

# State UI COVID-19 Response

The U.S. Department of Labor recently announced new guidance providing flexibilities that states have in administering their unemployment insurance (UI) programs to assist workers affected by the COVID-19 emergency. Under the guidance, states can amend their laws to provide UI benefits in multiple scenarios related to COVID-19. For example, federal law allows states to pay benefits where: (1) An employer temporarily ceases operations due to COVID-19, preventing employees from coming to work; (2) An individual is quarantined with the expectation of returning to work after the quarantine is over; and (3) An individual leaves employment due to a risk of exposure or infection or to care for a family member. In addition, federal law does not require an employee to quit in order to receive benefits due to the impact of COVID-19.

States and state workforce agencies have begun to respond to the new guidance. Many states have waived the one-week waiting period and work search requirements. Some states are also requiring employers to file claims on behalf of affected employees, creating incentives for employers to do so, and streamlining the process for employer-filed claims. This document summarizes some of the relevant unemployment related changes being made in response to the COVID-19 emergency. This information is current as of March 29, 2020.

State	Unemployment Provisions Made Due to COVID-19
<b>Alabama</b>	Alabama has waived one-week waiting period and “able and available” and work search requirements for individuals who are diagnosed with COVID-19, quarantined by a medical professional or a government agency, laid off or sent home without pay for an extended period by their employer due to COVID-19 concerns, or caring for an immediate family member who is diagnosed with COVID-19. Alabama is also temporarily waiving all charges against employers who file partial unemployment compensation claims on behalf of their employees. This waiver means that employers’ experience rating will not be affected by the COVID-19 claims.
<b>Alaska</b>	Alaska has waived the usual unpaid one-week waiting period, if found to be eligible for benefits.
<b>Arizona</b>	Arizona has stated that unemployment insurance benefits may be available to individuals who are involuntarily unemployed as a result of COVID-19.
<b>Arkansas</b>	The one-week waiting period has been waived in Arkansas.
<b>California</b>	California has waived the one-week waiting period so unemployed workers may collect benefits for the first week they are out of work, and the California Employment Development Department has indicated that reduced hours because of COVID-19 will qualify for partial wage replacement benefits, too.
<b>Colorado</b>	Colorado has provided that if an employer closed or reduced an employee’s hours to help stop the spread of COVID-19, the individual can file or reopen an unemployment claim.
<b>Connecticut</b>	Connecticut has waived the work search requirements. Individuals must still be physically able and available for full time work, unless the individual has a note from a physician stating that the individual is only available for part time work. If business has slowed, the Department of Labor offers a Shared Work program as an alternative to a layoff.
<b>Delaware</b>	<p>Delaware will issue new Unemployment Insurance guidelines that will address the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Workers will be eligible to receive unemployment benefits if an employer needs to curtail or shut down operations temporarily because of the Governor’s State of Emergency declaration or the coronavirus outbreak.</li> <li>A worker who has been ordered by a medical doctor to self-quarantine as a result, or due to risk of exposure to coronavirus COVID-19 will be eligible to receive unemployment benefits.</li> <li>Parents or guardians who have been forced to quit or take unpaid leave from their jobs to care for children due to the Governor’s emergency closure of schools will be eligible for benefits.</li> <li>Workers who have been forced to quit or take unpaid leave to care for a loved one who has contracted coronavirus COVID-19 will be eligible for benefits.</li> <li>If a worker falls ill to COVID-19 and is unable to work, they may be eligible for unemployment benefits.</li> <li>Part-time workers may be eligible for benefits.</li> <li>The definition of weekly work search requirements will expand to include a wide variety of activities that meet the requirement, unemployment insurance deadlines may be modified for mandatory appointments, and applying for training programs or mandatory re-employment service appointments and workshops.</li> </ul>

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DC	Employee eligibility for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits have been expanded while the Mayor's declaration of a public health emergency is in effect.
Florida	Florida has indicated that Reemployment Assistance may be available for those who are quarantined by a medical professional or a government agency, laid off or sent home without pay for an extended period by their employer due to COVID-19 concerns, or caring for an immediate family member who is diagnosed with COVID-19.
Georgia	Georgia has waived the work search requirements. Employers must file partial claims online on behalf of their employees whenever it is necessary to temporarily reduce work hours or there is no work available for a short period. Employer account will not be charged for certain benefits paid for unemployment due to the COVID-19 public health emergency, including partial claims.
Hawaii	Hawaii has waived the one-week waiting period for unemployment insurance benefits for those unemployed because of COVID-19.
Idaho	There aren't any changes to unemployment yet, but Idaho has provided COVID-related materials.
Illinois	Under recently adopted emergency rules, individuals in Illinois temporarily laid off due to COVID-19 do not have to register with the employment service. They are considered to be actively seeking work as long as they are prepared to return to the job as soon as the employer reopens. Those confined to their homes because of a COVID-19 diagnosis, a quarantine, or to care for a family member with COVID-19 are considered to meet the requirement to be unemployed through "no fault of their own."
Indiana	Indiana has provided that if a person's employment has been interrupted or ended due to COVID-19, they should file for UI and their claim will be evaluated. Applications must be filed online.
Iowa	In Iowa, individuals are eligible if ill with COVID-19 and unable to work due to sickness or quarantine, or out of work due to: caring for a family member with COVID exposure/illness; loss of childcare or school closures; employer shutdown (temporary layoffs have always qualified), or a need to self-quarantine need. The work search requirement is waived for these circumstances and employers will not be charged for benefits relating to COVID-19.
Kansas	Kansas waived the one-week waiting period and has also provided that the requirements to be "able and available for work and to look for work" may be waived as well. Employers forced to lay off employees temporarily may make a "spreadsheet filing" on their behalf. Additional information is available through COVID-19 FAQs.
Kentucky	Kentucky has waived the one-week waiting period and maintains the discretion to waive standards for ability to work, availability to work, work search activities and suitability for work.
Louisiana	Louisiana has waived one-week waiting period and work search requirements.
Maine	Maine has expanded eligibility for benefits to people who are affected by COVID-19 but have not lost their job. Individuals who would otherwise be able and available to work and who maintain contact with their employer may now be eligible for UI. Anyone who has filed for unemployment benefits on or after March 15th will be reviewed under these new temporary measures. The legislation temporarily revises eligibility requirement to provide unemployment coverage in situations not typically covered, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An employer temporarily ceases operation due to COVID-19</li> <li>• An individual is quarantined with the expectation of returning to work once the quarantine is over</li> <li>• An individual must take a leave of absence to care for a dependent who is affected</li> </ul>
Maryland	In Maryland, individuals may be eligible if employer temporarily ceases operations due to COVID-19, the individual is quarantined due to COVID-19 with the expectation of returning to work after the quarantine is over, or the individual leaves employment due to a risk of COVID-19 or to care for a family member due to COVID-19.
Massachusetts	Massachusetts has waived one-week waiting period.
Michigan	In Michigan, benefits were increased from 20 to 26 weeks, the application eligibility period was increased from 14 to 28 days, and the normal in-person registration and work search requirements were suspended. Unemployment benefits extended to workers who have an unanticipated family care responsibility, and those who are sick, quarantined, or immunocompromised and who do not have access to paid family and medical leave or are laid off.
Minnesota	Minnesota has waived one-week waiting period. Additionally, individuals may be eligible if a healthcare professional or health authority recommended or ordered them to avoid contact with others, they have been ordered not to come to their workplace due to an outbreak of a communicable disease, or child care is unavailable due to school or daycare closures.
Mississippi	Mississippi has waived the waiting period week for initial claims filed from March 8, 2020 through June 27, 2020. Additionally, the work search requirements are suspended from March 21, 2020 until June 27, 2020.
Missouri	In Missouri, If there is a layoff or temporary shutdown, individuals may be eligible for unemployment benefits if they meet the eligibility criteria. The weekly work search requirements are not required when there is a recall date within 8 weeks of the temporary layoff. Employers may be able to avoid a layoff with a partial shutdown by applying for the Missouri Shared Work program.
Montana	Montana waived the one week waiting period. Also, workers instructed by employers to leave work or not report to work due to COVID-19, workers who must quarantine, and workers who need to take care of a family member due to COVID-19 are eligible for benefits.
Nebraska	Nebraska has waived the one-week waiting period and work search requirements. Department of Labor will temporarily waive charges incurred by employers when employees file claims related to COVID-19.
Nevada	Nevada has waived the one-week waiting period and work search requirement. Additional information can be found on the Nevada Health Response information website.

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<b>New Hampshire</b>	New Hampshire has waived the one-week waiting period. Additionally, certain other requirements are waived for individuals diagnosed with COVID-19, quarantined, caring for a diagnosed or quarantined family member, or caring for a family member due to a school or daycare closing. These benefits will not be charged to an employer's account.
<b>New Jersey</b>	In New Jersey, individuals may be eligible if employer closes or worker has fewer hours due to low demand. Employees who have COVID-19, were exposed and quarantined, or can't work because school or daycare closed may use earned sick leave.
<b>New Mexico</b>	New Mexico has waived the able, available, and work search requirements for up to 4 weeks for employees who are laid off, whose hours are reduced, who are quarantined, or whose family member is quarantined.
<b>New York</b>	New York has waived the one-week waiting period for people out of work due to COVID-19 closures or quarantines. Also, the state has expanded eligibility for paid sick leave and disability benefits.
<b>North Carolina</b>	North Carolina has waived the one-week waiting period and maintains the discretion to waive "able and available" to work, work search, actively seeking work, and "lack of work" requirements. Employers' accounts will not be charged for benefits related to COVID-19.
<b>North Dakota</b>	In North Dakota, if an employer shuts down or lays off employees due to lack of work caused by the impact of COVID-19 on the business, these employees will generally be eligible for Unemployment Insurance benefits.
<b>Ohio</b>	Ohio has waived the one-week waiting period for all eligible individuals as well as the requirement to actively seek employment. Unemployment benefits are available for eligible individuals who are requested by a medical professional, local health authority, or employer to be isolated or quarantined due to COVID-19, even if not actually diagnosed with COVID-19. All Ohio employers planning a mass layoff or shutdown due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic should provide the following mass-layoff number - 2000180 - and linked instruction sheet to their employees to speed the processing of unemployment benefits.
<b>Oklahoma</b>	Oklahoma has waived the one-week waiting period. Employees given a return to work date do not have to search for other work during the layoff period. Employers may file a mass claim for a temporary shutdown involving 25 or more employees.
<b>Oregon</b>	Oregon enacted temporary rules to give more flexibility in providing unemployment benefits to COVID-19 affected workers. Unemployment Insurance benefits are available during temporary layoffs related to COVID-19 situations. These benefits occur for employees whose employer stops operation for a short period of time, such as cleaning following a coronavirus exposure, or by government requirement.
<b>Pennsylvania</b>	Pennsylvania suspended the one week waiting period; the work search and work registration requirements have been waived for all claimants.
<b>Rhode Island</b>	Rhode Island waived the one-week waiting period. Individuals under quarantine qualify for Temporary Disability Insurance.
<b>South Carolina</b>	In South Carolina, if an employer must shut down operations, lay off employees, or reduce hours, individuals may be eligible for unemployment benefits. Employers that have a temporary shutdown or are experiencing a slow or smaller workload than normal can request permission to file claims on their workers' behalf for up to six weeks of benefits, during which the work search requirement is waived.
<b>South Dakota</b>	In South Dakota, workers who are temporarily unemployed (up to 10 weeks) and expected to return to work with their employer are eligible, and not required to actively seek work each week. Workers sent home because they are considered a risk also are likely eligible.
<b>Tennessee</b>	In Tennessee, an individual who is quarantined or ordered to isolate by a medical professional or health authority may receive unemployment benefits if all other eligibility requirements are met and the individual intends to return to the job. Employers closing temporarily should file a mass claim.
<b>Texas</b>	Texas waived work search requirements for all claimants and the waiting week for those claimants affected by COVID-19.
<b>Utah</b>	In Utah, employees negatively impacted by COVID-19 (i.e. are sick or otherwise unable to go to work due to the virus), should apply for unemployment insurance. No noted provisions made due to the COVID-19 emergency.
<b>Vermont</b>	Vermont waived the "able and available" requirements when a claimant is isolated or quarantined at the direction of a health care official due to potential or verified COVID-19 exposure. The state also waived work search requirements for employees affected by a temporary closure of a business who were provided with a return to work date within 10 weeks, and for individuals in isolation/quarantine.
<b>Virginia</b>	Virginia waived the one-week waiting period and weekly job search requirement. Additional information is available in the form of an Unemployment Q&A.
<b>Washington</b>	In Washington, an individual may be eligible if following guidance issued by a medical professional or public health official to self-isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure, and the individual is not receiving paid sick leave from the employer. Employees who are laid off, or whose hours are reduced, temporarily may request "standby" status. Employers may request a relief of benefit charges due to a business closure which is directly related to possible contamination at the business site.
<b>West Virginia</b>	West Virginia maintains discretion to waive one-week waiting period, "able and available" requirement, and work search requirement. Benefits are available to eligible individuals who are requested by a medical professional, local health authority, or employer to be isolated or quarantined due to COVID-19, even if they are not actually diagnosed.
<b>Wisconsin</b>	Wisconsin waived the work search and availability requirements.
<b>Wyoming</b>	In Wyoming, if an employer must shut down operations or lay off employees, individuals may be eligible for unemployment benefits if they meet the monetary criteria and the federal weekly eligibility criteria. If a layoff is temporary, the employer may request that the employee be job- attached for up to 12 weeks so the employee can collect unemployment benefits without having to look for other work.