



N E W S R E L E A S E

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**\$45.6 billion in unemployment benefits during pandemic doubles highest year of recession**

**Extra \$600 federal stimulus payments ending July 25**

**Sacramento** – Workers impacted by the historic COVID pandemic have received a **total of \$45.6 billion** in unemployment benefits over the last four months, about doubling the benefits paid during the worst year of the Great Recession (\$22.9 billion in 2010). According to the latest data, the California Employment Development Department (EDD) has processed a **total of 8.2 million claims** since the pandemic began in mid-March, between the regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) program and separate Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program, as well as extension claims. California now accounts for about 19% of all UI claims processed across the country, and about 15% of all PUA claims.

| <b>Unemployment Insurance (UI) - Data Dashboard</b>   |                           |                              |                              |                        |
|---|---------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
|   |                           | <i>Current Week</i>          | <i>Prior Weeks</i>           | <i>Total</i>           |
|   |                           | <b>July 11, 2020</b>         | <b>WE 3/14 -7/04/20</b>      | <b>WE 3/14-7/11/20</b> |
| <b>Total Applications Submitted</b><br><i>(Approx. UI Online applications received from unemployed workers)</i> <sup>1</sup>                        | <b>Reg. UI</b>            | 103,424                      | 4,785,578                    | 4,889,002              |
|   | <b>PUA</b>                | 143,246                      | 1,373,223                    | 1,516,469              |
|   | <b>PEUC<sup>2</sup></b>   | 32,851                       | 312,727                      | 345,578                |
|   | <b>FED-ED<sup>3</sup></b> | 9,494                        | 22,027                       | 31,521                 |
|   | <b>Total</b>              | <b>289,015</b>               | <b>6,493,555</b>             | <b>6,782,570</b>       |
| <b>Total Claims Processed</b><br><i>(Approx. applications processed by the EDD including reopened claims)</i> <sup>4</sup>                          | <b>Reg. UI</b>            | 287,732                      | 6,307,600                    | 6,595,332              |
|   | <b>PUA</b>                | 126,780                      | 1,141,395                    | 1,268,175              |
|   | <b>PEUC<sup>2</sup></b>   | 37,113                       | 338,622                      | 375,735                |
|   | <b>FED-ED<sup>3</sup></b> | 9,395                        | 21,745                       | 31,140                 |
|   | <b>Total</b>              | <b>461,020</b>               | <b>7,809,362</b>             | <b>8,270,382</b>       |
| <b>Total Benefits Paid</b><br><i>(Approx. combination of first benefit payments and continued claim bi-weekly payments)</i> <sup>5</sup>            | <b>Reg. UI</b>            | \$2.5 billion                | \$31.3 billion               | \$33.8 billion         |
|   | <b>PUA</b>                | \$1.6 billion                | \$8.5 billion                | \$10.1 billion         |
|   | <b>PEUC<sup>2</sup></b>   | \$197 million                | \$1.5 billion                | \$1.6 billion          |
|   | <b>FED-ED<sup>3</sup></b> | \$384,000                    | \$20,000                     | \$405,000              |
|   | <b>Total</b>              | <b>\$4.3 billion</b>         | <b>\$41.3 billion</b>        | <b>\$45.6 billion</b>  |
| <b>Individuals Paid Benefits</b> <sup>6,7</sup><br><i>(Expressed as four-week rolling totals to account for different bi-weekly payment cycles)</i> | <b>Reg. UI</b>            | 3,390,000                    | 3,398,000                    |                        |
|   | <b>PUA</b>                | 899,000                      | 829,000                      |                        |
|   | <b>Total</b>              | <b>4,289,000<sup>8</sup></b> | <b>4,227,000<sup>9</sup></b> |                        |

1. The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) was implemented in California on April 28, 2020. This data includes new initial claims only.

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2. The Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) was implemented in California on May 27, 2020. PEUC claims are an extension of a regular UI claim. For the week ending July 4, 2020, (PEUC) total weeks claimed was 228,594.
3. FED-ED was implemented in California on July 1, 2020. FED-ED claims are an extension of a regular UI claim.
4. Claims processed through UI Online, along with about 5% of claims that arrive via paper of phone. This accounts for claims received in the current week as well as past weeks. The data also includes additional claims or claims that are re-opened when there is a break in certifying for benefits, for example when the claimant may return to work but then later come back to collect benefits on their initial claim.
5. Includes \$600 federal stimulus payments EDD adds to each week of regular UI, PUA, PEUC, and FED-ED benefits. Regular UI benefits are paid out of California's UI Trust Fund with contributions from employers, PUA, PEUC, FED-ED and the \$600 federal stimulus payments are paid for by the federal government. The Total Benefits Paid may not add up due to the rounding data.
6. Counts include individuals claiming regular UI, PEUC, and FED-ED benefits. If an individual claims a regular UI benefit, PEUC, or FED-ED benefit in a four-week rolling time period, they are only counted once.
7. Four-week rolling totals accommodate for numerous variables that dictate what claimants receive benefits in any given bi-weekly period. Data excludes claimants were who fully employed, disqualified or had excessive earnings that would disqualify them for a week of benefits.
8. Four-week rolling total between week-ending June 20 and week-ending July 11, 2020.
9. Four-week rolling total between week-ending June 13 and week-ending July 4, 2020.

## **Extra \$600 federal stimulus payments coming to an end**

The additional \$600 federal stimulus payment automatically added by EDD to every week of UI or PUA benefits claimants receive was authorized by Congress through July 25 and, unless extended by the federal government, is scheduled to sunset at the end of next week. Also known as Pandemic Additional Compensation payments under the CARES Act, these benefits were authorized and paid for by the federal government and cannot be extended by the EDD without congressional action.

- For payments made for weeks of unemployment ending after July 25, claimants will only receive the maximum weekly benefit amount associated with their regular UI or PUA claim. Those weekly amounts range from \$40 - \$450 a week for regular UI and from \$167 - \$450 for PUA.
- For any recently filed claims or claims awaiting resolution, individuals will still receive the extra \$600 federal stimulus payment beyond July 25, if the payments they receive were for weeks they spent unemployed or working reduced hours between March 29 and July 25. This assumes they meet all eligibility requirements.

## **Addressing Common Questions from Claimants**

### **After initiating my claim, I went back to work for a while but was laid off again and need benefits. How do I do that?**

Using UI Online<sup>SM</sup> is the fastest and most convenient way to reopen a claim, as long as you are still within your benefit year and have a balance left on your claim. It's available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and provides an abbreviated process as compared to the initial application for benefits. This [video tutorial](#) explains how to easily reopen a claim. In most cases, once you submit your application online, the EDD can reopen claims within a few days to a week.

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The exceptions are those in which claimants don't meet able and availability requirements and staff have to manually follow up to determine eligibility. Once reopened, claimants must then return to certifying every two weeks to determine eligibility for their next bi-weekly payment.

**Are there benefits available after I run out of my initial regular UI benefits?**

If you run out of the up to 26 weeks associated with a regular UI claim, another up to 13 weeks of benefits is available in the Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) extension provided by the federal government until the end of the year.

- If you are still within your 12-month benefit period of your claim and you run out of benefits, the EDD will automatically file a PEUC claim for you and you should get a notice by mail 5-7 business days later with more information. For faster updates and to certify for benefits, check your [UI Online<sup>SM</sup>](#) account inbox.
- If your 12-month benefit period has expired and you run out of your benefits, you must reapply for benefits and the quickest way to do so is through UI Online. The EDD is required to first check to see if you have earned enough wages to qualify for a new regular claim. If you don't, you will get a \$0 award notice in the mail on that new claim. But within a few days, you will get another notice showing that we **automatically** filed a PEUC extension for you and advising you that you need to certify for benefits. You can also check your UI Online account for updates.

**Are there benefits still available after I run out of my 13-week Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) extension and I'm still out of work?**

The EDD is sweeping the system daily to identify those who run out of their available PEUC benefits and who could be eligible for a new FED-ED extension. With state legislation (AB 103) maximizing available federal support, the FED-ED provides up to another 20 weeks of benefits.

- For individuals who meet the slightly different eligibility requirements of the FED-ED extension, the EDD will automatically file a FED-ED extension and mail a notice of eligibility to the claimant. Claimants will then need to complete the usual bi-weekly certification to determine eligibility for payment.
- For those individuals who do not qualify for a FED-ED extension, they will receive a notice about that disqualification but the EDD will proactively reopen their PUA claim if they already had one established. For those who have not previously established a PUA claim, the Department will proactively file a PUA claim in order to help maintain the availability of benefits.

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PUA claimants should be aware that if they received any regular UI benefits, the EDD is required by federal law to count those weeks of benefits against the total weeks of benefits available on their PUA claim.

In both situations where a PUA claim is reopened or filed, the Department will send the claimant a notice entitled Immediate Action Required – Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Self-Certification which will require claimants to attest that they meet PUA eligibility requirements before being paid PUA benefits. The notice will have to be completed and sent back to the EDD.

**I have a question about my claim, what's the best way to get information?**

The EDD is in the midst of a massive expedited hiring effort now that we have increased federal funds to expand capacity for serving impacted workers during this historic pandemic. Since May, the EDD has hired or made conditional job offers to more than 4,900 Californians to support all aspects of the UI program, including our call center operation.

As we work to increase staffing, the EDD encourages claimants to avoid the frustration of trying to get through on the congested phone lines during this unprecedented demand and utilize the self-serve options being updated regularly as much as possible. Options include:

- [Top Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) on our EDD website are being updated on a weekly basis based on the common questions we are hearing from claimants in our call center and other channels.
- Chat bot service provides answers to the most commonly asked questions about UI and PUA benefits. The virtual agent is available in Spanish and English and can be accessed through the “EDD Help” feature seen in the bottom right hand side of the EDD website, or through the “Send Message” feature on the department’s Facebook channel.
- [AskEDD](#) is an online service for seeking information as well as self-serve options including backdating a claim or requesting an EDD Employer Account Number (EDDCAN).
- UI Automated Self-Service Line can help with claim information including your last payment, certifying for benefits, and other helpful information. The line is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week in English at 1-866-333-4606 or Spanish at 1-866-333-4606.
- If you already filed for UI, refer to our [step-by-step instructions](#) for what to expect through the course of your claim, including how to certify for benefit payments.
- The [COVID Unemployment Benefits Guide](#) is a helpful resource to learn what type of benefits you qualify for and how to apply for them.

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