

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Disaster Unemployment Assistance benefits are now available in 10 California counties impacted by widespread fires

Eligible workers, business owners, and self-employed can qualify for benefits

SACRAMENTO – Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits are now available to individuals and business owners in several California counties that have been impacted by wildfires that began in early September. These benefits are a provision of an October 16 Presidential Disaster Declaration, and are available to workers, business owners, and self-employed individuals who lost their jobs or businesses, or had their work hours reduced due to the ongoing wildfires.

DUA is available to individuals whose loss of work or self-employment was a direct result of these fires **and** who are not eligible for regular state unemployment insurance, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), FED-ED extensions, or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) benefits. Affected individuals are encouraged to apply for DUA through the California Employment Development Department (EDD), which will first check to see if applicants can qualify for state unemployment benefits. **The deadline for filing claims is December 3, 2020.**

“These fires have claimed lives, destroyed homes and businesses, and caused many additional job losses,” said EDD Director Sharon Hilliard. “We encourage all of those impacted by this disaster to apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance to help recover some of their lost income during this difficult time.”

DUA benefits are now available to those impacted by the wildfires that began in September in the following California counties:

Fresno	Los Angeles	Madera	Mendocino	Napa
San Bernardino	San Diego	Shasta	Siskiyou	Sonoma

This DUA provision applies to covered losses beginning the week of September 6, 2020, and individuals can receive between \$40 and \$450 a week in benefits, for a maximum period of 32 weeks. The last payable week of this benefit ends April 17, 2021.

DUA benefits are offered to victims of a disaster and are available to individuals who meet any of the following criteria:

- Worked or were a business owner or self-employed, or were scheduled to begin work or self-employment, in the disaster area. This includes, but is not limited to, those in the agricultural and fishing industries.

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- Cannot reach work because of the disaster or can no longer work or perform services because of physical damage or destruction to the place of employment as a direct result of the disaster.
- Can establish that the work or self-employment they can no longer perform was their primary source of income.
- Cannot perform work or self-employment because of an injury as a direct result of the disaster.
- Became the head of their households because of a death caused by the disaster.
- Have applied for and used all regular unemployment benefits from any state, or do not qualify for regular unemployment benefits and remain unemployed as a direct result of the disaster.

To receive DUA benefits, all required documentation must be submitted within 21 days from the day the DUA application is filed. Required documentation includes a Social Security number and a copy of the most recent federal income tax form or check stubs, or other documentation to support that the individuals were working or self-employed when the disaster occurred. Documentation for the self-employed can be obtained from banks, government entities, or affidavits from individuals having knowledge of their business.

The fastest and easiest way for new claimants to apply for DUA is to use [EDD's UI Online application](#), which is available in both English and Spanish.

Claimants can also apply for DUA by phone between 8 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., seven days a week:

- English: 1-800-300-5616
- Spanish: 1-800-326-8937
- Chinese (Cantonese): 1-800-547-3506
- Chinese (Mandarin): 1-866-303-0706
- Vietnamese: 1-800-547-2058

[EDD's Disaster-Related Services](#) webpage includes more information for individuals and businesses impacted by disasters, including tax filing extensions for affected employers. EDD also encourages individuals to visit the [Governor's Office of Emergency Services](#) wildfire recovery website for information on Local Assistance Centers where individuals, families and businesses can access disaster assistance programs and services.

In addition, job seekers can find the [America's Job Center of CaliforniaSM](#) location nearest them (currently appointment-only due to the ongoing pandemic) for access to job-search resources, job postings and training programs, as well as assistance with exploring career options, résumé and application preparation, career development and more. Job seekers also may connect with potential employers through [CalJOBSSM](#), EDD's online job-search system.

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EDD News Release No.: 20-59

- 3 -

November 3, 2020

The EDD administers the federal disaster-benefits program in California for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, on behalf of the Emergency Management Agency.

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