



COVID-19 Unemployment Benefits

May 15, 2020

If your employment was impacted due to COVID-19, you may qualify for federal unemployment benefits in addition to state unemployment benefits. On March 27, 2020, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (“CARES Act”) was signed into law. The bill provides additional aid to unemployed individuals.

Federal Unemployment Benefits

Congress included three measures to aid unemployed individuals: (1) the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (“FPUC”), (2) the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (“PEUC”), and (3) the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (“PUA”).

1) Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (“FPUC”)

The FPUC provides unemployed individuals with an additional \$600 per week in benefits. To receive FPUC benefits, the individual must qualify for state unemployment compensation benefits. FPUC is available for individuals whose employment has ended on or before July 31, 2020. The \$600 in FPUC benefits expires on July 31, 2020.

2) Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (“PEUC”)

The PEUC provides individuals with thirteen (13) additional weeks of 100% federally funded unemployment benefits. The PEUC benefit kicks in once the individual has exhausted their eligibility under the state unemployment system. The PEUC is authorized until December 31, 2020.

3) Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (“PUA”)

PUA provides assistance to individuals not typically eligible for unemployment benefits including those who are self-employed, independent contractors, and gig workers. Individuals may qualify if partially or fully unemployed due to COVID-19 related issues such as: he/she or a member of the household is diagnosed with COVID-19, providing care to child due to closure of school or facility, he/she must be in quarantine. The individual cannot be receiving paid leave or able to telework. The PUA expires on July 31, 2020.

FPUC

- \$600 federal benefit in addition to state calculated benefit
- Must qualify for state unemployment benefits
- FPUC ends when state benefits end

PEUC

- After state benefits end, the federal unemployment benefit may extend an additional 13 weeks
- Expires December 31, 2020

PUA

- Unemployment benefits expanded to those that are self-employed, independent contractors, and gig workers
- Covers partially or fully unemployed individuals due to COVID-19 related issues

Additional Information

- Unemployed individuals will need to file for unemployment benefits in the State where the individuals’ previous employment was located.
- To file for unemployment benefits in Montana, visit MontanaWorks.gov or call (406) 444-0532.
- The State will require necessary documentation and completed forms.
- Stay in touch with your former employer.