STATE OF WISCONSIN

DWD

Department of Workforce Development
Unemployment Insurance Division

# Claiming Disaster Unemployment Assistance in Wisconsin

The Federal Disaster Relief Act of 1974, as amended by Section 410 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act permits emergency measures to help people and communities in major disaster areas. One measure is Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA).

## What is DUA

The DUA program provides temporary income in the form of weekly payments to eligible workers or self-employed individuals who lost work as the result of a major disaster and who do not qualify for regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits.

The fact that you have suffered a monetary loss due to damage or destruction to property or crops does not establish entitlement to DUA. You must be able to show that the disaster prevented you from performing customary activities related to your employment or self-employment.

## Definition of Major Disaster

A major disaster means any hurricane, tornado, storm, flood, high water, wind-driven water, tidal wave, earthquake, drought, ice conditions, fire, or other catastrophe declared by the President of the United States to warrant government assistance to communities and individuals. After a request from the State Governor, the President makes the declaration and defines the disaster area.

## Who may be Eligible for DUA

An unemployed worker may be eligible for DUA if, **as a direct result of the major disaster,** they (1) are an unemployed or self-unemployed worker; and (2) are a U.S. citizen, a U.S. national, or authorized to work in the U.S. (qualified alien); and (3) are not eligible for regular UI benefits from any state; and (4) have worked or were self-employed in, or were scheduled to begin work or self-employment in one of the affected counties; and (5) received their primary income from the work or self-employment they can no longer perform due to the disaster.

In addition to individuals who lost their jobs directly due to the disaster, individuals eligible for DUA may also include those who (1) can no longer work or perform services because of physical damage or destruction to their place of employment as a direct result of the disaster or because they cannot reach their job or self-employment location because they cannot travel through the affected area due to the disaster; or (2) were to start work or self-employment but were not able to because of the disaster; or (3) cannot work or perform services, including self-employment, because of an injury caused as a direct result of the disaster; or (4) became the primary household earner (breadwinner or major support) of a household because of the death of the head of the household because of the disaster; or (5) cannot work or perform services, including self-employment, due to the closure of a facility by the federal, state, or local government due to the disaster; or (6) lost work or revenue if their employer or self-employed business received a majority of its revenue or income from an entity damaged, destroyed, or closed because of the disaster.

DUA benefits are no longer payable when a worker's unemployment is no longer directly attributed to the disaster, the self-employed individual resumes usual and customary hours of work, or the DUA period ends. Stop filing weekly claims when any of these circumstances occur.

## Computing Your DUA Entitlement

Your entitlement will be based on all of your earnings from employment or self-employment during your most recently ended tax year. For most individuals, this will be the previous calendar year.

## DUA Weekly Benefit Rate (WBR)

Your weekly DUA benefit rate will be computed based on your statement of earnings from your employment or self-employment. You must provide proof of such earnings within 21 days of filing your claim. The gross DUA benefit rates will not be lower than 50% of the average payment for a full week of regular UI benefits and not to exceed the current maximum UI weekly benefit rate.

## When to Apply for DUA Benefits

If a disaster is declared, DWD will announce to local news media the DUA Application Period as well as how to file a claim. When announced, the DUA application period is set by federal regulation for 60 days.

**You are not eligible for DUA if you qualify for regular UI benefits**

## How To Apply for DUA Benefits

Go to **my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov** to apply for UI and to request a DUA application be mailed to you. For help using online services or if you are unable to go online, call the DUA hotline at (608) 318-7100 during business hours. A claims specialist will help you complete your initial claim application.

**Have the following information available:**

- Social Security Number.
- Wisconsin Driver's License, if you have one.
- A list of all employers you worked for in the past 18 months, their complete addresses (including zip codes), telephone numbers and the dates you began and last worked for them.

## Filing a Weekly Claim Certification

**You must file a weekly claim for a week to receive benefits for that week.**

If you are not self-employed, file your weekly claims online at **my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov**. For help using online services, or if you are unable to go online, call the DUA hotline number at (608) 318-7100 during business hours.

If you are self-employed, complete a paper weekly claim for each week for which you wish to receive DUA. Mail the weekly claim form in after the week is over.

You must submit your weekly claim certification by the Saturday that is 14 days after the end of each week you are claiming or, if mailed DUA Weekly Claims (Form DUA-3), within 14 days of the mail date on the DUA Weekly Claim (Form DUA-3), whichever is later.

**See "Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) Rights and Responsibilities" (DUA-16353-P) for more complete information and appeal rights.**