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## The COVID19 Unemployment Update

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President Trump declared COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) a National Emergency on March 13, 2020. The declaration provides new guidance and outlines flexibilities that states will have in administering their unemployment insurance programs. The following are the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services's latest unemployment updates.

While we have not seen any formal legislation from Arkansas, Governor Asa Hutchinson has:

- waived the waiting period
- waived current work-search requirements for 30 days, allowing the unemployed to receive benefits without seeking other employment. This exception applies only to those employed by businesses that are temporarily closed with plans to reopen.

As well, the Division has published "[Notice to Individuals Inquiring About the Availability of Unemployment Insurance Benefits As A Result of the COVID- 19 Pandemic](https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/Notice_to_Individuals_Inquiring_About_the_Availability_of_Unemployment_Insurance_Benefits_As_A_Result_of_the_COVID-19_Pandemic_Updated.pdf)" Here: [https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/Notice to Individuals Inquiring About the Availability of Unemployment Insurance Benefits As A Result of the COVID-19 Pandemic Updated.pdf](https://www.dws.arkansas.gov/src/files/Notice_to_Individuals_Inquiring_About_the_Availability_of_Unemployment_Insurance_Benefits_As_A_Result_of_the_COVID-19_Pandemic_Updated.pdf)

The state specifies the following:

"Generally, workers who are laid off due to a business closure or are unable to work due to COVID-19 quarantines will be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits provided they meet the other eligibility requirements.

ADWS understands that the COVID-19 Pandemic will impact the availability of workers to engage in work-related activities and/or reemployment activities. While these requirements will not be eliminated, ADWS will be flexible with the application of these activities consistent with a worker's status regarding their last employer and pursuant to guidance provided by the United States Department of Labor."

At this time no legislation or executive order has been released. As well no information regarding benefit charges related to the employer's unemployment tax account has been released.

**Information contained in the bulletin was gathered both independently, as well as utilizing resources obtained from NASWA and the Department of Labor. CCC is in contact with both national and state representatives regarding this issue and will keep you updated as more information becomes available.**