

**FACT SHEET 172 APRIL 2020**

## **PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE (PUA)**

### **What is Pandemic Unemployment Assistance?**

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance was established by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act that was passed by Congress and became law on March 27, 2020.

PUA provides up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits to individuals who are ineligible for unemployment benefits. Under PUA, individuals who are self-employed, independent contractors, nonprofit employees, gig economy workers, clergy and those working for religious organizations not covered by regular unemployment compensation, and part-time workers may qualify for unemployment benefits. Individuals who have exhausted all rights to such benefits and individuals that lack sufficient work history are also eligible for PUA.

In Michigan, a claimant can receive PUA unemployment benefits beginning February 2, 2020, or the first week a claimant was unable to work as a result of COVID-19, whichever date is later. The last week PUA benefits are available is the week ending December 26, 2020.

### **Who is eligible for PUA?**

Individuals are eligible for PUA if they do not qualify for regular UI benefits and cannot work because they:

- Are diagnosed COVID-19 or have COVID-19 symptoms and are seeking a medical diagnosis;
- Have a member of the household who is diagnosed with COVID-19;
- Are providing care for a family or household member diagnosed with COVID-19;
- Are the primary caregiver for a child whose school or care facility closed due to COVID-19;
- Are unable to reach their place of employment due to an imposed quarantine as a direct result of COVID-19, or because advised by a medical provider to self-quarantine, due to COVID-19;
- Were scheduled to start new employment and cannot reach the workplace as a direct result of COVID-19;
- Became the major breadwinner because the head of household died from COVID-19;
- Quit their job as a direct result of COVID-19;
- Had their place of employment closed as a direct result of COVID-19; or
- Meet any additional criteria specified by the U.S. Secretary of Labor.
- Individuals are not eligible for PUA if they can telework or are receiving paid sick leave or other paid leave benefits (regardless of meeting a category listed above).

### **Who is not eligible for PUA?**

Individuals are not eligible for PUA if they are being paid the full amount of regular wages for:

- Teleworking with pay;
- Paid sick leave or some other type of paid leave.

### **When and How to File for PUA**

New claimants or claimants who have been denied regular state unemployment benefits (as of January 27, 2020) may apply online using the PUA application available in the [Michigan Web Account Manager](https://www.michigan.gov/uia) (MiWAM) at [michigan.gov/uia](https://michigan.gov/uia).

### **Information Needed to File**

PUA applicants should have proof of their Social Security number and proof of income. Applicants will also be required to make certain self-attestations, including whether they were planning to start employment or were self-employed at the time they lost their job due to COVID-19.

Proof of income is used to determine the weekly benefit amount under PUA. Examples of acceptable proof of income include but is not limited to 1099's, W-2s, tax returns, bank statements, last pay stub, work orders and invoices, or other documents that substantiate employment or self-employment or to substantiate work that was to begin. You should have this information available for 2019 and 2020.

### **Weekly Benefit Amount Under PUA**

The amount of benefits an individual may receive is based on the individual's gross wages or self-employed income. The minimum PUA benefit rate is 50% of the average weekly benefit amount in Michigan. In Michigan, the weekly benefit amount will be from \$160 to \$318.

Individuals who qualify for PUA are also eligible for an additional \$600 per week in Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (PUC). This means individuals will receive the PUA weekly benefit amount plus the \$600 PUC amount each week. The additional \$600 PUC amount per week will end when an individual's benefit entitlement expires or the week ending July 25, 2020, whichever date comes first. The last week PUA benefits are available is the week ending December 26, 2020.

### **Claimants Must Certify Bi-Weekly**

Claimants must certify (report) every two weeks that they are eligible for benefits. After the first certification (which is done during the third week of unemployment) they will receive their payment in about 7-10 days after certification. You can [certify online with MiWAM](https://www.michigan.gov/uia) at [michigan.gov/uia](https://michigan.gov/uia) 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.