

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT THE CONTINUED ASSISTANCE FOR UNEMPLOYED WORKERS ACT OF 2020 AND THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT OF 2021

This notice is to inform you that you may be eligible for additional benefits as a result of the passage of the Continued Assistance for Unemployed Workers Act of 2020 (Continued Assistance Act), as part of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2021 or the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021.

Actively Filing for Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)

The Continued Assistance Act increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PEUC program from 13 times your average weekly benefit amount to 24 times your average weekly benefit amount. These additional benefits may only be collected for weeks ending on or after December 27, 2020.

The American Rescue Plan Act increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PEUC program from 24 times your average weekly benefit amount to 53 times your average weekly benefit amount. These additional benefits may only be collected for weeks ending on or after March 14, 2021. The PEUC program expires on June 19, 2021, with the last payable week being week ending June 19, 2021.

If you believe you fall into this category, contact NDOL.

Actively Filing for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance with a Previous Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) Claim

The Continued Assistance Act increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PEUC program from 13 times your average weekly benefit amount to 24 times your average weekly benefit amount. These additional benefits may only be collected for weeks ending on or after December 27, 2020.

The American Rescue Plan Act increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PEUC program from 24 times your average weekly benefit amount to 53 times your average weekly benefit amount. These additional benefits may only be collected for weeks ending on or after March 14, 2021. The PEUC program expires on June 19, 2021, with the last payable week being week ending June 19, 2021.

You may only collect PUA if you have exhausted entitlement to PEUC. Because of the additional PEUC benefits available, you are no longer eligible to receive PUA. If you continue to be unemployed or partially unemployed, you must reopen your existing PEUC claim. Note that your PEUC claim may have a different weekly benefit amount because the program uses a different look back period for your prior earnings. If you believe you fall in this category, contact NDOL.

If you later exhaust benefits under the PEUC program and continue to be unemployed, partially under employed, or unable or unavailable to work because of COVID-19, you may be eligible to resume collection of PUA benefits if the PUA program is still in effect.

Actively Filing for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) with no Previous Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) Claim

The Continued Assistance Act increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PUA program from 39 weeks to 50 weeks. Any weeks in which you received regular unemployment compensation (UC) or Extended Benefits (EB) since January 27, 2020 will be subtracted from this amount. These additional PUA benefits may only be collected for weeks ending on or after December 27, 2020.

The American Rescue Plan Act increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PUA program from 50 weeks to 79 weeks. Any weeks in which you received regular unemployment compensation (UC) or Extended Benefits (EB) since January 27, 2020 will be subtracted from this amount. These additional PUA benefits may only be collected for weeks ending on or after March 14, 2021. The PUA program expires on June 19, 2021, with the last payable week being week ending June 19, 2021.

If you believe you fall into this category, contact NDOL.

No Longer Filing, but have a Previous Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) Claim

The Continued Assistance Act increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PEUC program from 13 times your average weekly benefit amount to 24 times your average weekly benefit amount and is available to individuals who have exhausted their entitlement to regular unemployment compensation (UC). These additional PEUC benefits may only be collected for weeks ending on or after December 27, 2020.

The American Rescue Plan Act increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PEUC program from 24 times your average weekly benefit amount to 53 times your average weekly benefit amount and is available to individuals who have exhausted their entitlement to regular unemployment compensation (UC). These additional PEUC benefits may only be collected for weeks ending on or after March 14, 2021. The PEUC program expires on June 19, 2021, with the last payable week being week ending June 19, 2021.

If you are unemployed or partially unemployed after December 27, 2020, and believe you fall into this category, contact NDOL.

No Longer Filing, but have a Previous Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Claim (do not have a Previous Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) Claim)

The Continued Assistance Act increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PUA program from 39 weeks to 50 weeks and is available to individuals who are affected by COVID-19 and are self-employed or otherwise not eligible for regular unemployment compensation (UC). Any weeks in which you received regular UC or Extended Benefits (EB) since January 27, 2020 will be subtracted from this amount. These additional PUA benefits may only be collected for weeks ending on or after December 27, 2020.

The American Rescue Plan Act increased the maximum amount of benefits available under the PUA program from 50 weeks to 79 weeks and is available to individuals who are affected by COVID-19 and are self-employed or otherwise not eligible for regular unemployment (UC). Any weeks in which you received regular UC or Extended Benefits (EB) since January 27, 2020 will be subtracted from this amount. These additional PUA benefits may only be collected for weeks ending on or after March 14, 2021. The PUA program expires on June 19, 2021, with the last payable week being week ending June 19, 2021.

If you are unemployed, partially unemployed, or unable or unavailable to work after December 27, 2020 because of COVID-19, and believe you fall into this category, contact NDOL.

Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)

Starting with week ending January 2, 2021, if you are eligible for at least \$1 of your underlying unemployment benefit amount for any week of unemployment, you will also receive a \$300 supplemental payment from the FPUC program.

The FPUC program expires on June 19, 2021. This means that the last payable week for FPUC is week ending June 19, 2021.

Mixed Earners Unemployment Compensation (MEUC)

If you are currently eligible for regular state unemployment benefits or PEUC and were previously self-employed you may be eligible for an additional \$100 supplemental payment starting with week ending **January 2, 2021**, under the MEUC program.

To qualify, you must: 1) have earned at least \$5,000 in self-employment income in the most recent taxable year prior to your application for regular unemployment compensation (UC), and 2) submit documentation substantiating your self-employment income. To submit documentation, log into your NEworks account, under More Unemployment Services, and select Mixed Earners Unemployment Compensation (MEUC).

If you are eligible for the MEUC program and are paid at least \$1 of your underlying unemployment benefit amount for any week of unemployment, you will also receive a \$100 supplemental MEUC payment. This is provided in addition to FPUC. After you submit documentation and the state confirms your information, you do not need to take any additional action to receive this supplemental payment. Continue to file your claim each week for the unemployment benefit you are currently receiving.

The MEUC program expires on June 19, 2021. This means the last payable week for MEUC is week ending June 19, 2021.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Requirement to Submit Documentation Substantiating Employment or Self-employment

Section 241(a) of the Continued Assistance Act requires anyone that receives a payment of PUA on or after December 27, 2020, submit documentation to substantiate their employment or self-employment, or planned commencement of employment or self-employment. This includes any individual who receives any payment of PUA on or after December 27, 2020, even if the payment is for a week of unemployment that occurred before December 27, 2020.

Types of acceptable documentation are outlined below:

- Proof of Employment includes, but is not limited to: Paycheck stubs, earnings and leave statements showing the employer's name and address, and W-2 forms.
- Proof of Self-Employment includes, but is not limited to: State or Federal employer identification numbers, business licenses, tax returns, business receipts, and signed affidavits from persons verifying the individual's self-employment.
- Proof of Employment with organizations such as the Peace Corps, AmeriCorps, and Educational or Religious Organizations includes, but is not limited to Documentation provided by these organizations and signed affidavits from persons verifying the individual's attachment to such organizations.
- Proof of the Planned Commencement of Employment includes, but is not limited to: Letters offering employment, statements/affidavits by individuals (with name and contact information) verifying an offer of employment.
- Proof of Planned Commencement of Self-Employment includes, but is not limited to: Business licenses, State or Federal employer identification numbers, written business plans, or a lease agreement.

Individuals with initial PUA claims filed in 2020 must submit documentation that substantiates employment or self-employment which occurred between January 1, 2019 and December 31, 2019. Individuals with initial PUA claims filed in 2021 must submit documentation that substantiates employment or self-employment which occurred between January 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020.

Individuals who do not provide documentation substantiating employment/self-employment (or planned employment/self-employment) are not eligible for PUA.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Recertification

On February 25, 2021, the U.S. Department of Labor approved new COVID-19 related reasons under which you may self-certify eligibility for PUA, if applicable. Below is a complete list of the COVID-19 related reasons:

- I have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or am experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and am seeking a medical diagnosis.
- A member of my household has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- I am providing care for a family member or a member of my household who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
- A child or other person in my household for which I am the primary caregiver 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 me to work.
- I am unable to reach my place of employment because of a quarantine imposed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- I am unable to reach my place of employment because I have been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19.
- I was scheduled to commence employment and do not have a job or am unable to reach the job as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- I have become the breadwinner or major support for my household because the head of the household has died as a direct result of COVID-19.
- I quit my job as a direct result of COVID-19.
- My place of employment is closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- I am self-employed (including an independent contractor and gig worker) and experienced a significant reduction of my customary usual services because of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- I was denied continued unemployment benefits because I 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.
- I provided services to an educational institution or educational service agency and am 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.
- I am an employee and my hours have been reduced or I was laid off as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency.
- None of the above apply to me.

If any of the reasons apply to you for a week that you were previously denied or for a week prior to the start date of your PUA claim, you may go to <https://dol.nebraska.gov/uibenefits> and complete the PUA Recertification Form for all applicable weeks by **January 7, 2022**. PUA claims filed prior to December 27, 2020 may certify eligible benefit weeks back to February 2, 2020. PUA claims filed on or after December 27, 2020, may certify eligible benefit weeks back to December 6, 2020. In addition to completing the PUA Recertification Form, you must upload the following documentation to your NEworks account:

- Government issued photo ID
- Proof of Employment or Self-Employment (initial PUA claims filed in 2020 will require proof of employment or self-employment documentation for calendar year 2019; initial PUA claims filed in 2021 will require proof of employment or self-employment documentation for calendar year 2020). Information regarding acceptable documentation can be found at <https://dol.nebraska.gov/uibenefits>.

Failure to provide the information requested in the PUA Recertification Form and/or upload required documentation will result in the denial of your recertification request.