

Maryland Unemployment Insurance Information during COVID-19

What is unemployment?

You may see the term unemployment insurance or unemployment benefits. They both refer to state provided insurance payments a person may receive if they lose their job and meet eligibility criteria.

Unemployment insurance claims are filed in the state where you work. So, you may be eligible for Maryland Unemployment Insurance if you have worked in Maryland, but live in another state. You may not be eligible for unemployment insurance if you voluntarily quit or are terminated from your job.

This article will provide a brief overview of information needed to apply for Unemployment Insurance through The Maryland Department of Labor.

Maryland Unemployment Insurance Benefit Eligibility

You may be eligible for Maryland's Unemployment Insurance Benefits during the pandemic if the following applies:

- You were laid off as a result of your place of employment being shut down, having a loss of production, or going out of business due to COVID-19.
- You are quarantined by a medical practitioner or under government orders, and your employer has informed you to not return to work until your quarantine has ended.
- You voluntarily leave your place of employment because there may be a reasonable risk of exposure or infection of COVID-19.
- You voluntarily leave your place of employment to care for a family member due to COVID-19.

Partial benefits may be available to individuals who have experienced a reduction in their normal hours and are physically or remotely reporting to work. If you are working remotely and continue to work normal hours, you are not eligible for unemployment insurance.

I'm eligible for Maryland Unemployment Insurance Benefits. What's next?

To ensure that you will be able to successfully file for unemployment insurance, you must have access to the following:

- Your social security number and current mailing address
- A telephone number where you can be contacted
- All names, birth dates, and social security numbers of dependents under the age of 16, if applicable

- Proof of alien status if you are not a U.S. citizen
- Your employer's business name, address, and dates of employment within the last 18 months. Try to retain a copy of your W-2, if possible
- If you were in the military within the last 18 months, a copy of your DD214, Member 4

You are able to file for unemployment insurance by telephone or online. Note that the contact telephone number to a Claim Center where you can file varies based on counties in Maryland. Please file your claim at the Claim Center closest to your home address. Visit the [Claim Center Contact Information page](#) to find contact information for your county.

All Claim Centers accept claims via telephone only every Monday through Friday, not including State holidays. Business hours are Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Try to contact a Claim Center during off-peak hours, such as early in the morning or late in the evening, to possibly reduce your wait time.

To file an initial claim through a Claim Center, please file your claim according to last name as listed below:

- Last names beginning with letters A-F, file claims on Monday
- Last names beginning with letters G-N, file claims on Tuesday
- Last names beginning with letters O-Z, file claims on Wednesday
- You can file a claim regardless of first letter of last name via telephone Thursday and Friday and online Thursday through Sunday.
- Filing a claim later in the week will not impact your payments

Go to the [Maryland Unemployment Insurance Initial Claim System](#) to file for unemployment insurance online.

I've filed for unemployment. How do I learn about the status of my unemployment insurance claim?

You can contact the Claimant Information Service via telephone.

- If you are calling from the Baltimore area or out of state:
 - Dial 410-949-0022
- If you are calling from Maryland and do not live in the Baltimore area:
 - Dial 1-800-827-4839
- If you are living with a hearing impairment:
 - Dial 711

I consider myself one or more of the following: self-employed, an independent contractor, gig worker, have insufficient work history, and/or may be eligible:

Prior to The 2020 Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act, if you considered yourself under one of the previously listed categories, you were considered ineligible. The Maryland Department of Labor's website is not currently equipped to handle these claims but is working to create new systems and train staff so individuals will be able to apply. Do not submit a claim if you fall under one of these categories as your claim will be denied.

To learn more information, visit the [FAQ page for The CARES Act UI Benefit Provisions](#).

To receive updates about this new process, please go to the [Division of Unemployment Insurance](#) and scroll down to “**Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)**” where you will be able to subscribe via email to receive updates.

How does someone receive unemployment insurance benefits?

The State of Maryland provides benefits via mail with the Maryland Unemployment (UI) Benefits Debit Card through Bank of America. Benefits are loaded onto the debit card. There are no activation or usage fees.

You have the option to receive a paper check, but must call to request it.

- If you live outside of Maryland or within the Baltimore metropolitan area, dial 410-949-0022
- All other callers should dial 1-800-827-4839

How often do I have to file a request for payment?

You must file weekly claims for each week of unemployment that you are requesting benefits. A weekly certification covers a one-week period. You can either file online or via telephone.

I'm having trouble placing a call or accessing the website.

- Email questions to ui.inquiry@maryland.gov

I'm interested in learning about Unemployment Insurance Information in another state.

Go to The [State's Unemployment Insurance Contact Information web page](#) for a comprehensive list of unemployment insurance contact information by state.

For more information, please review [Maryland's Department of Labor website](#).