

How to file for PUA in Washington

Unemployment Law Project

Abbreviations defined:

1. **UI:** Unemployment Insurance (UI) is a state program designed to partially replace your regular earnings and help you meet expenses while you look for another job. For eligibility, see the [UI Application Checklist](#).
2. **PUA:** Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) is a program that temporarily expands UI eligibility to self-employed workers, freelancers, independent contractors, and part-time workers who are unemployed or partially unemployed because of the pandemic. For eligibility, see the [PUA Application Checklist](#).
3. **PEUC:** The Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) is a 13-week extension of regular UI for those who exhausted those benefits after July 1, 2019.

Issue

Some questions in the application process have created confusion and kept some people from applying for (and receiving) Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits. Because of this issue, they are not being considered for benefits that they otherwise could be getting. This document is not intended as legal advice. It is meant to provide some guidance in applying for PUA. If you have any questions, please contact the Unemployment Law Project.

Do I qualify?

If you are not eligible for UI—for example, you were self-employed or an independent contractor—you may be eligible to receive PUA. But the Employment Security Department (ESD) will not automatically evaluate your eligibility for PUA. You actively need to apply for PUA through your SAW (or e-Services) account. For more information on PUA eligibility, please visit the [PUA application](#).

How long do I have to apply?

PUA and PEUC are only available until December 26, 2020 in Washington State.

How do I apply for PUA?

Step 1: Click on YES to apply for PEUC

[Home](#) > [UI claim](#) > [PEUC Application](#) > [View](#)

PEUC Application

Your profile

Application

Confirmation

Work History

Your occupation

Issue determinations

Standby

Contact info

Submit application

Your profile

PEUC Application

Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)

PEUC provides an extension of up to 13 weeks of benefits beginning Mar 29 2020 for those who meet the following criteria:

- You have an unemployment claim that expired Jul 1 2019 or later
- You have exhausted all regular unemployment insurance benefits
- You are not eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits under the laws of any state, including Washington, or Canada
- You are able and available for suitable work
- You are actively seeking work as directed

Tell the truth. We will verify your information through state and federal databases. If you commit fraud to receive PEUC benefits:

- You will be ineligible for any additional benefit payments
- You must pay back **ALL** benefits previously paid using this information, including any PEUC
- You may be subject to prosecution under 18 USC §1001

By submitting this application, you certify that you will answer all questions truthfully to the best of your abilities.

You can apply for PEUC prior to exhausting your regular unemployment insurance (UI) benefits. Your eligibility will be evaluated at the time you exhaust your UI claim, or it expires. However, you will not receive any PEUC benefits until you have exhausted your regular unemployment insurance benefits.

Do you wish to apply for PEUC benefits?

Yes

No

Unemployment Law Project

Seattle: (206) 441-9178 or
(888) 441-9178

Spokane: (509) 624-9178
or (888) 940-9178

Step 2: You will get a warning that going on with the PEUC request will “restart the claim.” DO NOT let this message concern you.

Selecting “Next” will not reset the claims process. Go ahead and click “Yes,” then select “Next” to apply for PEUC benefits in order to get to the PUA application.

Home > UI claim > PEUC Application > View

PEUC Application

Your profile

- Application
- Confirmation
- Work History

Your occupation

- Issue determinations
- Standby
- Contact info
- Submit application

Claim restart date

The last activity on your claim occurred the week ending Oct 10 2020. Claims restarted today will have a restart date of Oct 11 2020. Is this the week you wish to restart your claim?

Yes No

< Previous Next >

Step 3: Possible need to refresh screen.

Once you submit your application for PEUC, you may see an alert or an option to apply for PUA. However, if you do not see this option, you may need to refresh or log out then log back into your SAW (or e-Services) account.

Alerts

- You have 3 unread letters
- Switch to electronic correspondence
- Apply for benefits
- Apply for a COVID-19 PUA Claim
- You have a UI weekly claim to file

Step 4: Answer PUA questions and Submit.

Once you are able to see and select the “Apply for a COVID-19 PUA Claim,” you will be provided with a series of questions. The answers to the questions won’t always be obvious. For more direction on answering the PUA eligibility questions, please visit the webpage [Guidance for answering the PUA eligibility questions](#), or download the PUA-Guidance document in [English](#) or [Spanish](#).

COVID-19 PUA Claim

Your profile	
PUA Information	
Certification	
Eligibility Questions	

Are you unemployed, partially unemployed, unable or unavailable for work for one of the following reasons?

- Your place of employment closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency
- You are an independent contractor or self-employed individual and your ability to do your work has been affected or your place of business closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency
- A child or other household member for which you have primary caregiving responsibilities is out of school, daycare, or other facility due to closure as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency
- You cannot reach your place of employment because of quarantine imposed as a result of the COVID-19 public health emergency
- You are unable to reach your place of work because you have been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19
- You were scheduled to start a job but no longer have a job or are unable to reach the job as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency
- You had to quit as a direct result of COVID-19
- You were diagnosed with COVID-19
- You have symptoms of COVID-19 and are seeking a medical diagnosis
- An individual in your household has been diagnosed with COVID-19 and you have been advised to self-isolate
- You are providing care for a family member or household member who has been diagnosed with COVID-19
- You became the breadwinner or major support for a household because the head of household died as a direct result of COVID-19

Did your employer offer you the ability to telework your usual number of hours with pay during the COVID-19 public health emergency, or as a self-employed person, are you able to telework your usual number of hours for pay?

On what date did your employment status change because of the COVID-19 public health emergency? This includes when you became unemployed, partially unemployed, unable or unavailable for work, or were prevented from starting new employment.

Do you normally work full-time?

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Save

Cancel

Previous

Next

Step 5: ESD issues a Determination Letter approving or denying your PUA benefits.

Once you submit your PUA application, you will receive several Determination Letters, including a monetary determination and determination of your eligibility for PUA benefits. If it turns out that you are eligible for PUA, you will begin to receive your benefits. For any weeks between April 4 and July 25 that you are eligible for benefits, you should automatically receive \$600 in Pandemic Unemployment Compensation added to your PUA benefits.

If you have been denied PUA benefits, you have the right to appeal and have a hearing before an administrative law judge. Please do not ignore Denial Letters.



Do you still have questions about PUA?

Contact the Unemployment Law Project

Seattle: (206) 441-9178
(888) 441-9178

Spokane: (509) 624-9178
(888) 940-9178