

El Claims for Contract Faculty

We've been receiving many questions about access to EI between contracts and in non-teaching periods. To clarify, contract faculty **are** eligible to make an EI claim for periods between contracts, break weeks, etc. so long as you are not employed elsewhere. **This is regardless of your status as part-time, partial-load, or sessional.**

How does this work?

- The eligibility period reaches back 52 weeks. The number of hours required changes depending on the regional % of unemployment. In our area it's usually around 600 to 700 hours over the past 52 weeks; your local EI office can confirm the specifics or you can check here: <https://tinyurl.com/3zw4jz3n>. You should note though that your ROE (record of employment) issued by the college needs to document beyond your direct TCH (teaching contact hours). For example, your contract last fall was 15 hours of teaching each week. On your ROE, this number should be multiplied by 2.17 (a standard multiplier used for faculty) to reflect 32.55 hours worked per week.
- The system also permits keeping a claim "open", which eliminates multiple waiting periods (the waiting period is one week). For example, if you applied this summer and were approved, you will be advised how many weeks of coverage are available. You have a one week waiting period for a new claim and then benefits begin. You return to work in the fall and E.I. benefits are discontinued, but if there are weeks of coverage still left you can keep the claim open while you work. When you get to the fall break week, you advise the EI office and you would get immediate coverage for that week without another wait period. If after that you still have weeks left on your original claim from the summer, you could additionally apply for weeks during the Christmas break, etc. until your claim was consumed.
- There is no limit on the number of times you can apply on one claim, so long as you meet the qualifications and you have not exhausted your weeks of coverage

And what about when my claim is concluded?

- When your original claim is exhausted, you would open a new claim. The qualifying hours would then be calculated based on the hours you've worked since your original claim was made (depending on timing, that may be a little less than 52 weeks). Please be sure to include hours at other colleges as well if you teach in multiple locations.

The first step?

- Your first step is to get an up-to-date record of employment from HR (the contract admin person in your department should be able to request that for you).

Additional information? (Please note that rules for post secondary faculty differ from K to 12 teachers)

All of the information you require regarding eligibility, documentation, and how to apply can be found at:

<https://tinyurl.com/yaabenov>

As ever, please don't hesitate to contact your steward or Local 558 directly for questions or support. We can also be reached at SUPPORT@OPSEU558.ORG

Please note: The above information is provided without prejudice as useful guidance for members only. It cannot be used by management as an indication of union position, interpretation, or practice.