

WARN Notice Frequently Asked Questions

What is a WARN notice and the WARN law?

The Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN) was enacted on August 4, 1988 and became effective on February 4, 1989.

WARN offers protection to workers, their families, and communities by requiring employers to give 60 days advance notice of covered plant closings and covered mass layoffs. This notice must be given to the affected workers or their representatives (e.g., a labor union) plus the State Dislocated Worker Unit and the appropriate unit of local government.

Does Iowa have its own WARN law?

Yes. Please refer to [CHAPTER 84C WORKER ADJUSTMENT AND RETRAINING NOTIFICATION ACT](#) or the following chart:

A Comparison of Iowa's Layoff Notification Law and the Federal Workers Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act		
	Iowa Layoff Notification Law	Federal WARN Act
Applies to:	Companies with 25 or more employees.	Companies with 100 or more employees.
Goes into effect when:	A permanent or temporary shutdown or mass layoff of 25 or more employees for a period exceeding 6 months.	Closing: when 50 or more employees will be affected during a 30-day period. Mass Layoff: when 500 or more employees or 33% of the workforce will permanently lose their job during a 30-day period.
Length of notice required:	30-days	60-days
Information required in the notice:	Company Name, Address, Business Contact Information, Date of Event, Names and Addresses of Affected Employees	Company Name, Address, Business Contact Information, Date of Event, Names and Addresses of Affected Employees
Enforcement through:	Iowa Workforce Development	US Department of Labor & United States District Courts
Contact information:	State Rapid Response Coordinator Iowa Workforce Development 1000 E Grand Avenue Des Moines, IA 50319 Phone: 515-725-2007 Fax: 515-281-9641 Email: dislocated.worker@iwd.iowa.gov	U.S. Department of Labor Employment & Training Administration Office of Work-Based Learning Room N-5426 200 Constitution Avenue NW Washington, DC 20210 Phone: 202-219-5577

You may also refer to the [WARN regulations](#).

Is a WARN notice required for COVID - 19 situations in Iowa?

No, not at this time, as long as the layoff is for 6 months or less. There are exceptions to the 30 - 60 day notice requirement if the circumstances are due to:

- **Unforeseeable business circumstances:** When the closing or mass layoff is caused by business circumstances that were not reasonably foreseeable at the time that 60-day notice would have been required (i.e., a business circumstance that is caused by some sudden, dramatic, and unexpected action or conditions outside the employer's control, like the unexpected cancellation of a major order); or
- **Natural disaster:** When a plant closing or mass layoff is the direct result of a natural disaster such as a flood, earthquake, drought, storm, tidal wave, or similar effects of nature. In this case, notice may be given after the event.

A notice is not required but can be submitted to the State Rapid Response Coordinator using the following email:

dislocated.worker@iwd.iowa.gov

Is a WARN notice required in the future, if workers don't return?

In an unfortunate circumstance where workers will not return and a layoff will either last longer than 6 months or become permanent, a WARN Act notice is required 30 days prior to the effective layoff date. The best effort should be given to notify workers and provide as much notice as possible, but exceptions could apply.

Are there resources which provide general guidance on the WARN Law?

Yes. The Department of Labor provides a resource which is designated for employers.

[United States Department of Labor](#)

[WARN: EMPLOYER'S Guide to Advance Notice of Closings and Layoffs](#)