

Guide to Changes in Workforce Benefit Laws

Updated April 16, 2020

With over 22 million unemployed and an unemployment rate of 4.4% in the US, California has removed waiting periods for unemployment and disability insurance for Californians who have lost their jobs. TMASF Connects has compiled as much information as we could to direct local employees to financial resources that are of interest during these times.

Labor and Workforce Development Agency of California

The Labor and Workforce Development Agency has a [chart](#) on what you are entitled to if you have been impacted by COVID-19. State ([California Family Rights Act](#)) and federal laws ([Family and Medical Leave Act](#)) may also qualify you for up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave per year. The Family and Medical Leave Act has also been [expanded](#), allowing some employees up to 12 weeks of *paid* leave up to \$12,000.

Unemployment Insurance Benefits:

What [benefits](#) you may be entitled to from disability to the quarantine of COVID-19? You may find you are eligible to file unemployment insurance if you are self-employed, an independent contractor or a gig worker.

Filing for Unemployment

Unemployment Insurance (UI) is an employer paid program that provides partial income replacement when you become unemployed or have your hours reduced and meet all [eligibility requirements](#). Eligibility for unemployment insurance claims have shifted significantly during the Coronavirus outbreak, and now includes those that are:

- Totally or partially unemployed
- Unemployed through no fault of your own
- Physically able to work and actively seeking a job
- Parents who are missing work due to their child's school being closed

You can [file your UI claim](#) in the first week that you lose your job or have your hours reduced. Your claim begins on the Sunday of the week you submitted your application. You can file a claim [online](#), by phone, or by traditional mail:

By Phone

Representatives are available at the following toll-free numbers, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 12 noon (Pacific time) except on [state holidays](#).

English 1-800-300-5616

Spanish 1-800-326-8937

Vietnamese 1-800-547-2058

Cantonese 1-800-547-3506

Mandarin 1-866-303-0706

TTY 1-800-815-9387

By traditional mail, you can fill out the application [here](#) and mail to:

EDD
P.O. Box 12906
Oakland, CA 94604-2909

State Income Taxes – Extended

California business and individual tax filers affected by COVID-19 now have an extra 60-90 days to file and pay state income taxes. For more information, visit the [State Franchise Tax Board Page](#).

Federal Income Taxes – Extended

The Treasury and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) announced that the federal income tax filing due date is automatically extended from April 15, 2020 to July 15, 2020, for more information visit [IRS COVID-19](#) page.

Stimulus Packages

Stimulus Checks - The [CARES Act](#) makes major changes to unemployment assistance by increasing benefits and broadening who is eligible. Most individuals earning less than \$75,000 in adjusted cash income can expect a one-time check of \$1,200, and families will get \$500 per child. Partial payments will be received by people earning from \$75,000 to \$99,000. Incomes are based on your 2019 tax return if submitted, otherwise your 2018 tax return. SF Gate has an [FAQ](#) on this subject. This legislation could also add 13 weeks of unemployment insurance (from 26 to 39).

Extra Unemployment Payments – As part of the CARES Act, the [Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation program](#) allows the federal government to add **\$600 per week** on top of the amount the State provides for unemployment benefits. The federal payment increase will last until July 31st or until funds are depleted. The State will continue to pay unemployment insurance to those who qualify. The eligibility requirements include those that are self-employed, gig workers, independent contractors, and freelancers. Those that are part-time, furloughed, or anyone who can no longer physically go to their job may also be covered, as well as people who recently got a new job but were laid off due to the pandemic.

For more information for any of the topics discussed, please visit Employment Development Department of California's main [unemployment page](#) and the federal government's main [unemployment page](#).