TN Department of Labor & Workforce Development

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance

Guidance Subject to Change - Updated April 7, 2020

The Federal CARES Act provides additional Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits to Tennesseans impacted by the COVID-19 health emergency. The new federal law provides:

- **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance -** Provides 39 weeks of eligibility for individuals who have traditionally been ineligible for UI benefits. (Self-employed, gig workers, independent contractors)
- **Pandemic Unemployment Compensation -** An additional $600 per week, on top of regular benefits, to all UI recipients; and,
- **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation -** Provides an additional 13 weeks of UI benefits.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance ("PUA") – Extended Eligibility for UI Benefits

QUESTION: Who is eligible for PUA?

ANSWER: Individuals are eligible for PUA if they do not qualify for regular UI benefits (including self-employed workers and independent contractors) and cannot work because they:

- Are diagnosed COVID-19 or have COVID-19 symptoms and are seeking diagnosis;
- Have a member of the household who is diagnosed with COVID-19;
- Are providing care for a family or household member diagnosed with COVID-19;
- Are the primary caregiver for a child whose school or care facility closed, due to COVID-19;
- Are unable to reach their place of employment due to an imposed quarantine, or because advised by medical provider to self-quarantine, due to COVID-19;
- Were scheduled to start new employment and cannot reach the workplace as direct result of COVID-19;
- Became the major breadwinner because the head of household died from COVID-19;
- Quit their job as a direct result of COVID-19;
- Had their place of employment closed as a direct result of COVID-19; or
- Meet any additional criteria specified by U.S. Secretary of Labor.

Individuals are not eligible for PUA if they can telework or are receiving paid sick leave or other paid leave benefits (regardless of meeting a category listed above).

To apply for PUA, claimants will need to file an application on Jobs4TN.gov or call (844) 224-5818. Filing online is the fastest, most efficient way to receive your benefits. Due to high call volume, you will experience extended wait times when applying by phone.