



January 7, 2021

UI Benefit Extensions Q & A

Millions of Californians are due to get \$300 a week added to their weekly unemployment payments -- but some will get the extra benefit sooner than others. The extra payments, part of COVID economic relief legislation signed into law by the President in late December, will continue for most people through the week ending March 13.

Even when those benefits end, the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program, created in March to help people who usually cannot qualify for jobless aid, will keep going through early April for those who are still receiving payment as of the week ending March 13 and who continue to be eligible for PUA benefits.

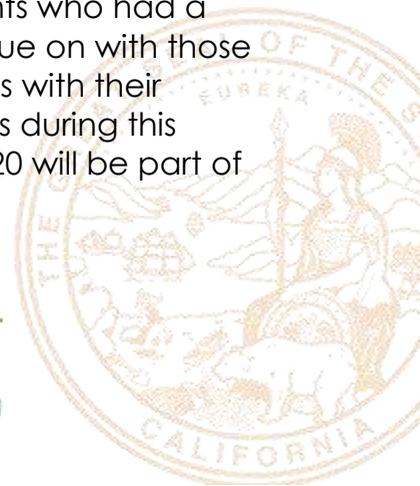
Some new rules and benefits won't kick in right away. The U.S. Labor Department is still issuing guidelines, and California's Employment Development Department needs to make programming adjustments so it can implement the new benefits. Here's a guide on what to expect:

Q. I've been getting unemployment for months. When will I see the additional \$300?

A. It depends. If you're getting regular unemployment insurance -- the traditional benefit for people who worked for employers that paid into the system -- or the extra weeks added to those benefits under the FED-ED extension program, you may already see the money added to your account if you submitted your bi-weekly certification for the week that ended Saturday, January 2. About 1.3 million people in California fall into that category.

Q. And if that's not me?

A. Starting Monday January 11 and stretching out over a two week period, PUA and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) claimants who had a balance remaining on their claim as of 12/26/20 will be able to continue on with those extension benefits. They will also receive the new extra \$300 payments with their weekly benefits. New claimants will also be able to file new PUA claims during this phase. PUA and PEUC claimants whose claims expired prior to 12/26/20 will be part of the next phase of the rollout of these extended benefits.



Q. Do I need to contact EDD or fill out any new forms?

A. Not if you now get the PUA or PEUC benefits. EDD will automatically recalculate PUA and PEUC claims and will notify you through your online account, mail or text message when you can certify for more benefits.

Q. If the payment is delayed, will I still get everything I qualify for?

A. Absolutely. Money will be paid retroactively if necessary. For eligible claimants, the first week of unemployment these additional benefits are payable for is the week beginning December 27.

Q. Are the rules for qualifying for PUA the same?

A. Anyone working as a small business owner, independent contractor, self-employed worker and so on, who does not qualify for regular unemployment benefits and is unemployed due to one of the specific federal COVID-19 reasons potentially qualifies.

However there is a new federal requirement that PUA claimants and applicants applying on or after January 31 will need to submit proof of employment or self-employment. States are awaiting further guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor on how to implement this provision.

Q. My PUA claim eligibility ran out a while ago. Can I now get the additional 11 weeks?

A. Yes, you can qualify again as of last week, which is the week beginning December 27. You do not need to contact the EDD at this time. The department will automatically recalculate PUA claims, and will notify you through your online account, mail or text message when you can certify for more benefits.

Q. I've never received PUA. How do I apply?

A. The best way for new PUA applicants to apply is online through the EDD website (www.edd.ca.gov/Benefit_Programs_Online.htm). Applicants applying on or after January 31 will need to submit proof of employment or self-employment within 21 days after the EDD has requested the proof. Further information will be made available as more guidance is received.

Q. I received regular UI benefits. They ran out after 26 weeks, and I then got 13 more weeks under the PEUC program. Am I eligible for more benefits?

A. Yes. The new law provides for another 11 weeks of PEUC benefits starting the week beginning December 27. The EDD will automatically recalculate PEUC claims, and will notify you through your online account, mail or text message when you can certify for more benefits.

Q. How do I know which if any of these programs I qualify for?

A. Start by looking at the EDD's benefit flowchart:

<https://edd.ca.gov/unemployment/pdf/benefit-flowchart.pdf>.

If that doesn't work, call or email the agency for help at 1-800-300-5616 between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m., or hit the "help" button on the lower right of the EDD's COVID page:

https://edd.ca.gov/about_edd/coronavirus-2019/contact-us.htm