



How to File a PUA Claim

This benefit is available to people who can't work because of COVID-19 and who do not otherwise qualify for unemployment insurance.

Example:

- Self employed
- People seeking part-time employment
- Church employees
- Gig economy workers
- Nonprofit and governmental workers
- Workers who have exhausted their unemployment benefits
- People lacking appropriate work history
- People who do not qualify for regular unemployment compensation or extended benefits under state or Federal law or PEUC

You are required to file a claim, answer some questions, and submit proof of your income to be get this benefit. This can all be done online on the [website](#).

Follow these 4 simple steps:

Step 1: Apply for Unemployment

- If you haven't done it yet, file an unemployment claim application **here:** <https://initialclaims.labor.alabama.gov/>
- Click "Proceed"
- We'll determine if you are eligible for a state unemployment claim

Step 2: Visit your UI Claim Tracker

A day after you file for your claim, you can visit your tracker page at <https://uiclaimstracker.labor.alabama.gov/>.

If you are eligible to file for PUA, you will get a link to the new application to answer some questions and upload documents.

If you have already filed before and weren't eligible, the tracker will update with a link for you to upload your information.

Step 3: Submit Proof of Income

If you are eligible, follow the link to the new app, then:

■ Complete the questions in the app (YOU DO NOT HAVE TO RESPOND ONLINE)

Once you apply for regular unemployment benefits, but find out you aren't eligible, you'll get a letter in the mail. It is not necessary for you to file an appeal. If you do not have internet access or don't want to apply online, you may respond with this letter. However, responding online will be the fastest way to apply for PUA benefits.

■ Upload your proof of income documents

The app will tell you which documents you need to upload. Some examples are:

- 2019 1099 miscellaneous income only
- 2019 W-2
- 2019 pay stubs
- 2020 pay stubs
- Form 1040 - U.S. Individual Income Tax Return
- A business license

If you already sent these in the mail, fax, or email, you may wait for this to be processed, or for quicker processing, you can submit online. If there aren't any issues with your claim, the tracker will be the fastest method.

Once you have submitted documents, the application will tell you to visit the tracker page the next day to see an updated status.

Step 4: Next Steps

You'll get a determination letter by mail and will begin receiving the minimum weekly benefit amount (\$114) for PUA. However, this may not be your final weekly benefit amount determination.

We'll review your proof of income and send another determination letter if your benefit amount changes. If additional information is needed, we'll contact you.

No more action is needed after you receive the notice unless we contact you directly.

IMPORTANT NOTE: None of the benefits described above, nor unemployment benefits of any kind, are available to employees who quit without good work-related cause, refuse to return to work, or refuse to receive full-time pay. Refusing to return to work could result in a disqualification for benefit eligibility. Attempts to collect unemployment benefits after quitting a job without good work-related cause is considered to be fraud. The CARES Act specifically provides for serious consequences for fraudulent cases including fines, confinement, and an inability to receive future unemployment benefits until all fraudulent claims and fines have been repaid. Employers are encouraged to utilize the New Hire system to report those employees who fail to return to work.

Other Important Information for Claimants

PUA payments may be taxable. These payments will be on your 1099G that you get for the 2020 tax year. Taxes will be withheld from PUA payments if you choose to have taxes withheld from your unemployment benefits.

You must continue to file your weekly claim application. When your proof of income has been reviewed and approved, you will be paid for all eligible past weeks you reported.

It takes about 21 business days for a first payment to be made.

Information for Employers

Employers will not be charged for benefits paid to employees receiving PUA.

If you have offered work to employees as the pandemic ends and your employee refuses to return to work, you must notify Alabama Department of Labor.

Employers should ensure they are current and timely in filing quarterly unemployment insurance taxes so their employees receive benefits as quickly as possible.

Employers should respond to all "Notice of Claim" notifications if a claim is filed for someone that is not working due to a reason other than COVID-19.

Employers should respond to the "Notice of Claim" notifications to report any paid sick leave or other paid leave benefits.