

MODULE 8

Unemployment Insurance

Module Overview

Time: 45 minutes

- Objectives:**
- to review and discuss how unemployment insurance works
 - to practice applying this law through examples.

- Preparation:**
- read Schwartz, *Your Rights on the Job*, Chapter 12
 - prepare flipcharts
 - read and copy handouts: *Participant Outline; Unemployment Insurance In a Nutshell; Who is Excluded from Unemployment Insurance; Who Can Collect?*

Materials: flipchart, markers, masking tape

Module Outline

Module Detail

Welcome and Introductions

Time: 5 minutes

Flipchart: *Objectives* and *Agenda*

Welcome and Introductions

Welcome participants, introduce yourself and review workshop objectives and agenda. It is helpful to put the Objectives and Agenda on flipcharts to post.

What's Our Experience?

Time: 10 minutes

Icebreaker: What's Our Experience?

Ask participants to introduce themselves, giving their name and union or organizational affiliation. Ask for a show of hands of all who have had experience with unemployment insurance – either personally or a member of their family. Ask some participants to briefly describe the experience.

**Unemployment Insurance
In a Nutshell**

Time: 10 minutes

Handout: *Unemployment
Insurance In a Nutshell.*

**Who is Excluded from
Unemployment Insurance?**

Time: 15 mins.

Handout: *Who is Excluded
from Unemployment
Insurance?*

Flipchart: *Who Can Collect?*

**What if I am Denied
Unemployment Benefits?**

Time: 5 minutes

Flipchart: *Denied
Unemployment Benefits*

Activity 1: Unemployment Insurance In a Nutshell

Ask participants to listen to the following mini-rap on Unemployment Insurance:

Mini-rap:

“In 1935 Unemployment Insurance was created as part of the New Deal programs working people fought for coming out of the Depression. The program provides half of your wages, up to a maximum, for thirty weeks after you have lost a job through no fault of your own. Sometimes there are extensions to how long you are able to collect. Many people are left out of this protection, especially undocumented workers. To get unemployment insurance you must prove you are looking for work.”

Ask a volunteer to read aloud or ask group to read silently *Unemployment Insurance In a Nutshell* and ask participants: “What questions do you have?”

Activity 2: Who is excluded from Unemployment Insurance?

Distribute and review handout *Who is Excluded from Unemployment Insurance?*

Break participants into groups and handout unemployment case studies. Ask groups to discuss the case studies, answering the question at the end of each case. Bring the whole group back together and ask each group to report their answers, posting responses on flipchart: *Who Can Collect?* Discuss any disagreements.

Activity 3: Remedies: What if I am Denied Unemployment Benefits?

Review the flipchart: *Denied Unemployment Benefits?*

Mention to group that for undocumented workers, speaking with a federal agency could result in the authorities becoming aware of their immigration status.

Ask participants “What questions do you have?”

Summary

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“The right to unemployment has been hard fought, however many people are still excluded from receiving these benefits. It is important to know if you are covered so that you can advocate for yourself.”