

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE: WHEN YOU'VE QUIT

Can I get Unemployment if I Quit my last job?

Yes, **but only** if you can show that you (1) quit for “good cause” and (2) took reasonable steps to solve the problem. **Talk to a legal advocate before you quit!** You have the burden of showing you meet these rules.

You are considered to have “quit” or “resigned” if you refuse to continue working. (You are “laid off” if there is no more work to be done. You are “fired” if the employer won’t let you work, although there was still work to be done.)

Good Cause

Your “quit” is for good cause if you had a “real and compelling” reason why you left your job, even though you wanted to keep working. This can be for personal or work-related reasons.

Examples of “good cause” for quitting: your spouse or partner needs to move for work; caring for family members; domestic violence; pregnancy; unsafe working conditions; pay cut >20%; illegal work orders.

Example of common reasons that are NOT good cause:

You don’t like your job or it is stressful; you think you are over-qualified or not qualified for the work; you don’t get along with management; you wanted to look for other work; you want to work for yourself or go to school; cut in hours/schedule change. **Be careful with schedule, hour, and pay cuts:** There are limited circumstances when quitting for these reasons can be considered good cause.

Reasonable steps to solve the problem

This means that you have talked about the problem **at least once** with your employer. Also, you need to have given your employer a reasonable opportunity to fix the problem. Because it’s so important to show that you have taken reasonable steps, *you may want to ask your boss in writing for the change or correction in work issues before you quit.* Keep a copy of the letter.

Denied? Ask for a hearing. Get legal advice.

Call your local Legal Aid program for help!

Or call (toll free): Worker’s Rights Clinic 1-866-864-8208