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## The COVID19 Unemployment Update

Many CCC clients have reached out questioning how the Coronavirus 2019 pandemic may affect their organizations in relation to unemployment compensation. This bulletin is intended to answer the most frequently asked questions.

### **Do employer-initiated quarantines or temporary shutdowns or mass layoffs entitle workers to unemployment benefits?**

Yes. Any stoppage of work initiated by the employer will be seen as a lack of work, and therefore the individual affected will be eligible to collect unemployment benefits. To be eligible, all other unemployment eligibility requirements will have to be met by the individual, which can include being able, available, and actively seeking employment.

Depending on the size and length of the employer initiated work stoppage, some jurisdictions may require notification to the state unemployment agency as a mass separation and follow the WARN act.

### **What if an employee chooses to self-quarantine? Will they be eligible for benefits?**

This will be dependent on the individual state agency and the specifics of that situation. For questions regarding a specific case, please contact your CCC Account Executive.

The only state that has taken special provisions due to COVID19 is Washington State. The following is a brief explanation; the full guide can be found at [https://esdorchardstorage.blob.core.windows.net/esdwa/Default/ESDWAGOV/newsroom/COVID-19/COVID-19\\_Scenarios%20and%20Benefits.pdf](https://esdorchardstorage.blob.core.windows.net/esdwa/Default/ESDWAGOV/newsroom/COVID-19/COVID-19_Scenarios%20and%20Benefits.pdf)

Some of the most common scenarios that may occur and benefits that may apply:

- Workers may receive unemployment benefits, and employers may get relief of benefit charges if an employer needs to shut down operations temporarily because a worker becomes sick and other workers need to be isolated or quarantined as a result of COVID-19.
- Workers that are asked to isolate or quarantine by a medical professional or public health official as a result of exposure to COVID-19 may receive unemployment benefits, and work search requirements could be waived, so long as they have a return date with their employer. The return to work date can be the date the isolation or quarantine is lifted.
- If a worker falls seriously ill and is forced to quit, they cannot collect unemployment benefits while they are seriously ill but may be eligible once they recover and are able and available for work.
- The new rules allow current unemployment claimants who are in isolation or quarantine as a result of COVID-19 more leniency when it comes to UI deadlines and mandatory appointments, such as deadlines for applying for training programs, job search reviews or mandatory reemployment service appointments.

The rules also provide more leniency when it comes to financial penalties for employers who file their tax reports late, pay their taxes late, or miss deadlines as a result of COVID-19.

### **Can employees use Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) to collect benefits?**

No. At this time, no state has been declared a major natural disaster, nor has a national state of emergency been declared. Even if that were the case, FEMA has not authorized DUA benefits in any state related to COVID19; therefore, DUA benefits are not available at this time. It is important to note that for a claimant to collect DUA benefits, they must be found ineligible for regular unemployment benefits.

**CCC is in contact with both national and state representatives regarding this issue and will keep you updated as more information becomes available.**