

PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

WHAT IS PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE?

The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program provides temporary benefits to workers (including self-employed, independent contractors, and gig workers) who have lost work for certain COVID-19 related reasons. It generally provides up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits.

On March 27, 2020, the President signed into law the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020. Section 2102 of the CARES Act created the temporary PUA program. The U.S. Department of Labor oversees the PUA program and reimburses states for all program administration and benefit payment costs. For more information on the PUA program, please see [Unemployment Insurance Program Letter \(UIPL\) No. 16-20](#).

HOW DO I QUALIFY?

Covered by PUA	Not covered by PUA
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People not eligible for, or who have exhausted all rights to, regular unemployment compensation or extended benefits under state or federal law or Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)• Self-employed workers (including independent contractors and gig workers)• Workers seeking part-time employment• People who haven't worked long enough to qualify for regular unemployment compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People who can telework with pay• People receiving paid leave benefits (for example, paid sick leave) <p>Note: You may be eligible if you're working fewer hours than before the pandemic, even if you're receiving telework pay or benefits for those reduced hours. If so, you'd be eligible for the PUA benefit payment minus the amount you'd received for that work, as described in 20 CFR 625.13.</p>

In general, PUA covers people who are able to, and available for, work as understood by your state's unemployment compensation law, except you are unemployed, partially unemployed, or unable/unavailable to work in one of these situations:

- You were diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and seeking a medical diagnosis;
- A member of your household has been diagnosed with COVID-19;
- You are caring for a family member or household member who has been diagnosed with COVID-19;
- You must care for a child or other person in your household for whom you have primary caregiving responsibility because his or her school or care facility is closed because of the COVID-19 public health emergency, preventing you from working;
- You can't reach your place of employment because of a government-ordered COVID-19 quarantine;
- You can't reach your place of employment because your health care provider advised you to self-quarantine due to COVID-19;
- You were scheduled to start working and you do not have a job or can't reach the job as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency;
- You have become the breadwinner or major support for a household because the head of the household has died as a direct result of COVID-19;
- You had to quit your job as a direct result of COVID-19;
- Your place of employment is closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency; or
- You work as an independent contractor and the COVID-19 public health emergency has severely limited your ability to continue performing your customary work activities, forcing you to suspend such activities.

The Disaster Unemployment Assistance regulations ([20 CFR Part 625](#)) apply to the PUA program, except as otherwise provided in Section 2102 of the CARES Act, or to the extent there is a conflict between Section 2102 and 20 CFR Part 625.

HOW DO I FILE A CLAIM?

To receive PUA benefits, you must file a claim in the state where you worked or were self-employed. To find your state's program and learn how and where to file your claim, visit the [Unemployment Insurance Service Locator](#). When you file a claim, the state agency will require information such as addresses and dates of former employment, as well as information about your self-employment. To avoid delays, provide complete and correct information, particularly how you became unemployed, partially unemployed, or are not able or available to work due to COVID-19-related reasons.

DO I HAVE TO COMPLETE CONTINUED CLAIM CERTIFICATIONS?

You must continue to file weekly or biweekly claims for PUA benefits according to your state agency's instructions.

DO I HAVE TO PROVIDE PROOF OF EMPLOYMENT?

You must provide proof (e.g., pay stubs, income tax return, bank statements, offer letter) to document employment or self-employment that was impacted by COVID-19 or to document work that would have begun on or after the date when COVID-19 impacted your employment status. You must follow the applicable state requirements for submitting the required documentation.

WILL I RECEIVE THE \$600 SUPPLEMENTAL PAYMENT FOR FEDERAL PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION?

If you are eligible to receive PUA benefits for a week, you will also receive the additional \$600 supplemental payment under the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) program. FPUC is payable only for weeks of unemployment beginning on or after the date on which the state entered into an FPUC agreement with the U.S. Department of Labor. FPUC is not payable for any week of unemployment ending after July 31, 2020. To learn more, please see [UIPL No. 15-20](#).

HOW LONG CAN I RECEIVE PUA AND HOW MUCH WILL I RECEIVE?

PUA is payable retroactively to eligible individuals for weeks beginning on or after January 27, 2020, and ending on or before December 31, 2020. You can receive PUA benefits for up to 39 weeks. Your PUA weekly benefit amount is calculated under the rules outlined in 20 CFR 625.6 and is then increased by the \$600 FPUC payment. If you're self-employed or haven't worked long enough to qualify for regular unemployment compensation and your earnings for the previous tax year would result in a lower weekly benefit amount than the minimum for Disaster Unemployment Assistance benefits outlined in [UIPL No. 03-20](#), your weekly benefit amount will be the minimum amount listed in that UIPL.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY PUA CLAIM IS DENIED?

You can file an appeal of your denial of PUA benefits by following the instructions provided by the State with your denial notification.