Unfortunately, there aren't currently enough universal supports for parents to weather this crisis. Below is a checklist of resources that, depending on your circumstances, may help. We know more is needed, and we hope you'll join us in advocating for better. Learn more at familyforward.org.

FAMILY & MEDICAL LEAVE

Do you qualify for the Oregon Family and Medical Leave Act (OFLA), which can now be used for time off to provide care to your child when school or place of care is closed? This state law provides up to 12 weeks of unpaid, but job protected leave. Eligible workers can use OFLA's sick child leave provision in the event of school or child care closures. You may qualify if you answer yes to the following questions:

- Do you work for an employer with more than 25 employees?
- Have you been employed with your current employer for more than 180 days?
- Do you work more than 25 hours per week?
- Is your child's school or place of care closed?

If you answered yes, you are likely eligible for OFLA leave and can use it in increments of 1 hour or more to care for your child when your school or child care facility is closed. Learn more about OFLA generally and using sick child leave for school and care closures [here](#).

**Note: Even though OFLA is unpaid, you may elect to use other accrued sick time, vacation or other PTO provided by your employer if it is available to use.

UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Do you qualify for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits because your child's school or child care facility is closed? PUA is a new unemployment benefits program in response to the COVID-19 pandemic created by the federal CARES Act. Workers can qualify for this unemployment insurance benefit if they can't work due to a COVID-19 related reason, which includes the inability to work due to child care demands when schools are closed.

- Have you separated employment with your employer because your child's school has closed and you need your child to be in school in order to work?

Learn more about PUA and getting unemployment insurance because you can't work due to child care demands [here](#).

This information is provided by Family Forward Oregon.

Learn more about our work to organize Oregon mamas and caregivers across a range of identities to fight for economic and reproductive justice by visiting familyforward.org.

CHILD CARE LEAVE

Do you qualify for Families First Coronavirus Response Act "child care" leave? This is federal leave available to some parents to take time off work or work a reduced schedule (if your employer agrees). You may qualify if you answer yes to the following questions:

- Do you work for an employer with fewer than 500 employees?
- Do you need leave to care for a child because of a school or daycare closure?
- Are you NOT a health care provider or emergency responder? (for more information about who is an excluded health care provider or emergency responder, [click here](#))

If yes to all, you may be eligible for FFCRA. If you qualify and if you and your employer agrees, you may use this leave in 1 hour increments to work a reduced schedule. You will be paid 2/3rds of your usual wages while on leave and your employer can be reimbursed for your leave from the federal government. But this program expires Dec. 31, 2020. Find out more [here](#).

FINDING CHILD CARE

Many child care providers are open for business and may have openings for more children. They are all operating under new health and safety requirements due to COVID and are taking extra precautions to keep the children in their care safe.

- [Online resource to find child care](#) or,
- Call your local [Child Care Resource and Referral](#) at 1-800-342-6712 for up to date information on openings.

PAYING FOR CHILD CARE

Employment Related Day Care (ERDC) is an Oregon child care subsidy program that helps working parents afford child care. You may qualify if...

- You are employed, or you are employed and going to school
- Your household earns under 250% federal poverty level, for a family of four that equals a monthly salary of about \$5,899 in salary or wages.

After being approved for ERDC you may continue to get this financial assistance to afford child care when you are searching for work after a job loss, if you need to take medical leave, or for military transitions.

Important: You can select a licensed child care provider who takes ERDC, hire a friend or relative to provide child care, or use more than one provider at a time. When you [apply for ERDC](#), the Department of Human Services (DHS) will ask the name of your child care provider. DHS needs to approve all providers for payment by filling out a [Provider Listing Form](#). If you are using an unlicensed friend, family or neighbor as your child care provider, they will be required to take a training before being approved, as described on the Provider Listing Form.

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SUPPORT FOR WORKING PART-TIME

Through Oregon's Unemployment Insurance program, many employers opt to enroll employees into WorkShare, a program that helps to pay people whose hours are reduced by 20-40%. If you need to work less and your employer is looking for a way to cut costs, you could suggest that they enroll volunteer employees in WorkShare (they will need to enroll at least 3 employees to qualify).

You would receive your regular wages for the hours you work and then an additional Unemployment benefit for the hours your schedule is reduced. Your employer may be eligible for WorkShare depending on the following:

- Is your employer looking to cut costs without laying off employees?
- Do you work for an employer with 3 or more employees?
- Have you worked either full time for six months or part time for 12 months?
- Do you think your employer is willing to file the necessary paperwork to become WorkShare eligible?

If you answered yes to all of the above, your employer is likely eligible for WorkShare. Find out more about how your employer can qualify [here](#).

RENT ASSISTANCE

Most rental assistance programs are operated by local or regional governments. To find and apply to rental assistance programs in your area, call 2-1-1 or visit 211info.org. 2-1-1 can also help you find and apply for a number of other resources as well.

FOOD ASSISTANCE

If your children normally get free or reduced price school meals, you're eligible to get extra grocery money. It's a new program called Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT). For each month that school is closed and you are eligible, you will get \$5.70 per day for each of your children in a K-12 school, school-based preschool, or school-based Headstart that normally participate in the National School Lunch Program. AND you can still get "grab and go" meals from school during the pandemic! Never received SNAP or free and reduced price school meals before?

- A simple way to access the P-EBT benefit is by applying for free school meals here: www.ode.state.or.us/apps/frlapp.
- Receiving SNAP benefits can also qualify you, here's how to apply: govstatus.egov.com/or-dhs-benefits.
- You will automatically be given Pandemic EBT benefits starting the month you're approved for either free school meals or SNAP.

To find out more information, you can visit oregonhunger.org/covid-19 or call 2-1-1.

****Immigration status does not matter for Pandemic EBT. Pandemic EBT will not count in a public charge test.****

LEGAL ACTION FOR WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION

Familial status discrimination is employment discrimination against workers based on their off-duty family caregiving responsibilities (like passing over a qualified mother for a job or penalizing employees who have caregiving responsibilities). Seven local jurisdictions in Oregon have enacted familial status protections that expressly prohibit employment practices that target people with family responsibilities, but we need an equivalent state law.

Unfortunately, familial status cases can only be brought by a private attorney and only for work performed in cities with an ordinance - Beaverton, Corvallis, Eugene, Hillsboro, Portland or Salem.

- Do you live in Beaverton, Corvallis, Eugene, Hillsboro, Portland or Salem?
- Can you afford a private attorney?

Find out more about jurisdictions with an ordinance protecting against familial status discrimination [here](#).

FINANCIAL HELP FOR UNDOCUMENTED WORKERS

The Oregon Worker Relief Fund and the Oregon Worker Quarantine Fund are related funds administered by the Oregon Worker Relief Coalition. The Oregon Worker Relief Fund (OWRF) provides temporary aid to undocumented immigrants who lost their wage because of the pandemic. The Oregon Worker Quarantine Fund (OWQF) provides temporary aid to agricultural workers who undertake self-quarantining while seeking medical assistance because of a possible COVID-19 exposure. The Oregon Worker Relief Fund provides financial support directly to Oregonians who have lost their jobs yet are ineligible for Unemployment Insurance and federal stimulus relief due to their immigration status, and now face hunger, homelessness, and economic hardship.

You may qualify for the **Oregon Worker Relief Fund (OWRF)** if you answer yes to all the questions below.

- Are you 18 years or older?
- Have you lost your wages due to COVID-19?
- Are you excluded from other assistance programs like Unemployment Insurance because of your immigration status?

You may qualify for the **Oregon Worker Quarantine Fund (OWQF)** if you answer yes to all the questions below.

- Are you an Oregon agricultural worker, 18 years of age or older?
- Have you had exposure to COVID-19 for which self-quarantining is recommended? This includes having had contact with someone that tested positive for COVID-19 in the workplace; testing positive for COVID-19; and/or living in close proximity to other household members that are COVID-19 positive; or if you have been contact traced.
- Are you practicing self-quarantining?
- Are you seeking health care assistance during the period of self-quarantine?

Find out more about both of these programs and how to [apply here](#).