

# DWD: Secretary-designee signs work-share program waiver

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MADISON – Department of Workforce Development (DWD) Secretary-designee Amy Pechacek today waived the requirement that Work-Share plans operate no longer than six months for any work unit in a five-year period.

By signing this waiver, Work-Share plans may extend longer than six months, up to 12 months, during a five-year period within the same work unit. The move ensures that DWD and Wisconsin employers receive the maximum amount of federal funds made available under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act and the Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act of 2020.

The Work-Share Program, also called “short-term compensation” (STC), is designed to help both employers and employees. Instead of laying off workers, a participating employer may reduce their work hours. Workers whose hours are reduced under an approved Work-Share plan receive unemployment benefits that are pro-rated for the partial work reduction. This allows everyone in the work unit to maintain some income and their health benefits.

“Work-Share experienced record use in 2020 as employers aimed to retain and protect their workforce amidst the economic challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic,” DWD Secretary-designee Pechacek said. “Demand for the Work-Share Program skyrocketed in 2020. In the four years between 2016 and March 15, 2020, Wisconsin had only 20 total Work-Share plans involving 899 participants. Between March 15 and December 15, 2020, DWD approved nearly 1,000 Work-Share plans covering more than 34,000 participants.”

This waiver shall be effective for weeks of unemployment for weeks ending January 2, 2021, through March 13, 2021, and shall only apply to participants in Work-Share

plans until the federal funding for their Work-Share benefit is exhausted. Work-Share plans that extend beyond March 13, 2021, will be limited to a total of six months in any five-year period within the same work unit.

For more information on Wisconsin's Work-Share Program, please visit <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uitax/workshare.htm>.