



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY

Your Partner For A Stronger Arizona

Unemployment Insurance Benefits Q&As



COVID-19 and Unemployment Insurance Benefits Arizona Department of Economic Security

NOTE: The CARES Act has changed eligibility and benefit amounts for Unemployment Insurance.

[View information on the CARES Act](#)

Questions and Answers

DES is committed to ensuring Arizonans get the help they need. The below questions reflect the requirements of the program under current law. However, we are monitoring potential changes in federal and state laws and regulations, which may impact funding, eligibility and requirements for unemployment insurance. If changes are enacted, DES will update its program requirements as soon as possible.

Question: Is it still a requirement to apply for jobs while receiving benefits?

Answer: No. DES is temporarily suspending the “actively seeking work” requirement. What this means is that for the duration of the emergency declaration an individual will no longer be required to look for work and apply for other employment while collecting unemployment insurance benefits.

We encourage individuals to review the guidance provided in the weekly claim system at [AZUI.com](https://www.azui.com) immediately adjacent to each required question. Our system has been updated to include specific examples of COVID-19 related scenarios impacting claimants.

Question: Has the waiting week/period been removed per the Executive Order?

Answer: Yes. The Department is temporarily suspending the waiting week.

Question: Will workers impacted by COVID-19 qualify for unemployment benefits?

Answer: Most likely. DES encourages the following individuals impacted by COVID-19 to apply for Unemployment Insurance Benefits:

- Individuals whose employer has permanently or temporarily ceased or drastically reduced operations due to COVID-19 resulting in a reduction of wages;
- Individuals who, due to requirements that the individual be quarantined, are separated from employment and do not have any available paid leave even if the individual has an expectation of returning to work after the quarantine is over;

- Individuals who leave employment due to a risk of exposure or infection and are a member of a population that is particularly susceptible to COVID-19;
- Individuals who leave employment to care for a family member who has been infected with COVID-19; or
- Individuals who for any other scenario are separated from work for reasons related to COVID-19.

Question: When should individuals impacted by COVID-19 apply for benefits?

Answer: Individuals should apply as soon as they know that their employment and income will be affected by COVID-19.

Question: When will individuals get the additional \$600 that was passed by Congress? Do individuals need to do anything different with their claims?

Answer: These benefits are paid for by the federal government, and Arizona is waiting for information on when they will be available. When the funding becomes available, DES will work to pay the benefits as quickly as possible. Individuals will not have to submit additional paperwork to qualify, it will be applied on top of their existing benefits.

Question: How can individuals apply for unemployment benefits?

Answer: The fastest and easiest way to apply is online www.azui.com anytime between 12:00 a.m. on Sunday through 6:00 p.m. on Friday. Individuals without Internet access should call 1 (877) 600-2722. Hard copies of the applications are also available in the documents center (UB-105 Arizona Initial Claim for Unemployment Insurance) at www.azdes.gov.

An individual can know his or her application is successfully completed when reaching the end of the application, certifying the statements made on the application are true, and receiving a confirmation number.

Question: What information is needed to apply?

Answer: When submitting an application for an initial claim, individuals will need to provide their Social Security Number, mailing address, county of residence and, if available, their Driver License or state-issued ID number. In addition, they will need the following information about their employment history:

- The names, addresses, and phone numbers of all employers for the last 18 months including the correct mailing address and telephone number for the most recent employer
- The last day worked immediately prior to filing the UI claim
- Amount (before deductions) and date of any payment for severance, vacation, holiday or unused sick pay
- The name and local number of your union hall, if applicable
- Alien Registration Number, if applicable
- Copy # 4 of DD Form 214 if released from the military in the last 18 months
- SF 8 or SF 50 if employed in Federal Civilian service in the last 18 months
- Start date and monthly benefit amount of any pension (other than Social Security), you will need the start date of the pension and the monthly benefit amount

Question: What am I eligible to receive if I qualify for benefits?

Answer: DES can provide individuals who have lost their job through no fault of their own with a weekly stipend of up to \$240 to supplement lost income. An additional Pandemic Unemployment Compensation benefit amount of \$600 weekly was authorized by the CARES Act and will be added to benefit payments as soon as possible once the funding becomes available from the federal government.

Question: How long can I receive unemployment benefits if I qualify?

Answer: The CARES Act allows for up to 39 weeks of benefits to claimants. Under the regular UI program, claimants are eligible for up to 26 weeks of benefits. These benefits can be extended an additional 13 weeks under the CARES Act. In addition, claimants that are not eligible for the regular UI program or have exhausted their benefits under that program may be eligible for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program for up to 39 weeks inclusive of the weeks they received regular UI benefits.

Question: How long do claims take to process?

Answer: DES is doing everything it can to get Arizonans benefits as soon as possible. However, DES is experiencing a high number of claims due to COVID-19 and processing times could vary. Additionally, if there are issues with the claim, such as incomplete information, processing the claim could take up to 21 days.

Question: How does an individual receive benefits?

Answer: Direct deposit is available at www.AZUI.com. Applicants may also receive an Electronic Payment Card (EPC) issued by Bank of America (applicants who have received UI within less than 3 years or are currently receiving child support, will not receive a new EPC card). The EPC card will have a zero balance until the applicants first benefit payment has been processed.

Question: When can I expect to receive my benefit payment?

Answer: DES is doing everything it can to get Arizonans benefits as soon as possible. However, DES is experiencing a high number of claims due to COVID-19 and processing times may vary. Additionally, if there are issues with the claim, such as incomplete information, processing the claim may be delayed. Prior to the increased claim volume, payments were being made, on average, within 14-calendar days after benefits have been processed and approved.

Question: If an employer imposes a mandatory quarantine on an employee because of COVID-19, will they be eligible for unemployment benefits?

Answer: In most cases, yes. The factors of each circumstance are important. If the employer required the individual to stay home, did not offer telework, and was not offering compensation, the individual might be eligible for benefits if they meet the monetary and weekly eligibility criteria.

Question: What happens after I complete the application process?

Answer: Within approximately one week of filing an initial claim, applicants will receive information from DES in the mail. They must sign and return the Certificate of Understanding to the address or fax number listed on the form. If DES needs more information to process the claim, the applicant will be mailed an additional questionnaire to complete and send back.

Question: Are there more requirements I need to meet after I apply?

Answer: Yes. To maintain benefits, applicants, including those impacted by COVID-19 are required to file a weekly claim by visiting our online claims system at www.AZUI.com. The week starts on a Sunday and ends on Saturday. Applicants are encouraged to review the guidance provided in the online claim system by hovering over the question mark icon immediately adjacent to each required question. Guidance has also been provided to include specific examples of COVID-19 related scenarios impacting claimants.

Applicants are also automatically registered on Arizona's largest jobs database, Arizona Job Connection (www.AZJobConnection.gov). By completing their registration, applicants can create a digital resume, search for jobs, and get matched with hiring employers.

Question: Where can applicants find additional information about DES' unemployment program?

Answer: Additional information about Arizona Unemployment Benefits can be found by visiting www.AZUI.com.

Question: Am I eligible for UI benefits if I am a freelancer, or self-employed?

Answer: Possibly. The CARES Act created a Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program for individuals that are self-employed, contract workers, those ineligible for state unemployment benefits or have exhausted benefits. Arizona is awaiting guidance from the US Department of Labor on the exact eligibility and benefit calculation requirements under this new program. Individuals are encouraged to file their applications now for processing as soon as the additional guidance is provided to Arizona.

Question: Where can job seekers get help with finding employment?

Answer: ARIZONA@WORK staff can provide you with no-cost job assistance to help you get back to work. You can learn more about the services available to you and view a list of jobs with immediate openings by visiting, www.ARIZONAatWORK.com.

Question: What should applicants do if they make an error on their application?

Answer: If an error is made after a claim is submitted, please call 1 (877) 600-2722. Claims cannot be edited after they are submitted.

Question: What is the process for partial unemployment for people whose hours have been reduced as a result of COVID-19?

Answer: If your wages have been reduced as a result of COVID-19, you may file for benefits at www.AZUI.com. Depending on your individual circumstance and the amount of gross wages (wages earned before taxes/deductions) you have earned, you may be eligible for benefits. As is the case with all Unemployment Insurance claims, applicants are required to file weekly claims confirming they continue to meet the requirements to receive Unemployment Insurance. This includes an opportunity to report earned wages (this also includes wages earned for part time work). Applicants must file a claim every week he or she is unemployed, or underemployed, by visiting our online claims system at www.AZUI.com. The benefit week starts on a Sunday and ends on Saturday.

Question: What should people do who applied prior to the Executive Order?

Answer: If an individual was denied because they did not meet the eligibility requirements, they will receive a Determination of Deputy in the mail. However, if the individual believes they are eligible or disagrees with the determination, they should contact the call center at 1 (877) 600-2722, for assistance with their claim. A redetermination will be considered using new information and the most up to date eligibility criteria. If the reconsideration is denied and the claimant disagrees with the Determination of Deputy, they may file an appeal within 15 calendar days from the date the original determination was mailed. An appeal may be filed by telephone, in writing, or by going online at, <https://uiappeals.azdes.gov/>.

Question: Is there a COVID-19 identifier on the application?

Answer: Yes, the Department has added a COVID-19 identifier to the application process.

Question: What should people do that have tried to submit a claim and received an error message, but when they tried to reapply they were told their SSN was already being used on another claim or had some other problem with their application?

Answer: Please call 1 (877) 600-2722 for assistance with your claim. If the issue requires further intervention, the call center agent you speak with will elevate the issue on your behalf.

[View additional information about the CARES Act - Unemployment Insurance Benefits here.](#)

[View step-by-step guidance on how to apply for Unemployment Insurance Benefits here.](#)