



News Release

U.S. Department of Labor | April 5, 2020

U.S. Department Of Labor Publishes Guidance on Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Department of Labor today announced the publication of Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) [16-20 \[wdr.doleta.gov\]](#) providing guidance to states for implementation of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program. Under PUA, individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment compensation and are unable to continue working as a result of COVID-19, such as self-employed workers, independent contractors, and gig workers, are eligible for PUA benefits. This provision is contained in Section 2102 of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES) Act enacted on March 27, 2020.

PUA provides up to 39 weeks of benefits to qualifying individuals who are otherwise able to work and available for work within the meaning of applicable state law, except that they are unemployed, partially unemployed, or unable or unavailable to work due to COVID-19 related reasons, as defined in the CARES Act. Benefit payments under PUA are retroactive, for weeks of unemployment, partial employment, or inability to work due to COVID-19 reasons starting on or after January 27, 2020. The CARES Act specifies that PUA benefits cannot be paid for weeks of unemployment ending after December 31, 2020.

Eligibility for PUA includes those individuals not eligible for regular unemployment compensation or extended benefits under state or federal law or pandemic emergency unemployment compensation (PEUC), including those who have exhausted all rights to such benefits. Covered individuals also include self-employed individuals, those seeking part-time employment, and individuals lacking sufficient work history. Depending on state law, covered individuals may also include clergy and those working for religious organizations who are not covered by regular unemployment compensation.

The UIPL also includes guidance to states about protecting unemployment insurance program integrity. The department is actively working with states to provide benefits only to those who qualify for such benefits.

For more information on UIPLs or previous guidance, please visit: <https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/> [[wdr.doleta.gov](#)].

For department resources on COVID-19, please visit: <https://www.dol.gov/coronavirus> [[dol.gov](#)].

For more information about COVID-19, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html> [[gcc01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com](#)].

The Employment and Training Administration administers federal job training and dislocated worker programs, federal grants to states for public employment service programs, and unemployment insurance benefits. These services are primarily provided through state and local workforce development systems.

The mission of the department is to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights.

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Release Number: 20-577-NAT