



## **APPLYING FOR PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (PUA)**

**Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) is payable for weeks of unemployment, partial unemployment, or inability to work caused by one of the eleven (11) COVID-19 related reasons set forth in the CARES Act.**

**Those COVID-19 related reasons set forth in the CARES Act are as follows:**

1. You have been diagnosed with or are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and are seeking a medical diagnosis.
2. A member of your household has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
3. You are providing care for family members or a member of your household who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
4. Your child or other person in the household for whom you are the primary is unable to attend school or facility care, which is required for you to work.
5. You are unable to reach your place of employment because of quarantine or stay-at-home order due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
6. You are unable to reach your place of employment because you have been advised by a health care provider to self-isolate or quarantine because you are positive for or may have had exposure to someone who has or is suspected of having COVID-19.
7. You were scheduled to start a new job and do not have an existing job or are unable to reach the job as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
8. You have become the breadwinner/major supporter for a household because the head of your household has died as a direct result of COVID-19.
9. You had to quit your job due to being diagnosed with COVID-19 and being unable to perform your work duties.
10. Your place of employment is closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.
11. You worked as an independent contractor with reportable income and COVID-19 has severely limited your ability to continue performing your work activities and/or has forced you to suspend such activities for one of the above COVID-19 reasons.

*Self-employed, gig workers, independent contractors, and those with insufficient work history are eligible to apply for PUA once it is verified that you are **ineligible for regular UC and meet one of the COVID-19 related reasons.***

PUA **does not** cover the following individuals:

- Those without an attachment to the labor market;
- Those who are unemployed for non-COVID-19 reasons.

To file for PUA you will need to go to **<https://www.uc.pa.gov>**, and click the link that says “**File an Initial Claim.**”

## **THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU FILE**

1. You will want to have proof of earnings documents ready in advance, if possible. Acceptable documentation of wages can include but is not limited to:
  - a. 2019 tax returns;
  - b. Your 2019 1099 form(s);
  - c. Paycheck stubs;
  - d. Bank receipts;
  - e. Ledgers;
  - f. Contracts;
  - g. Invoices; and/or
  - h. Billing statements.
2. You do not need a Personal Identification Number (PIN) with the PUA system, **you will have the USERNAME AND PASSWORD that you create.**
  - a. **NOTE:** You will need an email address to complete the application for PUA.
3. You will not receive a confirmation email after submitting your initial PUA claim, **you can go into the PUA DASHBOARD to see the claim.**
  - a. You can manage everything through your PUA dashboard – check on your claim status, upload documents, see payment information, etc.

## **REGISTERING AND FILING YOUR INITIAL PUA CLAIM**

According to the “PAU System Guide,” a guided wizard will walk you through the steps to register an account in the system and file an initial PUA claim. The basic steps are to:

1. Enter your Social Security Number to determine your eligibility to file a PUA claim.
2. Complete a multi-page registration form to create your system account.
  - a. To complete this, you will need to have **all your personal contact information available, as well as education, earnings, and work history information.**
3. Enter your work history.
4. Receive certification information.
5. Complete the claim filing process by acknowledging your rights and responsibilities.

For more detailed, step-by-step instructions visit:

**[https://pua.benefits.uc.pa.gov/admin/gsipub/htmlarea/uploads/Pandemic Unemployment Assistance \(PUA\) Portal Claimants Guide.pdf](https://pua.benefits.uc.pa.gov/admin/gsipub/htmlarea/uploads/Pandemic_Unemployment_Assistance_(PUA)_Portal_Claimants_Guide.pdf)**

## **IDENTITY VERIFICATION**

The Department is notifying individuals through their PUA dashboards that they must go through identity verification with ID.Me to continue their PUA claim. Follow the link from the dashboard message to complete the steps.

If an individual is without internet access, PUA staff will notify the claimant their identity must be verified. This will occur when the claimant calls for the next weekly filing. Those individuals must mail photocopies of two forms of identification (one including a photo) to the Department of Labor & Industry.

## **MONETARY DETERMINATIONS**

When a Monetary Determination is issued by the Department of Labor & Industry for your claim, it will be available to view and download on your PUA Portal (<https://pua.benefits.uc.pa.gov/vosnet/Default.aspx>). **If you are eligible for PUA, you are automatically eligible for at least \$195 a week. You may be eligible for a higher WBA based on your income, so it is important you submit any and all documentation to support that income.**

**Please note that the \$300 in additional benefits from the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) will not be included in the WBA, and is included automatically beginning after December 26, 2020 until March 12, 2021.**

## **REQUEST CLAIM BACKDATING**

If you are looking to have the effective date of your claim earlier than the week in which your claim was opened, you can call the PUA Call Center at 855-284-8545 **OR** send an email request to UCpua@pa.gov.

## **FILING WEEKLY CLAIMS**

To file weekly certifications, you will need to go to <https://www.uc.pa.gov>, and click the link that says "**File Biweekly Claim.**"

You need to submit your PUA certifications **WEEKLY IN ORDER TO BE PAID.** After the first payment, you will receive weekly PUA payments within three business days after filing your weekly certification.

**If you have questions, apply for services by calling 1-800-665-6957 or apply at [nwls.org](http://nwls.org)**



January 2021