
The COVID19 Unemployment Update

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 Maryland Division of Unemployment Insurance's latest unemployment updates.

Due to an increase in contact from individuals attempting to file for unemployment benefits, call center hours were extended an additional two hours per day. Maryland residents can call a claim center at (410) 949-0022 from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Claimants *MAY* be eligible for benefits if:

- If the employee is laid off temporarily due to a business shut down as a result of COVID-19
- If the employee quarantined by a medical professional or under government direction, and the employer has instructed them not to return to work until the quarantine is over and has not provided the option to telework
- If the employee is not exhibiting any symptoms of coronavirus, COVID-19, and decide to leave your employment due to a reasonable risk of exposure
- If the employee is sick and must miss work but has not been quarantined by a medical professional or under government direction and expect to return work with the same employer in the future.
- The employer lays off employees due to the loss of production caused by COVID-19
- The employer goes out of business as a result of COVID-19
- The employer reduces my hours as a result of COVID-19 (may be eligible for partial benefits)

Employer Financial Responsibility (per the website) :

- No employer will see an increase in their tax rate for 2020 due to the coronavirus, COVID-19. Unemployment insurance benefits are proportionately charged to each employer based on the employee's earnings in their base period. Contributory employers may see an increase in their 2021 tax rate as a result of benefits paid due to COVID-19; however, tax rates are calculated based on benefits that have been charged to the employer account over the prior three (3) years, ending on June 30. Thus, any benefits paid due to coronavirus, COVID-19, from March to June will comprise four (4) months of the 36 months used to calculate the 2021 tax rate for employers.
- In the event that a process for employers to apply for a waiver of charging of any benefits paid due to coronavirus, COVID-19, additional information will be provided outlining the requirements. Waivers will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and approved as the law allows.
- Reimbursing employers are charged dollar for dollar for benefits paid to their former employees.

See updated questions: <https://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/uicovidfaqs.shtml>

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.