

N E W S R E L E A S E

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State to Expedite Payment to More than a Million Californians
Federal unemployment benefits are extended until March 13

Sacramento – The California Employment Development Department (EDD) is expediting an expansion of federal unemployment benefits after receiving the first portion of needed guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor. That begins with the delivery of supplemental federal payments to more than a million Californians currently collecting regular Unemployment Insurance or FED-ED extension benefits starting as early as Sunday, January 3.

For CARES Act benefits that expired after December 26, EDD will automatically recalculate Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) claims and notify claimants through their UI Online account, mail or text message when they are able to certify for their next benefit payment.

Claimants can expect these changes for weeks starting December 27 (covering the week that the bill was signed by the President) through the week ending March 13:

- **A supplemental \$300 a week** - Known as Pandemic Additional Compensation in California, the additional \$300 will be added to up to 11 weeks of unemployment benefits a claimant receives. Those on a regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) or FED-ED extension claim who are scheduled to submit their bi-weekly certification including the week ending January 2 will be the first to see the extra \$300 PAC payments added to their benefits as early as this Sunday, January 3. That includes an estimated 1.3 million Californians. Adding the \$300 for PUA and PEUC claims will follow as soon as the revised programming is in place.
- **11 weeks added to PUA** - The PUA program supports business owners, the self-employed, independent contractors and others who don't qualify for regular UI and will now offer a total of up to 57 weeks of benefits. A total of 1.4 Californians have collected PUA benefits over the last four weeks. Those who had a balance remaining on their claim come December 26 will continue on with that claim and then transition to the additional up to 11 benefits as long as they remain eligible. Those who had a PUA claim expire **before** the week ending December 26 won't be eligible for the new benefits until weeks beginning December 27.
- **11 weeks added to PEUC** – This extension program available once someone runs out of their up to 26 weeks of regular UI benefits can now provide a total of up to 24 weeks of benefits for those who remain eligible. Approximately 1.5 million Californians have collected PEUC benefits over

the last four weeks. Just like with PUA, the new 11 weeks of PEUC benefits can only be paid for weeks beginning December 27.

- **FED-ED Extension remains up to 20 weeks of benefits** – Instead of dropping down to a maximum of 13 weeks, the continued federal funding allows the FED-ED to continue providing up to 20 weeks of benefits when claimants run out of PEUC benefits.

Other provisions in the new federal law will require further guidance to determine implementation. Claimants are encouraged to monitor the EDD's [Federal CARES Act Provisions for Unemployment](#) webpage for updates and to learn about the timelines for implementing the new unemployment provisions.

Resolving old backlogged claims

As of December 30, 91.4% (1,502,922) of the 1.6 million claims identified by the EDD Strike Team in September to be backlogged have been resolved. The definition of these claims includes Initial Claims and Continued Claims (those where a claim was established and the individual has already received at least one payment) and resolution on them is pending past 21 days, preventing either a first or further payment. That includes whether the EDD or the claimant needs to take some kind of action.

Since there will always be claims with complicated eligibility issues that take more time to resolve, the Strike Team recommended resolving 87% of claims within that 21 day timeframe – leaving a backlog of only 13% on any ongoing basis. The EDD is on track for meeting that goal by the end of January and is in the process of revising and simplifying the [two separate backlog dashboards](#) currently on the EDD website to reflect a couple of key factors which make up the majority of the remaining backlogged claims:

- **Waiting for claimant to certify** – Once initiating a claim, an individual must complete a certification of eligibility to receive payment. The EDD continues enhanced efforts to ensure claimants are well aware of this requirement, but there are always some claimants who may start a claim and never certify for a variety of reasons, including returning to work.
- **Pending overpayment** - While certain claims pending a potential overpayment are currently included in backlog figures, such action does not prevent payment of either an initial or continued claim so this workload will be tracked separately moving forward.

Latest Claim Activity

In the ten months since the COVID-19 pandemic began, a total of 18.5 million claims for various unemployment benefits to support California workers and their families have been processed by the state's Employment Development Department (EDD). There was a fairly large increase in FED-ED extensions over the last week. The latest available unemployment claims and trends data can be found on the [EDD's online Newsroom](#).

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