

If you're filing for **UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE** due to the Covid-19 pandemic, **here is what you need to know.**

*****Information is changing rapidly. Visit state agency websites for the latest updates*****

Special Covid-19 Provisions

The Department of Unemployment Assistance may pay unemployment benefits if a worker is quarantined due to an order by a civil authority or medical professional, or leaves employment due to reasonable risk of exposure or infection or to care for a family member. The worker need not provide medical documentation and need only be available for work when and as able.

To assist individuals who cannot work due to the impact of covid-19, the Baker-Polito administration filed emergency legislation that will allow new claims to be paid more quickly by waiving the 1 week waiting period for unemployment benefits. This means that DUA would be authorized to pay benefits without delay to persons who become unemployed because of lay-offs or business shutdowns taken in response to the virus.

You can apply three ways:

1. **Online:** <https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-unemployment-benefits>

Claimants are urged to apply online during the COVID-19 crises.

2. **By phone/TeleClaim Center:**

From area codes 351, 413, 508, 774 and 978: dial (877) 626-6800

From any other area code - (617) 626-6800

3. **In Person:**

You can visit the Boston walk-in center located at 19 Staniford St., Boston, MA 02114 to get in person assistance with a member of our staff. The walk-in center is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

A worker can apply within the first week after separation from employment but there will be a one week waiting period before a worker is eligible for benefits. The first check takes 3-4 weeks to arrive. After that weekly benefits should arrive weekly either by direct deposit or on the debit card issued to the beneficiary.

Information Needed

To apply for unemployment benefits, you need to provide personal information including:

- Social Security number,
- birth date,
- home address,
- email address (optional),
- phone number.

You also need information about your employment history from the last 15 months, including:

- Names of all employers, plus addresses and phone numbers
- Reasons you are not at those jobs (unless you still have some of them)
- start and end dates for each job
- Recall date (if you were laid off but you have a set date to return to work)

You may need additional information in certain situations:

- If you are not a U.S. citizen — your Alien Registration number
- If you have children — their birth dates and Social Security numbers
- If you're in a union — your union name and local number
- If you were in the military — your DD-214 Member 4 form. If you don't have it, you can [request your DD-214 online](#).
- If you worked for the federal government — your SF8 form (optional)

To receive payments by **direct deposit**, you'll also need your bank name, account number, and routing number. Otherwise, the Department of Unemployment Assistance (DUA) will send you a **debit card**.

The Benefit

Under Massachusetts' unemployment insurance program, if a worker is eligible to receive unemployment benefits, she will receive a weekly benefit amount of **50% of the average weekly wage**, up to the maximum set by law. **As of October 2019, the maximum weekly benefit amount is \$823 per week.**

Usually this benefit is for 26 weeks or until a new job is found. **For the year 2020 the benefit is extended up to 39 weeks or reemployment under the federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program (see below for more details).**

Between now at July 31, the federal government **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program** will also pay an **extra \$600 per week** to people collecting employment benefits.

A worker cannot receive unemployment benefits if she is working full time. "Full-time" (for unemployment purposes) usually means 35 hours/week or more.

For part-time workers/workers with part-time earnings

A worker can get UI from her principle job even if she is working another part-time job.

In that situation, she would collect the first one-third of her UI weekly benefit earnings (which is 50% the earnings of the lost work), and the remaining two-thirds are reduced dollar for dollar by the amount earning in the part-time job/s.

While collecting benefits

- The Benefits recipient must be looking for work to replace that which was lost*.
- Must report all earnings made each week to the Department of Unemployment Assistance.

*This may be waived during the COVID emergency period

Additional benefits under the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program are available if you:

- Have already used up your unemployment benefits
 - Do not have enough earnings to qualify for normal unemployment
 - Are self-employed
- and*

You are not working because:

- You cannot start work or get to work because of the emergency;
 - Your worksite is closed due to the emergency;
 - You are diagnosed with COVID-19, have the symptoms of COVID-19 or self-quarantine under the direction of a health-care provider;
 - A member of your household has COVID-19 or you are caring for a member of your household with COVID-19;
 - You have to take care of a child whose school or childcare facility is closed;
 - If you had to quit your job as a direct result of COVID-19;
- or*
- You are the major earner in your household because the head of household died from COVID-19

