

UCSU 20/6.22/9.100/1103
c.2

SERVICE

RECEIVED

What to do if you've
lost your job

IN

ACTION

APR 12 1990

COLORADO STATE LIBRARY
State Publications Library

COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY EXTENSION SERVICE

Judy McKenna and Dorothy Martin^{1/}

COLORADO STATE PUBLICATIONS LIBRARY
UCSU20/6.22/9.100/1983 c.2 local
McKenna, Judy E./What to do if you've lo

no. 9.100



3 1799 00012 9437

**Remember: all people have
problems; it's how you cope with
problems that makes you a winner
or a loser.**

Quick Facts

An important thing to remember if you've lost your job is not to panic; talk to your family and work out plans to meet financial obligations.

Apply for unemployment insurance either at a local Job Service office or by mail using a mail-in form available at the post office.

Check on social services benefits.

Contact your creditors and arrange alternate payment schedules.

Talk to friends and business associates and follow job leads they can offer.

Assess your skills; how many different types of jobs are you qualified for?

Consider retraining for a new field.

Exercise; your state of health and mental attitude are closely tied, keep both in top condition.

First Things First

• File for Unemployment Benefits

Go to the Job Service Center nearest your home on the first day you are not working. You will have to present your social security card. At the claims information counter, you will be given instructions on how to file an initial claim.

There are Job Service Centers in the following places in Colorado: Brighton, Canon City, Colorado Springs, Cortez, Craig, Denver (Downtown, Aurora, Lakewood and North Metro), Durango, Fort Collins, Fort Morgan, Frisco, Glenwood Springs, Grand Junction, Greeley, Gunnison, Lamar, Longmont, Monte Vista, Montrose, Pueblo, Rocky Ford and Trinidad. If there is not a Job Service Center in your county, you can file for unemployment benefits by mail. Forms are located in displays at post offices.

You should expect a minimum waiting time before you receive your first check. The payments are calculated from the first day you file, so file promptly.

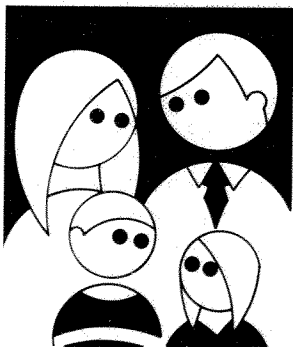
Job Service Centers provide many services in addition to unemployment benefits.

Job Placement

A wide range of job requests are processed for workers from entry level to highly qualified. Job orders are placed into a statewide job bank system that provides equal access to Colorado jobs for applicants from any part of the state.

Losing a job is traumatic whether it means loss of the entire family income or a second income upon which your family's standard of living depends. Is there anything you can do to ease the burden? Definitely yes!

Once you're over the initial shock, don't panic. The world has not come to an end. Right away, tell your family what has happened. Try to share your hurt and angry feelings. Allow your family to comfort and support you. Work out frustrations by walking or jogging or writing your thoughts in a notebook. Don't withdraw from the world or feel inadequate. Now is the time to take advantage of every possible resource.



^{1/}Judy McKenna, CSU assistant professor and extension specialist, family resource management; and Dorothy Martin, CSU assistant professor and extension specialist, human and family development (3/1/83)

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work in agriculture and home economics, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, John Patrick Jordan, acting director of Extension Service, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Colorado 80523. The CSU Cooperative Extension Service is dedicated to serve all people on an equal and nondiscriminatory basis.

To simplify technical terminology, trade names of products and equipment occasionally will be used. No endorsement of products named is intended nor is criticism implied of products not mentioned.

Counseling

The counseling service is designed to help an individual realistically choose a job, change from one occupation to another or make a suitable job adjustment.

Job Development

Counselors can make telephone calls to employers and sometimes secure job interview appointments even though no job orders are listed.

Testing

Aptitude testing as well as typing, dictation and spelling proficiency testing is available and can be certified for prospective employers.

• Turn to Social Agencies

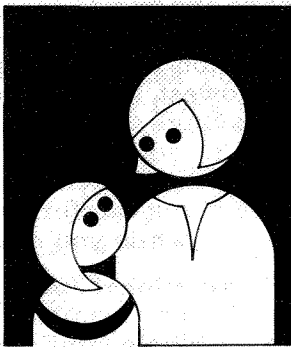
You may be eligible for public assistance. Contact the county social services department located in the phone book under "county government—social services department." Call to see if the office will make an appointment.

Several programs, such as Food Stamps and Medicaid, are available for families needing financial aid. Investigate these programs.

Food Stamps

Apply to your county food stamp program and find out if you are eligible. Eligibility is determined by your family's financial resources and family income.

When you apply for the Food Stamp program, take this information along—rent receipts, copy of house payment statement, utility bills, proof of income for all working members of household, including all benefits such as Social Security and public assistance, bank books or any papers showing what you have in savings, proof of medical bills (doctor, hospital, etc.).



You've done quite well if you've accomplished these things; completing an important task every day keeps you in good mental and physical condition.

• Consider Any Outstanding Loans

Don't ignore bills. Immediately contact your creditors—finance company, bank, credit union and department stores—about charge accounts

and installment loans and make appointments to explain your problem. Here are some solutions your family and your creditors might work out:

- Work out smaller payments for a short period.
- Refinance the loan, that is, make another contract for smaller payments over a longer period of time. New payments will be smaller in size but the overall costs for the loan will be larger.
- If all else fails, a consolidation loan may be considered. You take out one loan, pay off all bills at once and then have one debt to pay off to just one creditor (usually extending over a longer period of time). Again, each payment will be smaller but you will commit yourself for a longer period of time, usually at a higher total cost.

• Consider Monthly Mortgage Payments

Are they too high for you to pay? Go to your lender and ask the officer in the mortgage lending department for permission to pay interest only for a certain period of time, or ask if you can postpone one or two payments until you have improved your ability to pay. Try to work out something you can deal with.

• Check on Insurance Premiums

When unemployed, it is especially important to think of insurance coverage for your family.

Check your existing permanent life insurance policy or call your agent. In many life insurance contracts there is an automatic premium loan clause. This clause says the company will deduct the premium from the cash value of your policy or from your dividends.

Chances are that you were insured under your employer's group health, accident and life insurance plan. In most cases, your group policy will allow a 30-day grace period after you leave the company. You will be permitted to reapply for insurance within this period of time. You will not be asked to undergo a medical examination, but the premiums for your individual policy will be higher. The premium will be adjusted according to your age and the type of policy. Check with an insurance agent as soon as possible. Do not forget to evaluate all insurance your family has.



Think About How You Use Money

• Is there a philosophy that results in overspending or running up the bills with credit cards?

003
C.2

- Is there compulsive buying, because "tomorrow it may not be so cheap," or because "we might be even less able to afford it then," even though the item is not needed?

- Is money withheld as a punishment or used as a bribe?

- Is money spent as a way to work off frustration or to ease boredom or anxiety?

Now is the time to overcome these actions that drain money from your goals. Set the family up for success not failure by thinking positively. Remember, don't use money to play games with yourself and your family. Everyone can help tighten the purse strings and eliminate needless spending.

Your immediate goal is to survive financially and emotionally until future goals are decided. Whether or not unemployment benefits are available the family's income will be drastically reduced.

Include family members in discussing what your family really needs and what they would like to have. Postpone buying what the family would like and does not need now. Fixed expenses, such as rent or mortgage payments, installment payments, insurance premiums and any other payments due on a specific date must be paid unless arrangements have been made. Flexible expenses usually include food, vacation and recreation—areas in which family members need to make choices. These expenses can be reduced by eliminating waste or unnecessary expenditures.

One of the most difficult things about being unemployed is to realize your family cannot spend as much as it did. Pretending to yourself and to others that nothing has changed will not make it easier. Spending less is a must.

Remember, use the money you have to work for you; think, talk about and make choices about your money and stick to these choices.

- *Think About Where to Cut Corners?*

To balance your budget and reduce spending, you have to know exactly how much money you have coming in and going out. You may find that your family doesn't have a clear picture of where the money is going. In that case, try to:

- Write down every item on which money is spent. Figure out where your money is going.

- Put a lid on your spending.

- Agree within your family that every purchase over a certain amount will be brought to the family for discussion prior to purchase.

- Look for upcoming big bills, such as an insurance payment due twice a year.

- Make a shopping list and weigh the importance of each item. Reduce the number of shopping trips.

- For those things you feel are essential, can you find less expensive substitutes? Make snacks, potluck with friends, shop at garage sales.

- Consider gifts of time and inexpensive entertainment instead of things that cost a lot.

- Share with others whenever possible.

Eat it up, wear it out, make it do or do without; why not each night at the dinner table ask each family member what they did during the day to meet one of these suggestions?

- *Plan Alternatives If You Need Cash*

Should you use emergency savings or take out a loan if you can get one? This will depend on your individual circumstances, but there are some disadvantages either way.

Savings

When you take money from your savings account it will no longer earn interest. If the family decides to withdraw money from a savings account, take money from a regular account first and leave any certificates of deposit untouched. You'll lose interest on the certificates if you cash them in before they mature.

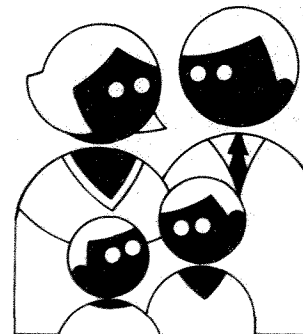
Loans

If you take out a loan, you'll pay interest for the privilege of using someone else's money. If you already have an overdraft checking account, using it might be one way to ease your dilemma, but you will have to pay back the extra amount.

Another solution might be a passbook loan. Borrow at the lowest interest rate. You'll lose interest on the savings account and pay about 1½ percent interest in addition, but the total cost might be less than the interest on another type of loan. In any case, think carefully about taking on any additional debt while you're unemployed.

Additional Jobs

Can other family members contribute to income? When the whole family helps, everyone is part of the solution and no one carries the entire burden of the problems.



Selling What You Own

Look around. Have a garage sale, sell the extra car, bike or other items that are not essentials or are seldom used.

Coping to Stay Healthy

You can do it, here's how.

Research tells us that people who cope well with problems will stay healthy. Staying healthy will prevent more spending on medical care. Studies show that proper diet, daily exercise and rest are important for good physical and mental health.

If you find yourself wondering how you can learn to cope, here are some ideas you might try:

The Stop Sign: When you find yourself thinking how bad it is and how helpless you are, close your eyes and bring to mind a picture of a large, red **stop sign**. Remind yourself that there are always ways to handle a problem. Take a few deep breaths, let your mind wander and relax. Just remember, whenever the negative thoughts creep in, close your eyes and put up that **stop sign**.

Talk to Yourself: One of the things many people use is the internal dialogue. Close your eyes and begin to talk back to the voice that is repeating the negative thoughts. When the voice says, "You're so dumb, no wonder you can't hold a job." You must respond, "That's ridiculous, I lost my job because they closed the plant and that doesn't have anything to do with my intelligence." Replace irrational thoughts with rational rebuttals.

What's the Worst Possible Thing? When you find yourself imagining terrible things that are going to happen because you lost your job, it will help you get a handle on things if you ask yourself "What's the worst possible thing that could happen because I've lost my job?" Then come up with the worst possible thing. Perhaps it would be, "I'll never get another job in my whole life." Now you must ask yourself how realistic that response is likely to be. This will help you sort out those fears that are imaginary and unlikely from those that are real possibilities.

Remember, coping means:

• believing you can make it through this crisis;

• believing you have the family unity and support to make it through this crisis;

• believing you have the ability to stretch your resources enough to make it through this crisis.

• *Keep a Healthy Perspective About Yourself*

You've done a lot if you've taken these steps. You're making real progress and your chances of coming through this period in good shape are improving with every action you take. Now you're ready for the next step.

Many people have received support and insight from their local mental health center. You also may want to call the community crisis line. Before you lose hope, remember that this too, will pass. In the meantime, call for help.

This publication is adapted from a publication developed by the Cooperative Extension Services of the Northwest States and the District of Columbia.

If you would like more information about ways to successfully manage reduced income, contact your local county extension office for the following free fact sheets:

8.530 *Simple clothing repairs—patching knees in pants*

8.532 *Simple clothing repairs—replacing a jacket zipper*

8.703 *Convenience foods*

8.704 *Cost of preserving and storing food at home*

9.114 *Saving at retail sales*

9.148 *Credit—where to go for help*

9.149 *Credit—resolving problems*

9.329 *Ingredient substitutions*

9.339 *Making baby food*

9.715 *Energy management—appliances*

9.720 *Selecting used appliances — evaluation and repair*

9.942 *Simple home repairs — flashing and caulking roof joints.*

9.944 *Simple home repairs—repairing screened doors and windows*

9.945 *Simple home repairs—repairing storm doors and windows*

10.202 *Homemade toys for young children*

10.207 *Family communication*

10.212 *Keeping a marriage strong*

10.223 *Strengthening the family with a family council*