



N E W S R E L E A S E

Contact: Loree Levy
Aubrey Henry
916-654-9029

Date: August 20, 2020

News Release No.: 20-39

Employment Development Department issues \$67 billion of unemployment insurance benefits to impacted workers

California applies for Lost Wages Assistance program

Sacramento – After five months of the COVID-19 pandemic and the historic demand for unemployment benefits it has created, impacted workers have received a total of \$67 billion in benefits to help support their families as well as businesses in their community. The California Employment Development Department (EDD) reports processing a total of 10.6 million claims for benefits over that time between the regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) program, extensions, and separate Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program. That’s almost triple the number of claims processed in the highest year of the Great Recession (3.8 million claims in 2010).

Unemployment Insurance (UI) - Data Dashboard				
		<i>Current Week</i>	<i>Prior Weeks</i>	<i>Total</i>
		August 15, 2020	WE 3/14 -8/8/20	WE 3/14 -8/15/20
Total Applications Submitted <i>(Approx. UI Online applications received from unemployed workers)¹</i>	Reg. UI	67,855	5,258,031	5,325,886
	PUA	223,485	2,466,415	2,689,900
	PEUC²	47,468	512,382	559,850
	FED-ED³	6,665	97,388	104,053
	Total	345,473	8,334,216	8,679,689
Total Claims Processed <i>(Approx. applications processed by the EDD including reopened claims)⁴</i>	Reg. UI	201,640	7,579,024	7,780,664
	PUA	173,424	2,024,078	2,197,502
	PEUC²	51,995	559,215	611,210
	FED-ED³	6,871	60,326	67,197
	Total	433,930	10,222,643	10,656,573
Total Benefits Paid <i>(Approx. combination of first benefit payments and continued claim bi-weekly payments)⁵</i>	Reg. UI	\$1.0 billion	\$42.9 billion	\$44.0 billion
	PUA	\$1.9 billion	\$18.4 billion	\$20.3 billion
	PEUC²	\$140 million	\$2.5 billion	\$2.6 billion
	FED-ED³	\$27.8 million	\$133 million	\$161 million
	Total	\$3.1 billion	\$63.9 billion	\$67.0 billion
Individuals Paid Benefits^{6,7} <i>(Expressed as four-week rolling totals to account for different bi-weekly payment cycles)</i>	Reg. UI	3,471,000	3,444,000	
	PUA	1,352,000	1,270,000	
	Total	4,823,000⁸	4,714,000⁹	

(more)

1. The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) was implemented in California on April 28, 2020. This data includes new initial claims only.
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 August 8, 2020, (PEUC) total weeks claimed was 290,941.
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. The total claims processed from 3/14 - 8/15/20 may include multiple claims from the same applicant.
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 July 25th and week-ending August 15th, 2020.
9. Four-week rolling total between week-ending July 18th and week-ending August 8th, 2020.

Status of federal stimulus payment for unemployment benefits

California submitted an application this week to participate in the Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program. If approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), it would provide a supplemental payment of \$300 per week for a limited period of time for claimants who are currently eligible to receive at least \$100 per week in benefits, and who have provided a self-certification that they are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by COVID-19. Updates will be provided when they become available.

In the meantime, the prior \$600 stimulus payment is still available to claimants with any eligible weeks of benefits between March 29 and July 25, even if those payments are processed at a later date. Otherwise, weekly benefit payments without the stimulus can continue to be made on all regular UI, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) or FED-ED extensions, or PUA claims in which individuals meet bi-weekly eligibility requirements.

Customer service updates

The EDD continues to enhance all customer service channels to ensure impacted workers receive updates on their claims and get the assistance they need.

- **Text messages** – The EDD has sent 10.6 million text messages to more than 3.6 million people since initiating text alerts in May, which inform claimants about key developments on their unemployment claims. Messages include notifying claimants when their claim is being processed as well as when their first payment has been issued. Other texts alert claimants when they will need to provide additional documentation to verify their identity, as well as when those documents have been processed.

(more)

- **Phone lines** – The EDD is increasing the number of call center agents through a mass hiring and training effort, with a goal of having at least 3,500 agents staffing a consolidated call center operation.

Extending benefits when claimants run out

If individuals run out of their up-to-26 weeks of regular UI available benefits and they are still out of work, there are two extensions available. The EDD has the following guidance:

1. [Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation \(PEUC\) – Up to 13 weeks of benefits](#)

The EDD will automatically file the extension for claimants, except if they have exhausted their regular UI benefit year which is the 12-month period from the start of their claim. In that case, the claimant must re-apply for a new regular UI claim first.

2. [Federal-State Extended Duration Benefits \(FED-ED\) – Up to 20 weeks of additional benefits](#)

The EDD will automatically file that extension for those who run out of a PEUC and meet eligibility requirements. If they aren't eligible, the EDD will automatically file or re-open a PUA claim for the individual and they'll need to attest to a pandemic reason for their unemployment.

###