

## ***PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (PUA) BENEFIT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES***

You have filed a claim for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance under Section 2102 of the CARES Act of 2020, Public Law (Pub. L.) 116-136. A determination of your eligibility will be made, and you will be notified. The purpose of this document, known as the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Benefit Rights and Responsibilities Handbook, is to inform you of your rights and responsibilities under the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program.

### **To be eligible for benefits for any week of Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, you must meet the following conditions:**

1. You must be able and available to work pursuant to state law, except for the following:
  - a) You are unemployed because you have been diagnosed with COVID-19.
  - b) You are unemployed because you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and seeking a medical diagnosis.
  - c) You are unemployed because you are providing care to a family member or member of your household who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
  - d) You are unemployed because you are the primary caregiver to a child or other person in the household who can't attend school or another facility because the facility is closed as a direct result of COVID-19, and you are unable to work because of the facility closure.
  - e) You are unemployed because you are unable to reach your place of employment because a public health emergency imposed a quarantine.
  - f) You are unemployed because you are unable to reach your place of employment because you were advised to self-quarantine by a health care provider.
  - g) You were scheduled to start work but are unable to reach the job or no longer have the job as a direct result of COVID-19.
  - h) You are serving as the main source of income and support for a household because the head of the household died as a direct result of COVID-19.
  - i) You had to quit your job as a direct result of COVID-19.
  - j) Your place of employment closed as a direct result of COVID-19.
  - k) You are an independent contractor and the COVID-19 public health emergency severely limited your ability to continue performing your customary work activities.
2. The individual is self-employed, seeking part-time employment, or does not otherwise qualify for state Reemployment Assistance or other federal unemployment benefits and fits one of the above scenarios.
3. You must provide documentation to substantiate your employment or self-employment, or the planned beginning of employment or self-employment. If you filed your initial PUA application on or after January 31, 2021, you must provide this documentation within 21 days of when you filed your PUA application. If you are currently receiving PUA benefits on or after December 27, 2020, you must provide proof of employment, self-employment, or prospective employment. Failure to provide the required documentation will result in a disqualifying determination and/or overpayment being made based on the available information. You will receive information in your CONNECT inbox explaining how to upload this documentation. Documentation submitted after the deadline, may be accepted only upon proof of good cause as to why you were unable to provide the information by the deadline.

Documentation to validate your employment or self-employment needs to demonstrate the existence of employment or self-employment during the start of the applicable tax year and the date of filing your initial PUA application for unemployment benefits. If your claim effective date is for the year 2020, then your applicable tax year is 2019. If your claim effective date is for the year 2021, then your applicable tax year is 2020.

Acceptable documentation for proof of employment includes:

1. Paycheck stubs;
2. Earnings and leave statements showing the employer's name and address; or
3. W-2 tax forms.

Acceptable documentation for proof of self-employment includes:

1. State or Federal employer identification numbers;
2. Business licenses;
3. Tax returns;
4. Business receipts; or
5. Signed affidavits from persons verifying your self-employment.

Acceptable documentation for proof of planned commencement of employment includes:

1. Letters offering employment; or
2. Statements/affidavits by individuals (with name and contact information) verifying an offer of employment.

Acceptable documentation for proof of planned commencement of self-employment includes:

1. Business licenses;
2. State or Federal employer identification numbers;
3. Written business plans; or
4. Lease agreement.

4. The minimum weekly benefit amount is \$125, and the maximum weekly benefit amount is \$275. You must provide documentation for proof of earnings within 21 calendar days from the date you filed your claim.
  - a) Your Pandemic Unemployment Assistance weekly benefit amount is determined by base period wages, which requires that you provide your proof of earnings. Documentation must be submitted within 21 days after your claim file date. If a proof of earnings is not submitted within 21 days, your weekly benefit amount will be adjusted to the minimum weekly benefit amount pursuant to 20 CFR, Chapter V, Section 625.6. However, a request for monetary reconsideration will be accepted anytime during the Pandemic Assistance Period, which is January 27, 2020 until March 14, 2021. Your tax return or W-2 for the previous applicable tax year from which the pandemic was declared is the preferred documentation. If you are self-employed, you will also need to provide your tax return including a copy of the appropriate schedule forms to verify the profit and loss statement. Net income is used to calculate the weekly benefit amount.
  - b) The base period that is used in calculating the PUA weekly benefit amount is the most recent tax year that has ended prior to when you filed your PUA initial application. If your claim effective date is for the year 2020, then your applicable tax year is 2019. If your claim effective date is for the year 2021, then your applicable tax year is 2020.
  - c) To request a monetary reconsideration log into your account online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org) or contact the Department at 1-833-FL-APPLY for assistance in filing your request for reconsideration or for help in understanding this determination.

Log into your account online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org)

- Choose the Determinations and Pending Issue Summary link from your home page.
  - Choose the Monetary Determination and from the next screen and then choose the option to view your Notice of Monetary Determination.
  - Indicate the problem with your monetary determination and choose the Request for Reconsideration option.
  - Complete the Request for Reconsideration form and, if appropriate, provide the necessary proof to substantiate your request.
5. You must request your benefit payments as instructed. Failure to request benefits timely as scheduled and/or instructed may result in delay or loss of your benefits.
  6. You must report any offer of work made to you. If you refuse any suitable job referrals, you may be disqualified from receiving benefits.
  7. You must not have the ability to telework with pay or be receiving paid sick leave or other paid benefits.
  8. You must report any hours worked regardless if you have received pay for the work performed. You must report gross earnings before any deductions and include all tips, room and meals. Military Reserve and National Guard pay must be reported as earnings as well as retirement income.
  9. If you are self-employed, **you must report gross earnings during the week earned.**

10. You must report any change in your address.

11. Appeal Rights: A determination will be final unless a request for reconsideration or an appeal is filed within 20 calendar days after the distribution/mailed date of the determination. If the 20th day is a Saturday, Sunday or State holiday, an appeal may be filed on the next business day.

File an appeal on-line at [connect.myflorida.com](http://connect.myflorida.com) or mail to RA Appeals; P.O. BOX 5250 TALLAHASSEE, FL 32399-5250; or fax to (850) 617-6504.

**Include the claimant's name and social security number on any appeal. If filed on-line, the confirmation date is the filing date. If mailed, the postmark date is the filing date. If faxed, the date stamped received is the filing date.**

**If you have additional documentation for proof of earnings, you can fax your information to: 1-800-222-7934 or 1-850-617-6505, or submit by US mail to:**

**PUA Unit  
P.O. Box 5350  
Tallahassee, FL 32314-5350**

**If you have questions about your claim, please call 1-833-FL-APPLY.**

**Penalties for Fraud: PUA benefits are federal funds that have penalties prescribed by law for willful misrepresentation or concealment of material facts to obtain benefit assistance to which you are not entitled.**

20 CFR 625

An equal opportunity employer/program. Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities. All voice telephone numbers on this website may be reached by persons using TTY/TDD equipment via the Florida Relay Service at 711.

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