

Indiana Legal Services, Inc

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Things to Consider Before You Quit Your Job

Is there any reason I should not quit my job even if I want to?

There are some things to think about before you quit. You can lose some or all of your public benefits if you quit your job. It may be harder to get some benefits (including Trustee assistance and Unemployment Compensation) if you quit your job. If you receive TANF or Food Stamps AND you are required to work or participate in the IMPACT program, then you can be sanctioned for quitting your job.

However, if you have “good cause” for quitting then your benefits should not be affected. Before you quit a job, you should think about how quitting might affect benefits you receive or benefits you would like to receive.

What is good cause?

Good cause means you had a good reason for quitting your job. Each program defines good cause in a different one. Your reason for quitting a job might be “good cause” for one program but not for another.

FOOD STAMPS

Good cause under the food stamp program includes the following:

- Your employer discriminates against you because of your age, race, sex, color, disability, religious beliefs, national origin, political beliefs, or marital status.
- Your work conditions or demands are unreasonable. For example, you work without being paid on time.
- Your job is the kind in which people usually move from one job to the next. For example, you do migrant farm work or construction work.
- You accept another job or enroll in a recognized school, training program or college.

So if you quit for those reasons, you can still be eligible for food stamps. In addition, the food stamp program mentions additional things that are not considered a “voluntary quit.” So if you quit for the following reasons you can still be eligible for food stamps:

- You were exempt from work registration at the time you quit.
- You quit more than 60 days before you applied for food stamps.

- Your employer fired you for something other than missing work.
- Your employer forced you to quit or tried to make you quit.
- Your job was for less than minimum wage.
- Your job was for less than 20 hours per week.
- Your job was more than a mile from your home and there was no public transportation.
- Your job was more than an hour away from home, one way.
- Your job posed a risk to your health.
- Your job required you to do something illegal.
- Your job required you to join or to resign from a labor organization to keep the job.
- You were self-employed.

TANF

Good cause under the TANF program includes:

- Your employer discriminates against because of your age, race, sex, color, disability, religious beliefs, national origin, political beliefs, or marital status.
- Your work conditions or demands are unreasonable. For example, you work without being paid on time.
- Your job is the kind in which people usually move from one job to the next. For example, you do migrant farm work or construction work.
- You quit to accept another job that has better pay or benefits. You must have the approval of your caseworker.
- You couldn't find someone to care for a child or an incapacitated adult living in your home while you worked.
- The employment site violates state or federal health and safety standards.

So if you quit your job for those reasons, you could still be eligible for TANF.

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION

You may have a harder time getting Unemployment Compensation if you quit. You will have to show that you had good cause for quitting. For Unemployment Compensation, good cause means having good reasons to quit your job that are related to the job. Some examples of good cause include:

- Working for less than minimum wage.
- Having to do work your doctor says is harmful to you after you give a doctor's statement to your employer.
- Having to do something illegal.
- Leaving to take a better paying job, so long as you keep the second job for at least ten weeks.
- Other reasons related to the work that would cause most reasonable people to quit.

So if you quit your job for those reasons, you can be eligible for Unemployment Compensation. However, if you quit your job for personal reasons, you are generally not eligible for Unemployment Compensation. If you quit for the following reasons, it is usually NOT good cause,

and you are usually NOT eligible for Unemployment Compensation:

- Unable to get child care.
- Don't have a way to get to and from work.
- Medical problems not proven by medical evidence.
- Other reasons which are personal or have nothing to do with your employer.

What should I do if I think I had good cause for quitting a job, but I'm sanctioned or denied Unemployment Compensation?

You can appeal. Put your appeal in writing and be sure to appeal within the time limits for the program. If you are appealing a Food Stamp or TANF sanction, you can ask that your benefits continue during the appeal process if you appeal quickly. You can also contact a private attorney or your local legal services provider for help. Appeal first, then contact an attorney.

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