

COVID-19 Relief Provisions- 2021

*Coronavirus Response and Relief
Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021*



What is the CARES Act?

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act, also known as the CARES Act, signed into law on March 27, 2020, expands Reemployment Assistance benefits. Benefits will be paid from the date individuals became eligible under the CARES Act. At this time, individuals who apply for Reemployment Assistance whose employment was negatively impacted as a result of COVID-19 will follow the same application, review and payment process as all applicants for Reemployment Assistance in Florida. This \$2 trillion stimulus rescue package provides aid to individuals, businesses and communities throughout the nation affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19.

On December 27, 2020, the federal COVID-19 relief package was signed into law extending and providing additional federal unemployment benefits to eligible claimants. For claimants receiving Reemployment Assistance, additional weeks for unemployment may be available for eligible Floridians beginning after the week of December 26, 2020. The Department is diligently working to implement the revisions and updates to the Federal CARES Act. As was the case with previous federal unemployment programs, the Department must receive guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor before fully implementing the changes and begin issuing payments. The Department anticipates the programs will be available for claimants in the coming weeks. Eligible claimants will receive the money they are owed as quickly as possible.

Programs

Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)

- FPUC will provide an additional \$300 per week for Floridians receiving state or Federal Reemployment Assistance benefits.
- FPUC is available to eligible claimants for the week beginning December 27, 2020, through the week ending March 13, 2021.
- The Department began processing these payments to eligible claimants on January 10, 2021.

Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation (MEUC)

- MEUC provides an additional \$100 per week to eligible individuals in addition to the benefit amounts they otherwise would be eligible from traditional employment under state law. MEUC will be available to eligible claimants through March 13, 2021.
- Claimants may be eligible for these additional benefits if they have received at least \$5,000 in net earnings from self-employment for the tax year prior to their initial claim.
- State Reemployment Assistance Benefits includes Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees and Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service Members, PEUC, Extended Benefits, Short-Time Compensation, Trade Readjustment Allowances, and Disaster Unemployment Assistance.
- Claimants must apply for MEUC and provide documentation that shows their net self-employment earnings. More information on the application will be available soon.

Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)

- PEUC allows up to an additional 24 weeks of benefits, which is an increase of 11 weeks from the previous 13 weeks, for claimants who have exhausted their state Reemployment Assistance claim.
- This means claimants may collect unemployment benefits for a longer period of time than under normal circumstances.
- PEUC will provide claimants with **up to** \$275 in weekly benefits available beginning December 27, 2020, through the week ending March 13, 2021, plus FPUC (\$300) payments for weeks requested beginning December 27, 2020, through March 13, 2021.
- This extension also allows claimants receiving PEUC benefits for the week ending March 13, 2021, to continue receiving PEUC through April 10, 2021, as long as the claimant has not exhausted the maximum number of weeks available.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)

- PUA provides benefits to those not ordinarily eligible for state Reemployment Assistance. This includes individuals who are self-employed or contracted employees.
- Pursuant to the Continued Assistance Act, PUA will provide claimants with **up to** \$275 per week in benefits available beginning December 27, 2020, through the week ending March 13, 2021, plus FPUC (\$300) payments for weeks requested beginning December 27, 2020, through March 13, 2021.
- This extension provides claimants with 50 weeks of PUA from the previous 39 weeks, which is an increase of 11 weeks. Additional weeks of PUA benefits paid pursuant to the Continued Assistance Act are only available for weeks of unemployment beginning on or after December 27, 2020.
- This extension also allows claimants receiving PUA benefits for the week ending March 13, 2021, to continue receiving PUA through April 10, 2021, as long as the claimant has not exhausted the maximum number of weeks available.
- For PUA initial claims filed after December 26, 2020, retroactive payments are only applicable for weeks of unemployment after December 1, 2020. This means the first payable week for PUA initial claims filed after December 26, 2020, is the week beginning December 6, 2020.
- Claimants will be required to provide documentation that substantiates employment, self-employment, or the planned commencement of employment beginning January 31, 2021. More information will be available soon.

OVERVIEW OF THE CARES ACT EXTENSIONS:

PROGRAM	CURRENT BENEFITS	CHANGES TO PROGRAM
PEUC Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation	Expires week ending December 26, 2020- Maximum 13 Weeks	Provides up to an additional 11 weeks of benefits, up to a maximum of 24 weeks. PEUC is available until week ending March 13, 2021, with allowance of four additional weeks of benefits for those who have not reached the maximum number of weeks through week ending April 10, 2021.
FPUC Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation	Weeks eligible- March 29 – July 25	Provides up to 11 weeks of an additional \$300 weekly benefit to eligible claimants. A claimant must be eligible through a separate unemployment program to receive FPUC. FPUC covers weeks of unemployment between Dec. 27, 2020, and week ending March 13, 2021.
PUA Pandemic Unemployment Assistance	Expires week ending December 26, 2020- Maximum 39 Weeks Reduced by weeks of UI and EB.	Provides up to an additional 11 weeks of benefits, up to a maximum of 50 weeks. Claimants will be required to provide documentation that substantiates employment, self-employment, or the planned commencement of employment beginning January 31, 2021. PUA will be available until week ending March 13, 2021 (no new applications), with allowance for four additional weeks of benefits for those who have not reached the maximum number of weeks through week ending April 10, 2021.
MEUC Mixed Earner Unemployment Compensation	* New Program- Florida has opted in to provide the benefit program to claimants.	Provides up to 11 weeks of an additional \$100 weekly benefit to eligible claimants who are receiving state Reemployment Assistance benefits and earned at least \$5,000 in net earnings from self-employment in the tax year immediately prior to when the claimant filed their initial Reemployment Assistance claim. Claimants must submit an application for MEUC and provide documentation of self-employment income of at least \$5,000. MEUC covers weeks of unemployment between Dec. 27, 2020 and week ending March 13, 2021.