



BERKS COUNTY

**PENNSYLVANIA CAREERLINK BERKS COUNTY**

**501 Crescent Avenue**

**Reading, PA 19605**

**(610) 988-1300**

**TTY (610) 988-1312**

**[www.cwds.state.pa.us](http://www.cwds.state.pa.us)**

**[www.bccl.org](http://www.bccl.org)**

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT CAREERLINK**

**What is CareerLink and what services do you offer?**

Pennsylvania CareerLink Berks County is a one-stop employment center, connecting job seekers with employers and job opportunities. CareerLink is a partnership that brings together many of Berks County's most effective workforce development services to serve you better – through technology and personal service. Through its partners, CareerLink offers a variety of services to help you find your next job. These include: a job search website, [www.cwds.state.pa.us](http://www.cwds.state.pa.us); a Resource Room with Internet-access computers, fax machine, phones, civil service information, employment applications, and reference materials to assist with your job search; screening and referral to job openings; and information sessions on job search and career topics.

**What services are available for veterans?**

Our Veterans' Employment Representatives can provide specialized job search assistance to veterans, along with referral to other veterans agencies. The Governor's Veterans Outreach Center representative is at CareerLink, usually the first Monday of every month, to assist veterans with other issues not related to employment.

**What training do you offer?**

Pennsylvania CareerLink Berks County offers many free information sessions of interest to job seekers. You can view our monthly schedule at [www.bccl.org](http://www.bccl.org). Call or visit the front desk to schedule to attend.

Sessions include:

Resume Writing

Interviewing Skills

Career Decision Making

Health Care Careers

Civil Service Application Process

Cover Letters

Hidden Job Market

Goal Setting/Time Management

Computer Basics

**Do you offer tests to help me discover my skills and interests?**

There are a variety of tests available. Simple web-based interest and work importance inventories are available on the Internet-access computers in our Resource Room. We also offer testing to determine reading and math skills, occupational interests, and aptitudes. Visit the front desk for more information.

## **What is Civil Service? How do I apply for Civil Service positions?**

Civil Service is the system used for hiring many of the employees for local and state government positions. CareerLink offers an information session each week to explain the Civil Service application and hiring process. We also have the applications and forms required to apply for these positions. Information is also available on the Civil Service website, [www.scsc.state.pa.us](http://www.scsc.state.pa.us). Information about federal civil service opportunities is available at [www.fedjobs.gov](http://www.fedjobs.gov).

## **How do I get financial assistance to pay for training?**

There are many sources of financial aid to assist with paying for training, either through grants, scholarships, loans or work-study awards. Grants are awards of money that do not need to be repaid. Federal (Pell) grants and state (PHEAA) grants require completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). You can get this form from the school you plan to attend or by calling 1-800-4FED-AID, or you can apply over the Internet at [www.fafsa.ed.gov](http://www.fafsa.ed.gov). Reading Area Community College offers a free semester of classes to Berks County residents who were laid off by their employer, or residents of other areas who were laid off by an employer located in Berks County, within the last year. You can also apply for funding through the Workforce Investment Act and the Trade Adjustment Act at CareerLink. In general, you must meet the applicable eligibility requirements to receive any of these types of training grants. Loans are amounts of money that must be repaid, usually after your training has ended. You can apply for low-interest Stafford or Perkins loans through your bank or credit union.

## **How do I apply for Unemployment Compensation?**

You can apply for Unemployment Compensation benefits from the convenience of your home by phone or through the Internet. To file a claim, call the UC Service Center toll free at 1-888-313-7284 Monday through Friday from 7:00 AM to 4:45 PM. The TTY access number for individuals with deaf or hard of hearing disabilities is 1-888-334-4046. A courtesy phone is available in the Resource Room. UC Service Centers experience a high volume of calls on Mondays. For quicker service, call Tuesday through Friday when call volume is lighter. You can file a claim through the Internet at [www.dli.state.pa.us](http://www.dli.state.pa.us). When you apply, you will need your Social Security number, your PA driver's license number (if you have a license), your alien registration number (if you are not a US citizen), the name and address of your last employer, and your most recent pay stub.

## **How do I file an appeal on my Unemployment Compensation claim?**

You can file an appeal by completing a *Petition for Appeal* form and faxing it to the UC Service Center. A self-service fax machine is available in the Resource Room for your convenience.

## **Do you have a list of employers that are hiring?**

We have an *Employer Recruitment List* with information about local companies that accept their job applications at CareerLink. You can view the list at [www.bccl.org](http://www.bccl.org). The list changes frequently as new employers are added and others are removed. Interested job seekers complete the employer applications and submit them to CareerLink. We send the application to the companies. A more extensive list of job opportunities, local and statewide, is posted on the CareerLink website.

## **Do I need to enroll on the CareerLink website to get a job?**

It is to your advantage to enroll as a job seeker at [www.cwds.state.pa.us](http://www.cwds.state.pa.us). In addition to the hundreds of job opportunities in Berks County that are posted on the website, you can also access and apply for thousands of other jobs across the state. Using the CareerLink website is an easy and convenient way for you to search for the right job. Employers who post jobs on the website can also search for you and view the resume you created.

## **When will I hear from the employers I applied to on-line or with an application?**

That depends on the needs of the employer. Some employers have positions to fill immediately and will contact qualified applicants quickly. Other employers are building a labor pool of applicants and contact them as future hiring needs arise. Or, depending on the number of qualified applicants, you may never hear from the employer. You can also follow up with the company on your own, so be sure to keep contact information about each employer.