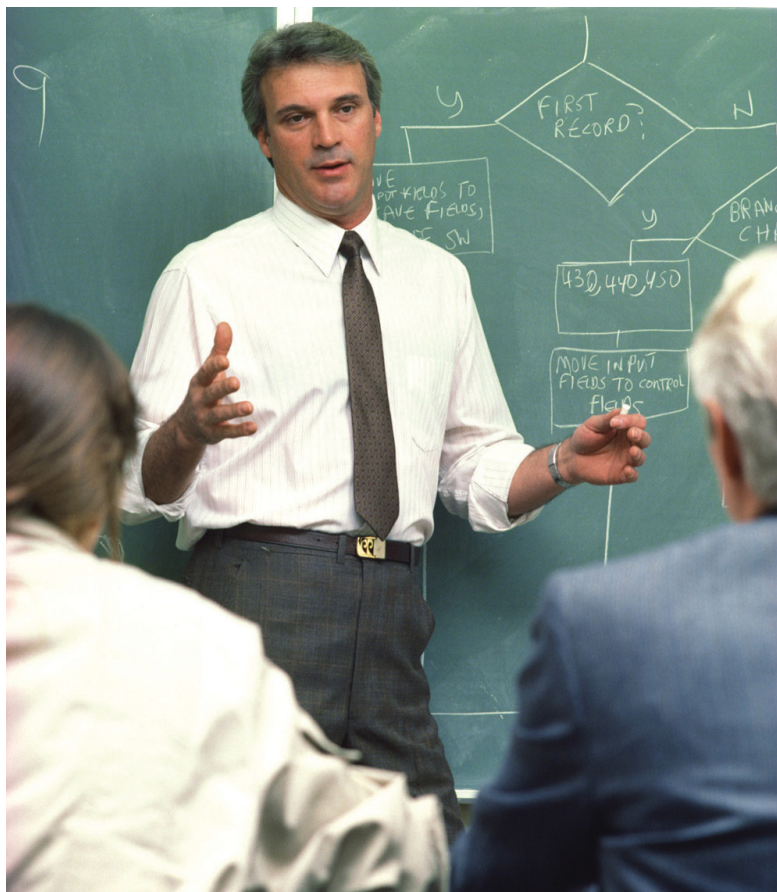


Option 2: What You Need to Know

Vocational Rehabilitation Services for employees of businesses insured by Labor and Industries



Option 2 benefits changed in 2015. The information in this guide applies to workers whose vocational plans were approved on or after July 31, 2015.

Contents

I selected Option 2; what happens now?	2
About the vocational award.	2
What is the vocational award?	
How is the amount calculated and paid?	
Can I receive the balance of my award in one lump-sum payment?	
About the training fund	2
What costs can be paid with the training funds?	
How do I find an approved school?	
What costs can't be paid with the training funds?	
How do I access my training funds?	
Getting help with vocational counseling and job placement services	3
How much of my training fund can I use for vocational services?	
How do I find a provider?	
What happens after choosing a provider?	
About the billing process	4
Direct billing	
Reimbursements	
What if I don't receive my reimbursement?	
What if I have questions or need to change the reimbursement amount?	
How do I check my training fund balance?	
What happens if I decide to choose Option 2 after starting Option 1 retraining?	5
How can I contact L&I?.....	5



I selected Option 2; what happens now?

Labor and Industries (L&I) received your *Retraining Plan Selection Form* showing that you selected Option 2 and chose not to participate in your approved Option 1 retraining plan.

Here is what happens next:

- Your time-loss benefits end.
- Your claim will be closed.
 - You have the right to apply to reopen your claim if your condition worsens later and the need for medical treatment is documented.
- You will receive two benefits:
 - A vocational award, and
 - A training fund.

About the vocational award

What is the vocational award?

The Option 2 vocational award is money to help you transition from time-loss payments to potential employment, schooling, or other plans you may have after your claim is closed.

How is the amount calculated and paid?

The award is equal to nine months of time-loss compensation, less any overpayments or Division of Child Support* liens you owe. This benefit is paid bi-weekly.

Can I receive the balance of my award in one lump-sum payment?

You may request a lump-sum payment of your remaining award balance by mailing a letter to L&I.

- You can request a lump-sum at any time.
- L&I may approve or deny your request.
- If the lump sum is approved, L&I will send your payment once 70 days or more have passed from the mailing date on your claim-closing order.

- Because bi-weekly payments will have already begun, L&I will send the remainder of your payment in a lump sum.

Mail your request to:

Insurance Services
Department of Labor and Industries
PO Box 44291
Olympia WA 98504-4291

About the training fund

Training funds are available for you to use toward the cost of a self-directed training plan. The time period and amount of funds you can use for training are listed on your Option 2 *Notice of Decision*.

You have up to five years from the date Option 2 benefits are approved to use the training funds. The school or training program you choose must be an L&I-approved school or training program.

If you want to attend a school that is not yet approved by L&I, contact SchoolOversightProgram@Lni.wa.gov.

What costs can be paid with the training funds?

You can choose training that is different from the plan submitted to L&I for approval.

You can seek training through any L&I-approved program or course.

You can use your training funds on the following expenses:

- Tuition or training fees for approved programs or courses.
- Books, fees, supplies, equipment, and tools required for the program or course.
- Licensed childcare or dependent care while attending approved programs or courses.
- Up to 10 percent of the training fund for vocational counseling and/or job placement services.

* Washington State Department of Social and Health Services,
Division of Child Support

How do I find an approved school?

The school or training program you attend must have an L&I provider number before approval is given for you to attend training.

To find an L&I-approved provider, go to Choosing a Training Provider at Lni.wa.gov/VocSchoolChoices.

What costs can't be paid with the training funds?

Expenses not paid for by the training fund include:

- Any program or course not approved by L&I.
- Transportation, including parking.
- Lodging.
- On-the-job training.
- Expenses related to starting your own business.
- Unlicensed childcare or dependent care.
- Licensed childcare or dependent care while you are not attending training.

How do I access my training funds?

Once you have chosen a school or training program, you must apply to access your training funds.

Prior to the start of each term, complete the form, *Option 2 Training Application* (F280-024-000), which can be found on the L&I website at Lni.wa.gov/go/F280-024-000.

This form tells L&I what information to look for when bills are submitted for payment. You must fill out Part A and sign it. Next, have your school or training program complete Part B of the form.

Before you mail the form, make sure all fields are filled in, you have signed Part A, and your school or training program representative has signed Part B.

The more information you provide, the more quickly L&I can process your request.

Mail your form to:

Insurance Services
Department of Labor and Industries
PO Box 44291
Olympia WA 98504-4291

Or fax to 360-902-4567.

Once L&I receives this form, we will send you a letter telling you if your training expenses have been authorized.

Getting help with vocational counseling and job placement services

You can use part of your training fund to get help from a vocational provider with services such as:

- Assistance in developing a training plan.
- Job development, including contacting potential employers on your behalf.
- Job readiness and interview practice.
- Job search and job application assistance, including targeted resume development.
- Help in obtaining employment as a preferred worker.

Note: Employers can receive financial incentives for hiring preferred workers. For more information, see L&I's Preferred Worker Program at Lni.wa.gov/PreferredWorker.

How much of my training fund can I use for vocational services?

You can spend up to 10 percent of the maximum training fund (listed on your *Option 2 Notice of Decision*) on vocational counseling or job placement services, or both.

Training funds are expended in order of bills received, so you'll need to keep a record of all your Option 2 expenses to ensure you have enough funds to pay for vocational services.

If you have questions about your expenses or the amount left in your fund, call the L&I Option 2 Specialist 360-902-9135 for assistance.

How do I find a provider?

You can use the vocational provider you worked with previously or contact L&I's Option 2 Specialist at 360-902-9135 for a listing of vocational providers in your area.

You may switch to a different qualified vocational provider at any time as long as you have enough of the 10 percent funds to pay for vocational services.

What happens after choosing a provider?

The vocational provider you've chosen will work with you to create a service agreement focused on your goals and listing your respective responsibilities. If you agree, you'll be asked to sign it.

After each visit with your vocational provider, you'll be asked to sign the provider's summary report to L&I, verifying you received the services reported.

The provider may want to review your claim documents to ensure you receive the best service possible. After your claim closes, you will still have access to your claim file through the Claim and Account Center (CAC), but the vocational provider won't. If you choose to, you may share the requested documents with your vocational provider.

About the billing process

All bills must be submitted within one year from the date of service or expense. If the bills are not submitted within one year, they cannot be paid.

Incomplete forms may be returned for more information, delaying the approval or payment process.

Direct billing

Give the school, training program, or vocational provider your L&I claim number and ask them to bill L&I for your tuition, related expenses, or vocational services. If a training provider has billing questions, direct them to the billing guides at Lni.wa.gov/VocSchoolProviderResources.

Reimbursements

L&I cannot reimburse you for tuition. If you pay for other approved expenses out-of-pocket, submit your receipts to L&I for a refund of authorized expenses.

You must submit your request for reimbursements within one year from the date of service or expense.

Fill out the Option 2 worker reimbursement form, *Statement for Option 2 Training* (F245-446-000), which is available on the L&I website at Lni.wa.gov/go/F245-446-000.

To be reimbursed for your expenses, you must include a copy of your receipt(s).

Before mailing the form and receipts, make sure that:

- You have signed the form.
- You have carefully reviewed your list of expenses to be reimbursed.
- All attachments have your claim number listed in the upper right corner.
- All attachments are legible and clear.
- You have kept a copy of your form and attachments for your records.

Mail your form to:

Claims Section
Department of Labor and Industries
PO Box 44269
Olympia WA 98504-4269

What if I don't receive my reimbursement?

Call the Option 2 Helpline at 360-902-9135 if you do not receive payment or notification within 90 days.

If you submit a second request for payment, it should be identical to the original bill. Please indicate "Rebill" on the form.

What if I have questions or need to change the reimbursement amount?

Call the Option 2 Helpline at 360-902-9135 if you have questions or need help understanding the bill process.

Requests for adjustment to reimbursements must be submitted in writing within 60 days from the date of your payment to be considered.

How do I check my training fund balance?

You can access this information through either:

- The Claim and Account Center or
- Option 2 resource staff at 360-902-9135.

What happens if I decide to choose Option 2 after starting Option 1 retraining?

If you started your Option 1 retraining plan before selecting Option 2, then:

- Your vocational award will be reduced by any time-loss received since the beginning of your Option 1 retraining plan.
- Your Option 2 training fund will be reduced by the amount expended for Option 1.

You are responsible for:

- Keeping track of all training expenditures to ensure you do not spend more money than is allotted for your vocational Option 2 training fund.
- Paying any and all training expenses that exceed your vocational Option 2 training fund balance.

How can I contact L&I?

Online

Claim Specific: Claim and Account Center at Lni.wa.gov/ClaimInfo

General: Lni.wa.gov

Phone

Option 2 Helpline: 360-902-9135

General: 1-800-547-8367

Mail

Insurance Services
Department of Labor and Industries
PO Box 44291
Olympia WA 98504-4291

In person

Go to Lni.wa.gov/Offices for a list of L&I service locations around the state.

Upon request, language support and formats for persons with disabilities are available. Call 1-800-547-8367. TDD users, call 711. L&I is an equal opportunity employer.

PUBLICATION F280-036-000 [04-2024]