

STATE OF WISCONSIN



Department of Workforce Development
Unemployment Insurance Division

Claiming Pandemic Unemployment Assistance in Wisconsin

Authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and extended by the Continued Assistance Act and the American Rescue Plan Act, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) provides up to 79 weeks of benefits between February 2, 2020 and September 4, 2021. The 40 weeks available as a result of the Continued Assistance Act and the American Rescue Plan Act can only be paid for the week ending January 2, 2021 or later.

You are not eligible for PUA if you qualify for regular UI benefits

Who May be Eligible for PUA

To be eligible for benefits under the Pandemic Unemployment assistance, you must:

- Not qualify for regular Unemployment Insurance (UI), Extended Benefits (EB), or Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) OR
- Have exhausted all forms of UI above OR
- Have been self-employed and not eligible for one of the forms of unemployment insurance listed above **AND**
- Be fully or partially unemployed for one of the qualifying COVID-19 reasons following:

Reasons for Qualifying

To be eligible for PUA, you must be unemployed, partially unemployed, or unable or unavailable to work

due to one of the COVID-19 related reasons listed below:

- You have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and are seeking a medical diagnosis.
- A member of your household has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- You are providing care for a member of your family or household who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- A child or other person in your household for which you have primary caregiving responsibility is unable to attend school or another facility that is closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency and such school or facility care is required for you to work.
- You are unable to reach your place of employment because of a quarantine imposed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- You are unable to reach your place of employment because you have been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
- You were scheduled to commence employment and do not have a job or are unable to reach the job as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- You have become the breadwinner or major support for a household because the head of the household has died as a direct result of COVID-19.
- You had to quit your job as a direct result of COVID-19.
- Your place of employment is closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- You are self-employed (including an independent contractor and gig worker) and experienced a significant reduction of your customary and usual services because of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- You were denied continued unemployment benefits because you refused to return to work or accept an offer of work at a worksite that, in either instance, is not in compliance with local, state, or national health and safety standards directly related to COVID-19. This includes but is not limited to, those related to facial mask wearing,

physical distancing measures, or the provision of personal protective equipment consistent with public health guidelines.

- You provide services to an educational institution or educational service agency and are unemployed or partially unemployed because of volatility in the work schedule that is directly caused by the COVID-19 public health emergency. This includes, but is not limited to, changes in schedules and partial closures.
- You are an employee and your hours have been reduced or you were laid off as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation and Lost Wages Assistance

Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) and Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) are payable in association with PUA with two exceptions:

- You are not eligible for LWA if you qualified for PUA under one of the last three qualifying reasons listed.
- You will not be eligible for LWA on claims filed after 12/27/20.

PUA will be Reduced or Denied if:

- You are able to telework with pay.
- You are receiving paid sick leave or other paid leave benefits.

PUA Weekly Benefit Rate

Your PUA weekly benefit rate (WBR) will be based on UI law. You may get an estimate of your WBR at <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/calculator-wbr.htm>. The PUA WBR will not be lower than 50% of the average payment for a full week of regular UI benefits and will not exceed the current maximum UI WBR. The minimum PUA WBR is \$163. The maximum PUA WBR is \$370.

If you are self-employed or don't have a sufficient work history to meet monetary requirements for UI, you must provide proof of your earnings within 21 days of filing the initial PUA claim.

Acceptable forms of proof of earnings include: tax forms, including schedules C, F, or K-1, if applicable, W-2's, and/or final pay stub. 2019 tax forms are

required for claims starting prior to January 3, 2021. 2020 tax forms are required for claims beginning January 3, 2021 or later.

Requirement to Submit Proof of Employment/Self-Employment

If you receive PUA on or after December 27, 2020, you are required to submit documentation substantiating your employment/self-employment or your planned beginning of employment or self-employment. **Failure to do so will result in an overpayment of PUA paid for the week ending January 2, 2021 and subsequent weeks.** Documents from the most recently completed tax year that are used to establish the weekly benefit may also be used to satisfy this requirement.

- If you submit a new PUA application on or after January 31, 2021, you are required to provide documentation within 21 days of the initial application. This deadline may be extended for good cause.
- If you have an existing PUA claim as of December 27, 2020 or submit a new initial PUA claim before January 31, 2021, you must provide documentation within 90 days of application date or the date instructed to provide such documentation, whichever date is later. This deadline may be extended for good cause.

Examples of Acceptable Documentation

- Employment: paycheck stubs, earnings and leave statements showing the employer's name and address, and W-2 forms
- Self-employment: business licenses, tax returns, business receipts, and signed affidavits from persons verifying the individual's self-employment
- Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, and educational/religious organizations: documentation provided by the organization and signed affidavits from persons verifying the individual's attachment to such organizations
- Proof of the planned commencement of employment: letters offering employment, statements/affidavits by individuals (with name and contact information) verifying an offer of employment

- Proof of the planned commencement of self-employment: business licenses, written business plans, or a lease agreement

How To Apply for PUA Benefits

Logon to my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov and use the link on your dashboard to apply for PUA online.

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.
- Proof of wages/self-employment from your most recent tax year or proof of work that was scheduled to start.

Backdating

New claims filed by December 27, 2020 are effective as of the first week during the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Period that you were unemployed, partially unemployed, or unable/unavailable for work due to a COVID-19 related reason cited in the CARES Act.

New PUA claims filed after December 27, 2020 may not be backdated to start before the week ending December 12, 2020 unless you filed a UI claim before December 27, 2020 and were later disqualified from UI. In that case, PUA can be backdated to the week of your UI claim.

Filing a Weekly Claim Certification

File your weekly claims for PUA online at my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov after you receive notice of eligibility.

Weekly claims cannot be filed until eligibility has been determined. A link for filing weekly claims will be offered if you are determined eligible.

Use this link to file weekly claims for past weeks. During subsequent weeks, continue to file weekly claims for each week you want to receive benefits. Subsequent weekly claims must be filed **within 14 days** of the end of the calendar week you are

claiming, but not until after the week has ended. No payment will be made until after you file a weekly claim certification for each week.

For help using online services, or if you are unable to go online, call the PUA Hotline at (608) 318-7100 between the hours of 7:30 AM and 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

If you stop filing for any reason, you must reopen your claim when you are again unemployed or working reduced hours. You may resume your claim via the internet at my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov or by calling (608) 318-7100.

See "[Pandemic Unemployment Assistance \(PUA\) Rights and Responsibilities](#)" (PUA-18781-P) for more complete information and appeal rights.