

EMPLOYER TESTIMONIALS

What Businesses Have to Say About the Program

"The Shared Work Program has been an essential tool for our company for the last few years. We've been hit by foreign competition who can produce the products much cheaper than is possible in the US given our labor rates and benefit obligations, something not faced in China or India. It's allowed us to keep our trained production personnel while helping to minimize our cost of operations. At the same time, it allows our employees to keep their medical benefits and avoid layoffs and expensive COBRA. Last year with the impact of the pandemic we would not have made it through the year without Shared Work and the Federal PPP loans. We are an essential manufacturer and our durable goods were needed by oxygen companies and X-ray manufacturers, so we had decent sales through the first quarter. However, by the end of the second quarter that demand ended and with the world economy on pause we didn't have enough work to keep people busy 40 hours a week, let alone the revenue to pay the wages. We made it until July before having to lay off any employees, much longer than we would have had we not taken advantage of both programs. While we did have to reduce our staff by a few, without the Shared Work program, and the PPP funding, I don't know what 2020 would have looked like for the company as a whole. Shared Work allows us to keep our trained staff when market demand is down and allows us to rebound quickly once demand picks up because we aren't laying off people and then having to start from scratch with untrained personnel. For a small company like ours, it provides a lifeline in difficult times."

- Batiste Z., Controller, Orange Research, Inc.

"March 2020 when the Covid pandemic hit Connecticut, and Governor Lamont's executive orders closed most business, as a pediatric primary care medical practice we remained open 7 days a week. It was still the early stages and how the virus spread was undetermined. Where many businesses were able to just switch their business functions to working from home that was not really an option for our business. We needed to see our patients in person, especially all of the newborns. It was a hard decision to make but we furloughed a number of staff members. In order to remain open, we struggled with how many staff members we needed at a minimum, and who those members should be. We considered keeping only 2 staff members active but that presented the dilemma of what would happen if those employees got sick or exposed to Covid and needed to quarantine? The CT Shared Work program provided us an opportunity for a middle ground in which we could keep a group of essential staff members, we could pay for their worked hours directly and the employees were provided unemployment compensation for the normally scheduled unworked hours. Our patient volume retracted dramatically in March and therefore our business income retracted as well. We were approaching the unknown for business viability and ability to retain the staff that we trained to suit our workplace. As I can only imagine, we were one of many businesses adopting this unique opportunity to help retain our employees and help with their livelihood. The Shared Work Program staff were themselves uprooted and working remotely but accommodated and approved our request quickly. Once accepted into the Shared Work Plan the weekly reporting was very easy. As we added furloughed staff back in a parttime capacity, we easily added employees to the existing approved plan by sending the information by email. Once the Payroll Protection Plan opportunities became available, we applied, were approved, and received funding, we were able to bring our furloughed staff back into the office and ramp back up to fulltime. If it was not for the Shared Work Plan, we would not have had the opportunity to retain and protect our employees and help keep our business open. As a business, we were very appreciative of the opportunity that the Shared Work Plan provides for business in transition and the ease of use. Thank you!"

- Bernadette C., Practice Manager, Children's Medical Group LLC

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"We have been utilizing the Shared Work Program at Success Printing & Mailing Inc off and on for ten years. It is without a doubt one of the best, most well-run programs in Connecticut in years. The plan is a huge help in managing salary expenses when business is slow without putting an undue burden on my employees. The staff at Shared Work are proactive and extremely helpful in making sure we are compliant and that our employees receive their funds in a timely manner. The Shared Work Program has been responsible for us NOT laying off employees over the time that we have been participating."

- *Bob H., President, Success Printing & Mailing, Inc.*

"I think the CT Shared Work program is a great program and has helped out our company to keep all of our employees. We have used the program a number of times over the past 10 years. When Covid-19 hit I do not think that Shared Work department was ready for the additional amount of work that the team would have and the amount of companies that joined the program. With that said I think the team did a wonderful job of communicating and getting back to our company in a timely manner with replies to our questions. Back in March 2020 phone calls were being answered and everyone I spoke to was very helpful and polite. I have recommended the program to other companies I know. Please keep up the great job!!!! This is really helping a lot of companies and more important a lot of families. THANK YOU!!!"

- *Patti T., Accounting Manager, Flagship Converters Inc.*

"Overall, the experience has gone extremely well. I wish I had known about the program in earlier years being HR manager. We have had other times where we had to reduce schedules and wasn't aware of this program to partake in. Last year, I heard about program because of the pandemic and it came to our attention that this could be helpful for us. The application process was relatively easy. Lots of times, if you're dealing with government programs, you're not sure what to expect when it comes to asking questions, getting in touch with them, etc. The customer service with the Shared Work Unit has been extremely nice, knowledgeable, friendly and responsive. We found out pretty quickly after the application was submitted we were approved and were able to start submitting our weekly certification forms. Since then, it has been a piece of cake. The deposits happen on a timely basis. I love that I get a note back from the Shared Work Unit that they have received my certification every week. This has made a bad situation a little bit more tolerable for my employees. They get to keep all of their benefits. From the HR perspective, in my opinion, this program has been extremely helpful and the flexibility makes the program even better."

- *Anonymous*

"Can't say enough good things about the State of CT's Shared Work Program. This program has allowed GMN USA to maintain our headcount by reducing our employee's hours in the workplace. Our highly-skilled workforce would have been extremely difficult to replace should we had to perform lay-offs. Submitting weekly certifications and receiving unemployment benefits has been a smooth and easy process. I would encourage all small businesses to check this program out!"

- *Lisa R., GMN USA*