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**Rep. Carla Cunningham April 1, 2020 - COVID-19 Unemployment Benefits Update**


Rep. Carla D. Cunningham [carlacunningham2012@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, April 01, 2020 10:28 PM

To: [Steve Johnston](#)



**Representative Carla D. Cunningham**  
North Carolina House of Representative  
106th District, Mecklenburg County  
[Carla.Cunningham@ncleg.net](mailto:Carla.Cunningham@ncleg.net)



**Rep. Carla Cunningham: House Committee Assignments 2019-2020 Session**

Appropriations

Appropriations Health and Human Services

Commerce

Energy and Public Utilities

Health

House Select Committee on COVID-19

House Select Committee on School Safety

Wildlife Resources

**Non-Standing Committee**

Joint Legislative Oversight Committee on Health and Human Services


**Appointments by North Carolina House of Representative Speaker Tim Moore**

Minority Health Advisory Council

North Carolina Council for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing

**North Carolina Institute of Medicine Legislative Health Policy Fellows Program**

April 1, 2020



**CORONAVIRUS**  
What you need to know

Dear Friends,

I hope my message finds you and your family healthy and well.

To those impacted by the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, I am sharing with you valuable information our office received from The Division of Employment Security in regards to Federal Benefits as the state responds to the COVID-19 pandemic. .

The first page details the impact of the recent federal CARES Act on unemployment insurance. These changes, in conjunction with Governor Cooper’s efforts to waive UI eligibility requirements at the beginning

of this crisis, will allow a greater number of North Carolinians to receive unemployment benefits. DES expects to receive final guidance on CARES Act implementation from the federal Department of Labor in the near future, and the resulting benefits will begin to be paid out approximately two weeks after that guidance is received.

Also included are answers to the most frequently asked questions that DES is receiving during this time and a guidance sheet for unemployment filing.

Please feel free to share and I hope this information is useful to all.

We're in this together,

Rep. Carla Cunningham



NC DEPARTMENT  
of COMMERCE  
EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

#### FEDERAL UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

##### MARCH 30, 2020

The federal CARES Act provides for three temporary unemployment compensation programs due to COVID-19:

- Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

The Division of Employment Security is awaiting guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor to implement these programs. Once we receive the final guidance, benefits should start being paid in about two weeks.

Anyone who filed a claim due to COVID-19 before this legislation may still be eligible for these benefits. If any benefits are owed for a week previously claimed, payment will be made retroactively.

Here is a brief summary of each program. We will share more details about eligibility and how to apply for benefits as they become available.

**Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC):** Provides an additional \$600 in weekly unemployment insurance benefits paid for weeks after March 29, 2020. The program is slated to end July 31, 2020.

**Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC):** Provides up to 13 additional weeks of unemployment insurance benefits.

**Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA):** Provides unemployment compensation for individuals not eligible for regular unemployment insurance or any extensions to unemployment insurance. This would provide coverage to eligible self-employed workers and independent contractors who are not typically eligible for unemployment insurance.

Updates will be posted on the Division of Employment Security website at [des.nc.gov](https://des.nc.gov).



NC DEPARTMENT  
of COMMERCE  
EMPLOYMENT SECURITY

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FAQs  
FIND MORE AT [DES.NC.GOV](https://des.nc.gov)

**MARCH 30, 2020**

#### **HOW DO I FILE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE?**

The fastest and most efficient way to file a new claim is to file online at [des.nc.gov](https://des.nc.gov). If you don't have access to a computer or need assistance, you may file over the phone by calling the Customer Call Center at 888-737-0259. However, due to the high volume of calls related to COVID-19, you may experience a long wait time. DES will ensure that claimants do not miss out on any weeks of eligibility due to the high call volume. We will begin the claim with the week when they initially attempted to file.

#### **I'M HAVING TROUBLE SIGNING INTO MY ONLINE ACCOUNT.**

If you are experiencing issues with the password or PIN for your online account, please email [NCDESpasswordhelp@nccommerce.com](mailto:NCDESpasswordhelp@nccommerce.com) for assistance.

#### **I HEARD THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS EXPANDING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS. AM I ELIGIBLE?**

The Division of Employment Security is awaiting guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor to implement the new assistance programs. Once we receive the final guidance, benefits should start being paid in about two weeks. Anyone who filed a claim due to COVID-19 before this legislation may still be eligible for these benefits. If any benefits are owed for a week previously claimed, payment will be made retroactively.

#### **WHEN WILL I RECEIVE PAYMENT?**

After you have filed a claim, it usually takes about 14 days to receive your first payment. The additional \$600 in federal benefits will be for weeks ending April 4 – July 31. DES is awaiting guidance for issuing those payments. Any benefits owed will be paid retroactively.

#### **DO I NEED TO COMPLETE A WEEKLY CERTIFICATION EVERY WEEK TO RECEIVE BENEFITS?**

Yes. A Weekly Certification is a series of yes/no questions that helps determine your eligibility for benefits each week. If you do not complete a Weekly Certification, you will not be considered for payment for that week. Sign into your Online Account to complete your weekly certification. If you do not have online access, call 888-372-3453 (Weekly Certifications only).

**Note:** N.C. [Executive Order 118](#) allows some requirements to be waived for people filing for unemployment due to COVID-19. If you are filing due to COVID-19, you may answer 'yes' to this question on the Weekly Certification: Did you look for work?

#### **ARE INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS ELIGIBLE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE?**

Independent contractors and self-employed workers are not typically eligible for unemployment insurance benefits. However, these individuals may qualify for federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance available as a result of COVID-19. The Division of Employment Security is awaiting guidance from the federal government to implement the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program. Check [des.nc.gov](https://des.nc.gov) for updates.

# FILING FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS DUE TO COVID-19

Updated March 26, 2020

## File your claim at [des.nc.gov](https://des.nc.gov)

**Need Assistance?**  
**DES Customer Call Center**  
**888-737-0259**  
Due to extremely high call volume, you may experience long wait times.

## North Carolina Division of Employment Security

### CREATE AN ONLINE ACCOUNT: [DES.NC.GOV](https://des.nc.gov)

- File a claim for unemployment
- Complete your Weekly Certifications
- Check your claim status

### FILE YOUR CLAIM

You will need your Social Security Number, information about your most recent employment and pay, work history for the last two years, and bank routing and account numbers for direct deposit.

**TIP: If you are filing due to COVID-19, select 'coronavirus' as your reason for separation.**

### COMPLETE YOUR WEEKLY CERTIFICATION

A Weekly Certification is a series of yes/no questions that helps determine your eligibility for benefits each week. If you do not complete a Weekly Certification, you will not be considered for payment.

Log into your Online Account to complete your Weekly Certification. If you do not have online access, call 888-372-3453 (Weekly Certifications only).

**TIP: N.C. Executive Order 118 allows some requirements to be waived for people filing for unemployment due to COVID-19. If you are filing due to COVID-19, you may answer 'yes' to this question on the Weekly Certification: Did you look for work?**

### TIMELINE

After you file your claim, your last employer will be given, by law, 10 days to respond to DES. No payment will be released until after this 10-day period.


If there are no issues, individuals typically receive payment within about 14 days of filing their initial claim.

**TIP: Remember—you must complete a Weekly Certification for each week, or you will not receive payment.**

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4 of 5

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