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**FLORIDA DEPARTMENT *of*  
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY**

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# **Reemployment Assistance Resource Guide - COVID-19**

Updated: July 1, 2020

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY | 107 East Madison St. Tallahassee, FL

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# Eligibility Requirements

- You have lost your job through no fault of your own, and you did not quit for personal reasons or were terminated for misconduct;
- You must be totally or partially unemployed;
- You must have a minimum amount of wages earned in what is called the "base period," which is the first 12 months of the past 15 months from when you filed your claim;
- At the time you apply, you must be able to work, available for work, and actively seeking work, unless otherwise exempt from this requirement. This includes being physically able to perform a job and having childcare if necessary.

## **You may be unable to receive benefits for the following reasons:**

- You voluntarily left work without good cause.
- You were discharged for misconduct connected with work.
- You were discharged for a dishonest act.
- You refused to accept a suitable offer of work.
- You received or will receive wages instead of a notice of termination.
- You received or will receive Workers' Compensation.
- You are unemployed because of a labor dispute.
- You are on a voluntary leave of absence.
- You are unemployed because you were suspended.
- You are receiving unemployment benefits from another state.
- You made a false or fraudulent misrepresentation to obtain benefits.
- You are receiving income, such as retirement pay or severance pay.
- You are not monetary eligible (i.e. you do not have enough wages in the base period).

### **You must:**

- Have been paid wages\* in two or more calendar quarters in the base period;
- Have a total base period wages\* of at least 1 ½ times the wages in the quarter having the highest earnings; and
- Have at least \$3,400 total wages\* in the base period. The base period for your claim is the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters before your benefit claim begins.

\* Some types of employment are not covered and some wages paid for services cannot be used to calculate monetary eligibility for Reemployment Assistance benefits.

## **Your continued eligibility may be impacted if:**

- You are still working or you are partially unemployed and earning more than your weekly state or federal benefit amount.
- You are not able and available to work if a job was offered or became available.
- You have failed to register with the online work registration system (Employ Florida).
  - *In order to better serve you, Governor DeSantis waived this requirement. Effective March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.*
- You have failed to make the required work search requirements.
  - *In order to better serve you, Governor DeSantis waived this requirement. Effective March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.*

- You failed to attend a mandatory appointment for reemployment services. These appointments are randomly chosen by CareerSource centers, not all individuals are selected to utilize these services.
- You have been employed during the one week waiting period.
  - *In order to better serve you, Governor DeSantis waived this requirement. Effective March 29, 2020 until August 1, 2020, which means you will be paid for the waiting week if you filed your application for Reemployment Assistance during this timeframe.*

### **CARES Act Eligibility –**

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. Programs included in the CARES Act are:

- **Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)** - provides an additional \$600 per week to any individual eligible under Florida law for Reemployment Assistance or federal unemployment programs. This benefit is available for weeks claimed March 29, 2020 – July 25, 2020, in addition to the funds owed under Florida law to eligible individuals.
  - \* This funding is subject to federal withholding taxes.
- **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)** – provides **up to** \$275 in weekly benefits to those not ordinarily eligible for Reemployment Assistance, in addition to the FPUC funding. This includes individuals who are self-employed or contract employees. For those eligible, this benefit is available for weeks claimed from February 2, 2020 – December 26, 2020.
  - \* This funding is subject to federal withholding taxes.
- **PUA Eligibility:** You may be eligible if your employment has been either lost or interrupted because, as a direct result of COVID-19, one or more of the following occurred: you became unemployed, you were scheduled to begin work but no longer have a job or you became the primary breadwinner due to the death of the head of household, and you are not eligible for state Reemployment Assistance. This includes individuals who are gig workers, self-employed or contract employees.

### **You may be ineligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance if:**

- Your unemployment is **not** a direct result of COVID-19.
- You are eligible for state Reemployment Assistance benefits or extended benefits under state or Federal law or Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC).
- You have the ability to telework and receive wages.
- You are receiving paid sick leave or other paid leave benefits.
- You are **not** able and available for work.
- You are no longer unemployed.
- You are receiving wages that are more than your weekly state or federal benefit amount.
- You commit fraud in order to obtain PUA benefits.

- **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)** – provides **up to \$275** in weekly benefits and allows **up to** an additional 13 weeks of benefits added to the end of state Reemployment Assistance benefits, in addition to the FPUC funding. This means claimants may collect unemployment benefits for a longer period of time than under normal circumstances. PEUC will provide individuals with **up to \$275** in weekly benefits.  
\* This funding is subject to federal withholding taxes.

**DEO will gather your employment information and determine whether you qualify. When the department receives information regarding your claim, the following will happen:**

- Your claim will be referred to a Reemployment Assistance representative to determine eligibility.
- You may be contacted for additional information by telephone, email or mail.
- A separate determination will be made for each job separation that may affect your claim.
- Other determinations may be made for each eligibility requirement that may affect your claim.

# General Reemployment Assistance Questions

## Q: What is Reemployment Assistance?

**A:** Unemployment Insurance was rebranded with the name Reemployment Assistance to reflect the comprehensive goal of assisting Floridians with finding work during periods of unemployment through training with Florida's CareerSource centers and monetary assistance, when eligible.

## Q: How do I know if I qualify for Reemployment Assistance benefits?

**A:** Please apply for Reemployment Assistance Benefits at [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org). When your application has been processed, we will notify you of your eligibility by providing a written determination electronically and/or by mail to explain your eligibility status.

- If you are eligible, you will receive payment for any eligible weeks that you requested during the bi-weekly process.
- If you are not eligible, the written determination will explain the reason why your claim was denied and will explain your appeal rights.
- If you disagree with a determination that denies benefits, you may request an appeal hearing.

When reviewing your claim, we will look to answer several questions that will impact your eligibility. Here are some examples:

- **Ability and Availability Issues:** In addition to reviewing why you lost your employment, we will look at whether you are able to and available for work. Able to work means you are physically capable of performing the job duties for the work you are seeking. Available for work means you are actively seeking work and are ready and willing to accept suitable work.
- **Discharge:** If you were fired from your job, we will look at the reasons why. Your employer must show that it had just cause to let you go, such as misconduct on the job.
- **Voluntary Quit:** If you voluntarily quit your job, you must show that you quit your job for good cause.

There are other factors that may impact your eligibility, and Reemployment Assistance representatives are available to help you through the process. The most important thing you can do while applying, is answer all questions as accurately as possible. Always know that you can ask us questions at any time throughout the process by calling **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759).

## Q: What information and documents should I collect before beginning my application?

**A:** To ensure your application is complete and processed efficiently, have the following information available when submitting an application for Reemployment Assistance:

- Social Security number.
- Driver's License or State ID number.
- Employment information for the last 18 months for each employer.
- Employer identification number, also known as FEIN number, if available. This number can be found on your W2 or 1099 tax form.
- Employer name (name on pay stub), address, and phone number.

- First and last day of work.
- Gross earnings (before taxes) covering the last 18 months.
- Reason for separation.

If one of the following criteria applies to you, have the following additional information available:

- Not a U.S. Citizen: Alien Registration Number or other work authorization form.
- Military employee: A copy of your DD-214 Member 4. If you do not have a Member 4, a copy of your Member 2-7 may be used.
- Federal employee: SF-8 or SF-50.
- Union member: Union name, hall number, and phone number.

# Reemployment Assistance Waivers for COVID-19

**Q: I heard the waiting week for Reemployment Assistance has been waived, what does this mean?**

**A:** After your claim is filed and accepted, the state of Florida requires a “waiting week” during which benefits are not paid to a claimant. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, **Governor DeSantis waived the requirement to wait a week to receive Reemployment Assistance benefits beginning March 29, 2020 until August 1, 2020.**

**Q: Governor DeSantis waived the waiting week, why haven't I gotten paid?**

**A:** Your claim must be processed before the waiting week can be paid to determine if you are eligible for those benefits. You will also have to claim your first two weeks of benefits before the waiting week can be paid. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Governor DeSantis waived the “waiting week” so Floridians would be eligible for benefits for the first week of unemployment, in which they would not have previously been eligible. **This requirement has been waived for the period beginning March 29, 2020, and will expire August 1, 2020, and individuals will begin waiting a week before receiving benefit payments.**

**Q: I heard work registration requirement is waived, what does that mean?**

**A: Governor DeSantis has waived the work registration requirement for individuals filing an application for benefits from March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.** If you file an application during this time period, you will not be required to complete the work registration in Employ Florida. You may be prompted to register in Employ Florida or may receive a message on the Reemployment Assistance system, however you do not have to register. If you completed your application prior to March 15, 2020, you must complete the online work registration.

**Q: I heard work search requirements were waived, what does this mean?**

**A: Governor DeSantis has waived the work search requirement for individuals filing an application for benefits from March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.** When completing the application, you will be asked questions about your ability and availability to look for work for the weeks of unemployment you are claiming. If you did not search for work due to the waiver, you may select “no” when asked if you looked for work that week. After selecting no, proceed through the next steps in the process. If you answered that you did not search for work, you will not be asked to complete a work search log. However, you will be asked additional questions that need to be answered to proceed to the next step in the process. Example questions may include: why did you not search for work; did you not have transportation; did you not have child-care; or were you out of the area? If you did search for work, you may be asked to complete a work search log.

**Q: I heard week certification requirements “claiming weeks” is waived, what does that mean?**

**A:** Due to COVID-19 and in order to better serve you, Governor DeSantis temporarily suspended the bi-weekly reporting requirement until May 9, 2020. However, to comply with federal law, for weeks beginning May 10, 2020, claimants will be required to return to the CONNECT system every two weeks to request their benefits or “claim their weeks.” In doing so, claimants will confirm that they are still unemployed and acknowledge that they are able and available for work should it be offered. To claim your weeks, [click here](#) to log-in to the CONNECT system and be sure to follow the steps included in the step-by-step guide [here](#).



# COVID-19 and Reemployment Assistance

**Q: What resources are available for individuals, businesses and communities?**

**A:** There are multiple state and federal resources available for individuals, businesses and communities. Visit [FloridaJobs.org/COVID-19](https://FloridaJobs.org/COVID-19) for more information about the resources available.

**Q: My employer has temporarily closed their business due to COVID-19. The date I was supposed to return to work is within 8 weeks from the date I was laid off. How do I request Reemployment Assistance benefits?**

**A:** You may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits due to a temporary layoff. If you are on a temporary layoff, you do not need to seek work with other employers. You must be able to work, stay in contact with your employer, and be available to work when notified by your employer. An application can be filed online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://FloridaJobs.org). If you have never filed for benefits in Florida, select “**File a Claim for State or Federal Assistance Benefits.**”

**Q: What if my layoff is permanent and my employer has closed their business due to COVID-19?**

**A:** You may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits if your employer has no work available, the business closed, your position was eliminated due to budget cuts, or if you have not been given a return date. However, to be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits, all other eligibility requirements must be met.

**Q: My employer reduced my hours as a result of COVID-19. Will I be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits?**

**A:** All workers negatively affected by COVID-19 are encouraged to apply for Reemployment Assistance benefits. If your hours and earnings have been substantially reduced, you may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits. However, if your earnings total more than your weekly benefit amount, you will not be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits. The Reemployment Assistance team will review your application and determine your eligibility for benefits.

**Q: My work is event-based, and many of my future jobs have been cancelled. Am I eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits?**

**A:** If you are out of work because there is no work available, you may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits.

**Q: My local school district closed, and I must stay home with my children. Am I eligible to receive Reemployment Assistance benefits?**

**A:** Reemployment Assistance benefits are available to individuals who are unemployed through no fault of their own. If you are out of work due to personal reasons, you may not qualify for Reemployment Assistance benefits. You may be eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance under the CARES Act. You can file an application online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://FloridaJobs.org) to determine the possibility of receiving benefits.

**Q: Do I need to complete a separate Reemployment Assistance benefits application because I have been financially impacted by COVID-19?**

**A:** No, the state Reemployment Assistance benefits application will be used for individuals impacted by COVID-19. An application can be filed online at [Floridajobs.org](https://Floridajobs.org). You will be notified if there is

additional information needed for the Reemployment Assistance team to completely review and process your application.

However, you may need to complete a subsequent application for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). The Reemployment Assistance system will prompt you to fill out a PUA application once you are determined ineligible for regular Reemployment Assistance benefits. An additional application will need to be completed for Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), provided under the CARES Act. Visit [FloridaJobs.org/CARES-ACT](https://FloridaJobs.org/CARES-ACT) for more information about PEUC.

**Q: My employer has shut down operations temporarily because an employee is sick, and we have been asked to isolate or quarantine as a result of COVID-19. Am I eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits?**

**A:** If your employer shuts down operations and no work is available, you may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits. You can file an application online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://FloridaJobs.org) to determine if you are eligible to receive benefits.

**Q: If I am forced to remain in my home because I am quarantined by a medical professional or by government direction, will I be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits?**

**A:** You may be eligible to receive Reemployment Assistance benefits, but you must be able and available for work. You can complete an application on [FloridaJobs.org](https://FloridaJobs.org) to determine your eligibility for receiving Reemployment Assistance benefits.

**Q: Do I have to look for other work if my employer temporarily closes because of COVID-19?**

**A:** You do not have to look for work if you have a return to work date within eight weeks of your layoff date.

**Q: What if my employer goes out of business as a result of COVID-19?**

**A:** If all eligibility requirements are met, Reemployment Assistance benefits are available to individuals who are unemployed through no fault of their own. You can file an application online to determine the possibility of receiving Reemployment Assistance benefits.

**Q: Are any benefits available if I'm out of work due to COVID-19 and I'm self-employed?**

**A:** If you are self-employed, file an application online to determine the possibility of receiving state Reemployment Assistance benefits. Because of the CARES Act, individuals who are self-employed, independent contractors and those who are otherwise ineligible for state Reemployment Assistance benefits or who have exhausted other benefits may be eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). Eligibility does not include individuals who have the ability to telework and receive pay or individuals who are receiving paid sick leave or other paid leave benefits. PUA will provide **up to** \$275 in weekly benefits payments plus an additional \$600 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC). Please read more about the CARES Act programs in the CARES Act section of this resource guide.

**Q: I am currently unemployed, but I feel the need to self-quarantine. Am I eligible for benefits?**

**A:** You must be able and available for work to receive Reemployment Assistance benefits. Able to work means physically and mentally capable of performing the duties of the occupation in which work is being sought. Available for work means actively seeking and being ready and willing to accept suitable work. An individual may be considered available for work if there are no limitations placed on the individual that would constitute withdrawal from the labor market.

**Q: Do I have to report for my mandatory appointment at CareerSource center at this time?**

**A:** Please contact the CareerSource center that has notified you about your appointment and find out what their procedures are, since in-person meetings may be limited and/or prohibited during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Q: My employer just called me back to work. How do I end my benefits?**

**A:** If you currently receive Reemployment Assistance benefits and no longer wish to receive benefits, do not claim your weeks, and payments will stop.

**Q: I'm going back to work but will be working reduced hours. Will I lose my benefits?**

**A:** Any wages you earn may affect your eligibility to receive benefits or may reduce your weekly benefit amount. If you earn more than your weekly state benefit amount, you will not be eligible for benefits. You must continue to claim your weeks in CONNECT and report any wages you earn. Remember, you must report wages for the week in which you earned them, not the week in which you are paid.

**Q: I have been called back to work but am concerned about COVID-19 exposure. What options do I have to remain on Reemployment Assistance?**

**A:** Generally, you will be disqualified from receiving further Reemployment Assistance benefits if you have failed without good cause to accept suitable work or return to work upon notice by your employer. If your employer has called you back and you did not return to work, you should report that you have refused an offer to work when claiming your weeks in the CONNECT system. You will have an opportunity to provide more information about your reason for not returning to work. DEO will determine eligibility for Reemployment Assistance benefits on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor provides that an individual who does not return to work due to general concerns about exposure to COVID-19 and who does not meet any of the other COVID19 related criteria for PUA, is not eligible for PUA.

**Q: I believe I am at high risk of being exposed to COVID-19 if I return to my job. Will I lose benefits if I refuse to go back?**

**A:** If you have a medical condition that puts you at a high risk for severe illness if you are infected with COVID19, and your employer is not able to offer you a safe workplace or your job does not allow for a reasonable accommodation such as teleworking, you may have good cause for not returning to work and may be eligible to receive benefits. Documentation from a medical professional will be considered as proof of a high-risk medical condition.

You should report that you have refused an offer to work when claiming your weeks in the CONNECT system. You will have an opportunity to provide more information about your reason for not returning to work when you provide your report. DEO will determine eligibility for unemployment benefits on a case-by-case basis.

**Q: I have been called back to work, but my children are out of school and I can't leave them alone. Can I refuse to go back to work and keep my benefits?**

**A:** Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, signed into law on March 27, 2020, created Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). PUA may be available to an eligible individual who is unemployed, partially unemployed, or unable to work because a child in the household, whom the individual has primary caregiving responsibility, is unable to attend school or another childcare facility that is closed as a direct result of COVID-19, and the school or childcare facility is required for

the individual to be able to work. If you believe you may be eligible for PUA, please visit [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org) and select “File a Claim” to apply.

**Q: My employer has offered me my job back, but I would make more utilizing Reemployment Assistance benefits. Can I refuse to take the job?**

**A:** No. If you are offered work by your employer and refuse to accept it because you wanted to receive Reemployment Assistance benefits, you will no longer be eligible for benefits. Additionally, guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor provides that an individual will not be eligible for PUA if they refuse to return to work when called back to work by their employer because the individual wanted to receive unemployment benefits.

**Q: What if I am under state quarantine for COVID-19 and my employer has called me back? I'll have to quit to stay in quarantine. Can I still receive benefits?**

**A:** If you are unemployed, partially unemployed, or unable or unavailable to work because of a quarantine imposed as a direct result of a COVID-19 public health emergency, you may be eligible for PUA.

# Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act

## **Q: What is the CARES Act?**

**A:** On Friday, March 27, 2020, President Trump signed into law a \$2 trillion stimulus rescue package to aid individuals, businesses and communities throughout the nation affected by the economic impacts of COVID-19. This package is officially called the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which provides economic relief and monetary support for those in need.

## **Q: What programs are included in the CARES Act?**

**A:** There are multiple benefit programs included in the federal CARES Act. Please see the programs below:

**Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)** – FPUC provides \$600 per week to any individual eligible under Florida or Federal law for Reemployment Assistance. This benefit is available for weeks claimed between March 29, 2020 – July 25, 2020, in addition to the funds owed under Florida law to individuals.

\*Due to the system upgrades in the Reemployment Assistance system, DEO began paying \$600 FPUC benefit payments the week of April 13, 2020. If you are eligible for Reemployment Assistance Benefits and have previously provided a bank account in the Reemployment Assistance system, you will receive a direct deposit to your bank account. If you did not provide your bank account, you will receive a check to the mailing address provided on your account.

**Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)** – PUA provides benefits to those not ordinarily eligible for Reemployment Assistance. This includes individuals who are self-employed or contract employees. PUA will provide individuals with **up to** \$275 per week in benefits, plus FPUC (\$600) payments for weeks claimed between March 29, 2020 and July 25, 2020.

\*You can apply for assistance online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org).

**Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)** – PEUC allows up to an additional 13 weeks of benefits for individuals who have exhausted their Reemployment Assistance claim. This means claimants may collect unemployment benefits for a longer period of time than under normal circumstances. PEUC will provide individuals with **up to** \$275 in weekly benefits, plus FPUC (\$600) payments for weeks claimed between March 29, 2020 and July 25, 2020.

Please visit [FloridaJobs/CARES-Act](https://www.floridajobs.org/CARES-Act) for more information about PEUC, FPUC and PUA.

## **Q: What will the new CARES Act provide me for Reemployment Assistance?**

**A:** For weeks claimed beginning March 29, 2020, the CARES Act provides eligible individuals with \$600 per week in addition to the weekly benefit amount determined under state law.

## **Q: If I am self-employed, do I need to file a claim online for Reemployment Assistance?**

**A:** Yes, you will first need to file a claim online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org) to see if you are eligible for a state Reemployment Assistance claim. After you have submitted your claim, continue to check your Reemployment Assistance account for updates. If you are not eligible for state Reemployment

Assistance, you may be eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) under the CARES Act. You can file an application online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org) to determine if you are eligible for PUA benefits.

**Q: Do I need to submit another application to receive the additional \$600 per week on my claim?**

**A:** No, if you have filed a new Reemployment Assistance benefits claim and it is being processed; or you have an existing claim, you do not have to file another application to receive the supplemental \$600 (FPUC) benefits. DEO began paying the \$600 FPUC benefits on April 13, 2020. If you are eligible for Reemployment Assistance Benefits and have previously provided bank account information in the Reemployment Assistance system, you may receive a direct deposit to your account. If you did not provide your bank account information, you will receive a check to the mailing address provided on your account.

**Q: Am I eligible for benefits if I am an independent contractor?**

**A:** Yes, under the CARES Act, individuals who are self-employed, independent contractors, those that are otherwise ineligible for state Reemployment Assistance benefits, and those that have exhausted state and federal benefits may be eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. However, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance eligibility does not include individuals who have the ability to telework and receive pay or individuals who are receiving paid sick leave or other paid leave benefits.

Generally, individuals whose income is only from self-employment or individuals who work as an independent contractor are not normally eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits. However, if an independent contractor or self-employed individual also received wages through services performed as an employee (i.e., they had another job with an employer) during the base period (first 12 months of the past 15 months), he or she may be eligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits.

**Q: Where do gig workers apply?**

**A:** If you are a gig worker, you will apply for benefits the same way any other individual would apply for Reemployment Assistance benefits, online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org). You will fill out the state Reemployment Assistance application to determine if you are eligible for benefits. If you are not eligible, you will be provided with a link and directed to fill out a Pandemic Unemployment Assistance application within your CONNECT account.

**Q: What is the duration and maximum amount of benefits I can receive?**

**A:** Florida's duration of benefits may adjust based on the state's unemployment rate, but the maximum weekly amount of benefits remains the same. In addition, the CARES Act provides an additional \$600 per week to the weekly benefit amount through the week ending July 25, 2020.

**2019 Claim Maximums: 12 weeks**

- Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA): \$275
- Maximum Benefit Amount (MBA): \$3300

**2020 Claim Maximums: 12 weeks**

- Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA): \$275
- Maximum Benefit Amount (MBA): \$3300

**Q: I was denied through the Reemployment Assistance Program, but I may eligible through the federal government.**

**A:** DEO will provide notification to individuals about their potential eligibility for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). The Reemployment Assistance Program will prompt you to fill out a PUA application. If you have not applied for assistance, please visit [FloridaJobs.org](http://FloridaJobs.org) to apply. If you are eligible for state Reemployment Assistance benefits or PUA benefits, you will receive an additional \$600 in Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) for weeks of unemployment beginning March 29, 2020 through the week ending July 25, 2020.

**Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA):**

**Q: How do I know if I am eligible for PUA?**

**A:** You may be eligible if your employment has been either lost or interrupted as a direct result of COVID-19 and one or more of the following occurred: you became unemployed, you were scheduled to begin work but no longer have a job or you became the primary breadwinner due to the death of the head of household, or you meet one of the other COVID-19 related reasons listed in section 2102(a)(3)(A)(ii)(I) of the CARES Act and you would not ordinarily be eligible for state Reemployment Assistance. This includes individuals who are gig workers, self-employed or contract employees.

**Q: How do I file a claim for PUA?**

**A:** You must complete an application for Reemployment Assistance benefits before filing for PUA. To complete your application, you can file your claim online at [www.FloridaJobs.org](http://www.FloridaJobs.org). You must file for state Reemployment Assistance benefits before filing for PUA. During the application process, you will be asked if you were impacted by COVID-19. Your Reemployment Assistance claim will then be determined for eligibility. If you are determined ineligible, you will then be prompted in CONNECT to file a PUA application. If you applied for Reemployment Assistance on or before April 4, 2020, you must submit another Reemployment Assistance application.

**Q: What should I keep in mind when filing a PUA claim?**

**A:** You must report all earnings. If you are paid by your employer during your absence from work or if you return to work, you must report these earnings. Paid sick leave, vacation pay or other paid leave must also be reported.

Proof of wages you earned in calendar year 2019 is required. You can fax the required documents to 1-800-222-7934 or mail them to PUA Unit P.O. Box 5350 Tallahassee, FL 32314.

**Q: How long will it take before I receive my PUA benefits?**

**A:** PUA benefits are payable once you provide wages and it is determined that your unemployment was a direct result of COVID-19. Each claim must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Our goal is to ensure a determination is made as quickly as possible in your time of need.

**Q: How many weeks of PUA can I receive?**

**A:** If you are eligible for PUA, you will be paid weekly benefits on a biweekly basis in accordance with federal and state regulations. The PUA benefit duration may last up to 39 weeks, with up to \$275 in weekly benefits. The CARES Act Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) also provides eligible individuals with \$600 per week in addition to the weekly benefit amount. These additional benefits may be available from March 29, 2020 through the week ending July 25, 2020.

## **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC):**

### **Q: How do I know if I am eligible?**

**A:** PEUC is available for Floridians who have exhausted their regular state or Federal Reemployment Assistance benefits or their benefit year expired after July 1, 2019. Floridians will need to apply for PEUC benefits once the balance of their current claim is exhausted. Floridians who have already exhausted their benefits or have a Reemployment Assistance claim that expired after July 1, 2019, will also have to apply. DEO will provide a notice to individuals who have exhausted their benefits or have an expired claim after July 1, 2019, detailing the instructions on how to apply for PEUC benefits.

### **Q: I lost my job before COVID-19 and I am almost out of weeks, but I still can't find work and my employer has not reopened yet. Am I eligible?**

**A:** If you are currently receiving regular Reemployment Assistance benefits and you are still unemployed after you have exhausted your benefits, you may be eligible for PEUC.

### **Q: I am scared to return to work due to COVID-19, but I am about to exhaust my benefits. Am I eligible for PEUC?**

**A:** To be eligible for PEUC, you must meet the eligibility requirements under state and federal law and the CARES Act.

### **Q: How much funding will I receive?**

**A:** Floridians may be eligible for up to \$275 (+ \$600 through FPUC) in weekly benefits. Note that the additional \$600 in FPUC applies only to weeks of unemployment beginning March 29, 2020 and through the week ending July 25, 2020.

### **Q: I am currently receiving Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). Am I eligible for PEUC?**

**A:** To be eligible for PUA, an individual must not be eligible for other state or federal unemployment programs. This means that if you are eligible for PEUC, you must first exhaust those benefits before you can be eligible for PUA. Individuals can only receive benefits from one unemployment program at a time with the exception of FPUC.

### **Q: I was receiving unemployment last year, but I used all of my eligible weeks. Would I be able to benefit from PEUC?**

**A:** It is possible, so long as you continue to experience unemployment and meet the eligibility requirements under state law and the CARES Act. Individuals who are notified of their potential PEUC eligibility may apply for PEUC through CONNECT.



# Applying for Reemployment Assistance Benefits

## Q: How do I submit my application for Reemployment Assistance?

A: There are multiple ways to submit an application for Reemployment Assistance.

1. New applicants can complete an application online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org).
2. You may complete a paper application by following the steps online at [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org) and by mailing your application to:  
Florida Department of Economic Opportunity  
P.O. Box 5350  
Tallahassee, FL 32314-5350
3. CareerSource centers throughout the state can offer assistance with paper applications. Please visit [CareerSourceFlorida.com](https://www.careersourceflorida.com) to find the location and contact information for your local career center. We recommend calling to confirm your local center's hours of operation.

\*If you have questions or need assistance completing your application online, you can contact DEO at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759) for assistance.

## Q: What are the hours of operation?

A: If you have never filed for Reemployment Assistance, you can file a claim for Reemployment Assistance online 24 hours a day at [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org).

Florida's Reemployment Assistance system, [CONNECT](https://www.connectfl.com), is available from 8:00 a.m.- 8:00 p.m. EST, Monday-Friday. CONNECT offers access for claimants to apply, file, manage, and review claim details. **Please note, to process payments and applications, the CONNECT Reemployment Assistance system may be temporarily offline throughout the night and weekends.**

\*The Florida Reemployment Assistance Customer Service Center is also available to claimants for assistance. The hours of operation are Monday through Friday 7:30 AM to 6:30 PM and Saturday and Sunday 8 AM to 5 PM ET. Please call **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759) for assistance.

**Please check [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org) for updates on hours of operation for Reemployment Assistance CONNECT access and Customer Service Center.**

## Q: Does the new mobile friendly application ([FloridaJobs.org/RAApplication](https://www.floridajobs.org/RAApplication)) connect to the CONNECT system?

A: The new online mobile-friendly application does not connect directly to CONNECT. However, the information submitted in the application will be transferred to CONNECT usually within one week.

## Q: How will I know if I am eligible or ineligible?

A: If you are eligible, you will receive a written determination stating your eligibility. **If you are not eligible**, the written determination will explain the reason your claim was denied and will explain your appeal rights. If you disagree with a determination that denies benefits, you may request an appeal hearing.

\* Be sure to check your Reemployment Assistance account for any updates. This includes your benefit payments and important notices regarding your account.

**Q: Will I receive confirmation after my application is submitted and received?**

**A:** After your Reemployment Assistance application has been processed, you will be notified of your eligibility. See below for the communication methods for each application.

**If you submitted a paper application:**

You will receive notification via email or by mail after your application has been uploaded into CONNECT with a temporary PIN so you can access your account and see the status of your claim.

**If you submitted an online application through FloridaJobs.org:**

You will receive notification via email or by mail after your application has been uploaded into CONNECT with a temporary PIN so you can access your account and see the status of your claim.

**If I submitted an online application through CONNECT:**

You will receive confirmation in the CONNECT system that your application has been submitted. Once your application has been processed and your eligibility has been determined, you may begin receiving benefits. You have the option to appeal your determination if it negatively impacts you.

Please log-in to the CONNECT system to check for any updates to your account and respond to any requests for additional information. If you have questions or need assistance, please contact DEO at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759).

**Q: Is there a location where I can get a paper application?**

**A:** Yes, CareerSource centers throughout the state can offer assistance with paper applications. Please visit [CareerSourceFlorida.com](http://CareerSourceFlorida.com) to find the location and contact information for your local career center. You can also complete an application online at [FloridaJobs.org](http://FloridaJobs.org).

If you have questions or need assistance completing your application online, you can contact DEO at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759) for assistance or use the new CHAT feature on [FloridaJobs.org](http://FloridaJobs.org).

**Q: I made a mistake on my claim. How do I edit?**

**A: Unfortunately, once an application is submitted, the claimant is not able to make changes themselves.** You will need to contact the Florida Reemployment Customer Service Center at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759) for assistance.

**Q: I am missing a piece of information, should I still file?**

**A: Our goal is to assist you in receiving the benefits for which you may be eligible.** Missing information may create additional delays in determining your eligibility. However, if missing information is unavoidable, your claim may still be processed.

**Q: What do I do once I complete my application?**

**A:** You are required to complete a few additional items after completing your application.

- **Request Benefit Payment**

You are scheduled to return to the CONNECT system every two weeks to request your benefits. Completing this process submits your request for payment during your weeks of

unemployment, even when your claim is pending for review. It is important that you request your benefits within 7 days of your scheduled date regardless of your claim status.

- **Work Registration**

***Governor DeSantis has suspended the work registration requirement for any claims filed with an effective date of March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.***

Under normal circumstances, you are required to register with Employ Florida. When creating (or updating) your Employ Florida profile, you must provide a valid e-mail address, upload or create a current resume, and complete background history on your profile. If you filed a claim prior to March 15 or filed a claim after August 1, this requirement is still applicable to you.

- **Work Search**

***Governor DeSantis has suspended the work search requirement beginning the week of March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.*** Generally, you are required to provide five work search contacts for every week of benefits you request from DEO. This is only applicable to weeks before March 15 and after August 1.

- **Any incomplete fact-findings**

During the initial processing of your claim, many reviews of your eligibility for benefits occur. You will be mailed correspondence or sent an email reminder to check your Reemployment Assistance inbox based on your selected contact method. Please complete any requests for information as soon as possible to avoid any delays in determining your eligibility. Any correspondence received via mail can be completed online. You may also fax completed forms to 1-877-934-1504.

- **Watch for your notice of monetary determination**

The monetary determination notice will provide details on the amount of benefits you can receive per week (weekly benefit amount), the total balance of your claim (maximum benefit amount), as well as the history of wages that has established your claim.

- **Appointment with your local CareerSource office**

You may be selected and scheduled for a mandatory appointment with your local CareerSource office. It will provide one-on-one services to help create a reemployment plan. Your appointment notice will be mailed to you, so please ensure your address in both CONNECT and Employ Florida are up-to-date. Failure to participate in your scheduled appointment will result in a review of your eligibility and potentially delay or deny your benefits.

**Q: I have filed a Reemployment Assistance claim previously (more than 12 months ago); do I need to file another claim?**

**A:** Yes, you will need to file another Reemployment Assistance claim. However, you will need to file your claim in the CONNECT system because you have an account that has been previously created.

**Q: I have already filed within the last year; do I need to file another claim?**

**A:** If your previous claim has a remaining balance and has not expired, you need to file a "Reopen" request after logging into your CONNECT account. This is a shortened application to update your work history since your original application was filed. Once completed, any recent employment will be reviewed, and weeks of benefits will be scheduled for you to claim.

You may also be eligible for Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC). PEUC allows for up to an additional 13 weeks of benefits for individuals who have exhausted their Reemployment Assistance claim. This means claimants may collect unemployment benefits for a longer period of time than under normal circumstances. PEUC will provide individuals with **up to \$275** in weekly benefits. Please log-in to your CONNECT account to submit an application for PEUC, in addition to the \$600 FPUC payments available through the week ending July 25, 2020.

**Q: What if my employer fails to respond?**

**A:** If your employer fails to respond to a request for information by their deadline, a determination will be made with the available information provided in your application.

**Q: Why are you asking about my previous employer? I have worked somewhere else, and I am not filing against them.**

**A:** All employers during the last 18 months are reviewed and contacted regarding your employment. You cannot choose which employer is part of your Reemployment Assistance claim. Please respond to all requests for information to ensure timely processing.

**Q: What is considered being “able and available” for work?**

**A:** Being able to seek and accept full-time work as well as having the availability to accept a full-time schedule. Below are some related examples that could impact your eligibility:

- Any illness or injury during the majority of a week (including hospital stays).
- Travel without the intent of seeking work and relocating.
- A lack of childcare that interrupts your ability to find work.
- Your school schedule conflicts with your ability to work full-time.

**Q: I still have questions about completing my Reemployment Assistance Application. Who do I contact?**

**A:** You have multiple ways to reach the department if you need assistance or have questions about completing your Reemployment Assistance application.

1. Complete the Reemployment Assistance contact form found [here](https://racontactus.floridajobs.org) (racontactus.floridajobs.org).
2. Contact the Reemployment Assistance Customer Service Center at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759).
3. You can also contact your local CareerSource center for assistance and questions about completing your application. Please visit [CareerSourceFlorida.com](https://CareerSourceFlorida.com) to find locations and contact information for your local career center. We recommend you call your CareerSource center to check their hours of operation.

**Q: Are Reemployment Assistance benefits taxed?**

**A:** Yes, benefits are a taxable income. You can elect to withhold 10% of your weekly benefits due to the IRS. This can be handled after logging into your claim under "View and Maintain Account Information" and selecting "Payment Method and Tax Withholding Options."

**Q: What is a 1099-G?**

**A:** The 1099-G is the tax form the department issues in January for the purposes of filing your taxes. The 1099-G will detail the amount of benefits you received during a specific year as well as any amounts withheld and paid to the IRS. They are made available by January 31st for the prior tax year.

**Q: What is a 49T?**

**A:** The form 49T is a receipt of repayment that provides the amount paid to a Reemployment Assistance overpayment in a specific tax year. You can log into CONNECT and click on “My 1099G/49T” to view the forms.

**Q: How can I obtain a copy of my 1099-G and/or 49T for a tax year?**

**A:** You can receive a copy of your 1099-G/49T multiple ways:

- The fastest way to receive your 1099-G or 49T is by selecting "electronic" as your correspondence method within the CONNECT system. You can log-in to CONNECT and go to "My 1099-G & 49Ts" in the main menu to view the last five years of your 1099-G or 49T documents. If you selected "US Mail" as your preference, a copy will be mailed by January 31st to the address on your application. Please keep your address updated in the Reemployment Assistance system. If you have mail forwarding, the United States Postal Service will forward your tax forms.
- You can request a copy of your 1099-G from the last five years by e-mailing [1099G@deo.myflorida.com](mailto:1099G@deo.myflorida.com). Please include your name, last 4 digits of your Social Security number, address on file, current street address, a valid contact number, and the tax year you are requesting.
- You can speak with an representative at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759) who can assist in regaining access to your claim and/or submitting a request to issue duplicate information on your behalf.

**Q: Why did I get a 1099-G for a year that I did not request benefits?**

**A:** Sometimes this occurs when your last weeks of benefits were paid at the beginning of the year. Other times, the department may complete the appeal process that releases payments at a significantly later date. The easiest way to check on why a 1099-G was issued, would be to log-on to CONNECT and review the “Payment History.”

**Q: My account says I am inactive. Should I submit a new application?**

**A:** You will need to file a “Reopen” request after logging into your CONNECT account.

**Q: DEO issued a paper application. Does this mean individuals cannot use the online system? Can they access the Reemployment Assistance system or should they send in a paper application?**

**A:** There may be times that CONNECT is not accessible (overnight hours), but individuals are still encouraged to apply online any time of day and any day of the week at [FloridaJobs.org/RAApplication](http://FloridaJobs.org/RAApplication). Paper applications should only be submitted if you are unable to apply online.

**Q: I am having difficulty opening my 1099-G. What do I do?**

**A:** There could be a number of reasons why you are having difficulty opening your 1099-G. Consider these options:

- Verify Adobe Acrobat Reader is installed and up-to-date.
- Disable pop-up blockers in your browser. The 1099-G opens as a pop-up window.
- Scroll Down when the PDF opens. The distributed forms are 2 pages long and include letterhead and 1099-G.
- Use Internet Explorer 11. Our system is most compatible with Internet Explorer 11, other browsers may experience issues.
- If you continue to receive technical errors even after making these adjustments, please contact

the department at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759).

**Q: I can't reset my PIN, should I use the new online system?**

**A:** No. Only people who have never filed for Reemployment Assistance should file in the new application. You will be best served by following the steps below to have your PIN reset:

1. Please [click here](#) to access the CONNECT homepage.
2. Read the Claimant Warning Notice and select "I acknowledge I have read the above."
3. Enter your Social Security Number and select "Forgot PIN."
4. Select which option you would like to use to reset your PIN. If you have never logged into CONNECT, select "Send PIN Reset Email."
5. An email will be sent to the email address we have on file.

\*\* If you are unable to reset your PIN through the options above, contact us at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759).

**Q: How do I check the status of your application?**

**A:** After your Reemployment Assistance application has been processed, you will be notified of your eligibility. See below for the communication methods for each application.

**If you submitted a paper application:**

You will receive notification via email (DoNotReplyReemploymentAssistance@DEO.MyFlorida.com) or by mail after your application has been processed with a temporary PIN so you can access your account and see the status of your claim.

**If you submitted an online application at FloridaJobs.org:**

You will receive notification via email (DoNotReplyReemploymentAssistance@DEO.MyFlorida.com) or by mail after your application has been processed with a temporary PIN so you can access your account and see the status of your claim.

**If you submitted an online application through CONNECT:**

You will receive confirmation in the CONNECT system that your application has been submitted. Once your application has been processed and your eligibility has been determined, you may receive benefits. You have the option to appeal your determination if it negatively impacts you.

**Q: When and how will I get my PIN for CONNECT if I applied through the new online application or on paper?**

**A:** Once your application is received and reviewed, the department will be in contact with you, either by email or mail.

**Q: Why does my application status say I am ineligible?**

There are many reasons you may be deemed ineligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits. This includes incomplete or inaccurate information. You may also be ineligible because you do not have enough qualifying wages in the base period. Please review the eligibility section of this Reemployment Assistance Resource Guide for more information. You can also view reasons for ineligibility [here](#). If you were deemed ineligible, you may be eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (PUA). Read more about the Federal Cares Act and programs available at [FloridaJobs.org/Cares-Act](https://FloridaJobs.org/Cares-Act). You

may also request a reconsideration or appeal your determination if you believe the determination is inaccurate.

**Q: What does inactive status mean?**

**A:** Your status may change to inactive if you do not log-into your CONNECT account to request your benefits within seven days of your scheduled request day. This status has temporarily been removed so that claimants will have more time to claim their weeks.

**Q: Why is my claim still pending?**

**A:** If your status says pending, the department is still reviewing and processing your application. You do not need to take any action on your account at this time.

**Q: Are Reemployment Assistance benefits retroactive to the day I lost my job?**

**A:** If you were not able to submit your application because you were prevented from doing so or because of system issues, and you would like to request to modify your claim filing effective date, you may visit [www.FloridaJobs.org](http://www.FloridaJobs.org) and select the link “Request to Modify Claim (Application) Filing Effective Date.” If eligible, your claim may be backdated to the date you first attempted to file your application. The effective date of PUA claims are made retroactive in the CONNECT system.

**Q: How do I get a password?**

**A:** After your Reemployment Assistance application has been processed, you will be notified of your eligibility. See below for the communication methods for each application.

**If you submitted a paper application:**

You will receive notification via email or by mail after your application has been processed with a temporary PIN so you can access your account and see the status of your application.

**If you submitted an online application through FloridaJobs.org:**

You will receive notification via email or by mail after your application has been processed with a temporary PIN so you can access your account and see the status of your application.

**If you submitted an online application through CONNECT:**

During the application process in CONNECT, you will set up your PIN. We encourage you to write it down and keep it in a safe place.

If you have applied and you have received a notification with a temporary PIN, you can follow the PIN reset options [here](#). If you have not received a notification and you are unable to log-in with the PIN reset, please call the Customer Service Center at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759).

**Q: Can my local CareerSource center help me file for Reemployment Assistance?**

**A:** Your local CareerSource center can assist you with finding employment and obtaining necessary training for career placement. CareerSource centers have computers, most available by appointment only, for you to use to access your Reemployment Assistance claims or file a new claim. CareerSource center staff is not trained to answer claim-specific questions for Reemployment Assistance claims.

# CONNECT

## **Q: What is CONNECT?**

**A:** CONNECT is Florida's Reemployment Assistance claims system. CONNECT offers access to manage and review your claim details.

## **Q: Can I use my mobile device to file a claim or manage my benefits in the CONNECT System?**

**A:** At this time, mobile devices are not supported with our claims system, CONNECT.

## **Q: Are there certain requirements or criteria for creating my PIN?**

**A:** Yes, please make sure your PIN meets the following criteria:

- Your PIN must be four digits.
- Your PIN can only be numbers. Letters and symbols are not allowed.
- Your PIN cannot be the numbers 1111, 9999, 0000, or 1234.

Your PIN cannot be the last 4 digits of your Social Security number.

## **Q: Are there any restrictions for the security question answers?**

**A:** Yes, please make sure your security question answers meet the following criteria:

- Your answers must use letters and numbers.
- Special characters are not allowed. (i.e.: \$%#@)
- Your answers must be between 5 and 35 characters in length.

## **Q: How can I reset my PIN to access my CONNECT account?**

**A:** Please follow the steps below to reset your PIN so you can access your account in CONNECT. You can also [click here](#) to download the step by step guide. If you need further assistance resetting your PIN, please contact our Customer Service Center at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759).

- 1- Please [click here](#) to access the CONNECT homepage.
- 2- Read the Claimant Warning Notice and select "I acknowledge I have read the above."
- 3- On the next page, enter your Social Security Number and select "Forgot PIN."
- 4- On the next page, you have two options to reset your PIN, "Send PIN Reset Email" or "Answer Security Questions." Select either option you would like to use to reset your PIN. If you have never logged into CONNECT, select "Send PIN Reset Email." An email will be sent to the email address we have on file.

## **Q: I received a technical error in CONNECT. What should I do?**

**A:** There are three common causes to technical issues with CONNECT:

- You may need to clear your cache or browser history. You can do this in your web browser settings.
- CONNECT is not compatible with mobile devices. CONNECT was designed for desktop computers.
- CONNECT is most compatible with Internet Explorer, but also works in other internet browsers.

If you continue to receive technical errors after making these adjustments, please contact the department at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759).



**Q: When I enter my Social Security Number, Driver's License, and/or State ID, the system says the information is not valid. What should I do?**

**A:** Please verify you are submitting the information exactly as it appears on your documents. If the system continues to report that information is not valid, after your third attempt, the system will not accept the information you are providing. If this happens, your claim will be followed-up with a request for you to provide copies of your signed Social Security card and your valid Driver's License or State issued ID card. The department will use this information to confirm your identity.

**Q: Sometimes the CONNECT system tells me to call back later. Why is that?**

**A:** We experience periods of high call volume. If you are unable to reach the department by phone, please submit an e-mail for information regarding your claim. If you have a claim, please use the e-mail address you have provided in CONNECT. The Reemployment Assistance contact us form can be found online, [here \(www.racontactus.floridajobs.org/\)](http://www.racontactus.floridajobs.org/). We have also opened a chat service so you can receive answers to your questions online at [FloridaJobs.org](http://FloridaJobs.org).

**Q: I'm locked out of my account. It says I need to verify my identity, but no one will answer the phone or respond to my email. What do I do?**

**A:** At this time, we do not need additional documentation to verify the identity as long as the application is fully complete and submitted. If any additional information is needed, a DEO representative will reach out to you.

**Q: I used to have notices in my inbox. Why don't I see anything in my inbox?**

**A:** After you review an item in your inbox, it is hidden to make room for new notifications. You can use the search functions in the inbox to pull up previously viewed correspondence. If you want all items displayed, select the "Search" button with no search information entered. All correspondence will show in your inbox. You can watch a video to help you navigate your inbox [here](#).

**Q: I am having trouble opening items in my CONNECT inbox. How can I access these documents?**

**A:** Please verify the following as these are common issues surrounding opening correspondence:

- Adobe Acrobat Reader is installed and up-to-date.
- You are using a computer, not a mobile device such as a cell phone or tablet.
- Make sure you are using a compatible browser.
- Disable any pop-up blockers that may prevent PDF documents from opening.

**Q: I received an email and/or text from DEO saying I needed to log-in to CONNECT to view my messages, but I don't have any messages.**

**A:** Due to the large volume of claims we are receiving, items sent to your inbox may take a few days to arrive. Please check your inbox at a later date to confirm receipt of any correspondence after initially filing your claim.

**Q: CONNECT will not allow me to continue without completing my work search and work registration requirement. I thought the Governor waived this. Why can't I complete my claim?**

**A:** The work registration and work search requirements have been waived for individuals requesting benefits for the weeks of March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020. You do not need to complete the work registration. If you answer "no" to the question asking if you looked for work when you are claiming your weeks, you will not be asked to complete a work search log. However, you will be asked some additional questions. Please be aware that your claim will not be affected if you answer no to this question during this timeframe. You are scheduled to return to the CONNECT system every two

weeks to request your benefits. Completing this process submits your request for payment during your weeks of unemployment, even when your claim is pending for review. It is important that you request your benefits within 7 days of your scheduled date regardless of your claim status.

Please continue to check CONNECT for any important updates to your account.

**Q: Why does CONNECT undergo so much maintenance, and why is it unavailable to users at certain times?**

**A:** CONNECT goes through nightly maintenance so the system can make payments to Floridians, process claims and run required updates.

**Q: How do I change the type of communication I receive?**

**A:** After you log-in to CONNECT:

1. Select "View and Maintain Account Information" in the main menu.
2. Select "Contact Information" option.
3. Select "Edit."
4. Select your new "Correspondence Preference."
5. Make sure your contact information is up-to-date.
6. Select "Submit."

**Q: When I submit my fact-finding questions, why do I get logged out and CONNECT doesn't save my answers?**

**A:** Please be aware CONNECT may log you out of the system after periods of inactivity. If you spend too much time without changing pages in CONNECT, you will be logged out for security purposes. Please make sure if you have a large amount of information to provide in your fact-finding that you select "Save" at the bottom of the page frequently to avoid losing any information.

**Q: Was the supplemental documentation I uploaded received in CONNECT?**

**A:** When you attach additional documents to your fact-finding, the form will show which documents have been successfully attached prior to submission. Please verify the documents you wish to submit are listed before sending your fact-finding documents. When you submit your documents, you will receive an error if they are not received successfully.

**Q: What happens after I submit my application for Reemployment Assistance?**

**A:** You will receive an email or letter after your application has been processed. Based on your eligibility, you may receive benefits. You have the option to appeal your determination if it negatively impacts you.

Please log-in to the CONNECT system regularly to check for any updates to your account, respond to any requests for additional information. If you have questions or need assistance, contact DEO at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759).

**Q: I am having trouble entering my citizenship/work authorization information.**

**A:** Please enter the number of the authorizing document you are able to provide. If you continue to have difficulties, the system will accept your information after several attempts. However, a copy of your document will be requested after your application is completed.

**Q: Do I need to enter an employer I only worked with a short time?**

**A:** Yes, your entire work history is required from the last 18 months. Regardless of the length of time worked, all employment is used in determining your benefits.

**Q: I cannot enter one of my employers in the CONNECT application, what do I do?**

**A:** Please check for the following common mistakes. Make sure:

- There are no mistakes with the start and end dates.
- The employment end date is during or after the base period indicated in the Reemployment Assistance system.
- The employment is not already on the claim. You can use the “Previous” button to return and double check.
- Carefully review the error message you receive as this will help us correcting the error. If the problem persists, please contact the department at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759) for assistance.

**Q: What should I do once I complete my application in CONNECT?**

**A:** You are required to complete a few additional items in CONNECT after completing your application.

- **Request Benefit Payment**

You are scheduled to return to the CONNECT system every two weeks to request your benefits. Completing this process submits your request for payment during your weeks of unemployment, even when your claim is pending for review. It is important that you request your benefits within 7 days of your scheduled date regardless of your claim status.

- **Work Registration**

**Governor DeSantis has suspended this requirement for any claims filed with an effective date of March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.** Under normal circumstances, you are required to register with Employ Florida. When creating (or updating) your Employ Florida profile, you must provide a valid e-mail address, upload or create a current resume, and complete background history on your profile. Please see these [step-by-step](#) instructions for more information. If you filed a claim prior to March 15 or after August 1, 2020, this requirement is still applicable to you.

- **Work Search Contacts**

**Governor DeSantis has suspended this requirement beginning the week of March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.** You are required to provide five work search contacts for every week of benefits you request from the department. The suspension of these work search requirements applies to weeks claimed after March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.

- **Any incomplete fact-findings**

During the initial processing of your claim, many reviews regarding your eligibility for benefits occur. You will be mailed correspondence or sent an email reminder to check your CONNECT inbox based on your selected contact method. Please complete any requests for information as soon as possible. Any correspondence received via mail can be completed online. You can fax completed forms to 1-877-934-1504.

- **Watch for your notice of monetary determination**

This notice will provide details on the amount of benefits you can receive per week (weekly

benefit amount), the total balance your claim has (maximum benefit amount), as well as the history of wages that has established your claim.

- **Appointment with your local CareerSource office**

You may be selected and scheduled for a mandatory appointment with your local CareerSource office. It will provide one-on-one services to help create a reemployment plan. If applicable, your appointment notice will be mailed to you, so please ensure your address in both CONNECT and Employ Florida are up-to-date. Failure to participate in your scheduled appointment will result in a review of your eligibility and potentially delay or deny your benefits.

**Q: Will I be paid for my waiting week? Do I have to serve a waiting week each time I reactivate my claim?**

**A:** The waiting week has been waived for claims filed after March 29, 2020, so you will be paid for your waiting week if you filed your claim after March 29, 2020 and prior to August 1, 2020.

**Q: What is a valid work search contact and what information do you need?**

**A: Governor DeSantis has suspended this requirement beginning the week of March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.** Prior to COVID-19, you were required to provide five work search contacts per week. Weeks prior to March 15, 2020, and after August 1, 2020, you are required to provide the following details for each job contact:

- Date of contact.
- Method of contact (in person, online, fax, phone, etc.)
- Business name including telephone number and complete address, website URL or an e-mail.
- Results of your search.
- Type of work sought.

**Q: How many work search contacts do I need to provide to the department per benefit week?**

**A: Governor DeSantis has suspended this requirement beginning the week of March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.** Prior to COVID-19, you are required to provide five work search contacts per week. The following are exceptions and exemptions:

- If you reside in a low-population county, you are required to submit three contacts weekly.
- If you are a union member, you are required to remain in good standing and maintain regular contact with your union.
- If you are on a temporary layoff and will return to the same employer within 8 weeks, you are exempt from work search requirements.
- If you are a part of an approved training program, you are exempt from work search requirements.
- If you qualify for one of these exemptions and still receive a request for full work search information, please contact us at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759) for assistance.

**Q: I haven't been able to claim my weeks because I can't log-on to CONNECT. Will I lose my benefits for that week?**

**A:** If you miss the deadline shown in CONNECT to claim your weeks/request benefits for Reemployment Assistance, you still have the opportunity to claim your weeks. Claimants should be aware if they were late claiming their weeks that it could lead to a delay in payment. DEO encourages claimants to log-into CONNECT and check their account regularly and take action when prompted. If you were late to claim weeks, claimants can contact the Customer Service Center at **1-833-FL-APPLY**

(1-833-352-7759) and an agent will be able to assist you.

**Q: My claim says it is under review, what does this mean?**

**A:** Under review means the claim is being authenticated or your identity is being confirmed.

**Q: My claim still says pending. What does this mean?**

**A:** Pending means that a determination has not been made on your claim.

**Q: What does active versus pending mean for my claims?**

**A:** Active is referring to your claim status and that your benefit year has been established. Pending means a determination has not been made.

**Q: How do I know when to file my weeks? What should I do if I cannot log-in to file my weeks? I missed my deadline to file a claim because CONNECT was down. What should I do?**

**A:** At the end of your application, it will tell you what dates you need to log-in to CONNECT and claim your weeks. You are scheduled to return to the CONNECT system every two weeks to request your benefits. Completing this process submits your request for payment during your weeks of unemployment, even when your claim is pending for review. It is important that you request your benefits regardless of your claim status.

# Receiving Reemployment Assistance Benefit Payments

## **Q: How often will I receive Reemployment Assistance benefit payments?**

**A:** Reemployment Assistance is paid on a biweekly basis. However, in an effort to get Floridians paid as quickly as possible and due to COVID-19, many claimants have received benefit payments weekly and at different times. Moving forward and in an effort to streamline payments for Floridians, DEO will transition benefit payments back to a biweekly schedule. Claimants will begin to notice that benefits will be scheduled biweekly as weeks are claimed for benefit payments.

## **Q: How will I receive the benefits once my Reemployment Assistance application has been processed?**

**A:** Floridians have two options for receiving benefits during the application process.

- 1. Direct Deposit:** This process may take 1-2 business days to reflect in your bank account after your application has been processed. Please note, due to the current high volume of requests, this process may take longer than usual.
- 2. Way2Go Debit Card:** Debit cards are mailed after the first payment is processed and may take 7-10 business days to receive by mail. Please note, due to the current high volume of requests, this process may take longer than usual.

## **Q: When will I receive my debit card?**

**A:** The Way2Go debit card will be issued by mail after the first payment on your claim is made via debit card. If you have previously been issued a debit card, it is valid for three years from the initial issue date. Your previous card will receive any payments on your current claim. If you have lost your previous debit card and/or have not received your debit card 10 business days after your first debit payment, please contact our card provider at:

**U.S.:** 1-833-888-2780

**International:** 1-210-334-6615 (This includes Puerto Rico. This line is not toll-free.)

## **Q: How do I change how I get paid? I want to get direct deposit versus debit card.**

**A:** You can log-in to CONNECT and change this information yourself under the “View and Maintain Account Information.”

## **Q: Why do I have a negative balance on my debit card?**

**A:** The debit card provider has certain fees associated with the card. This includes a limited number of contacts to their phone lines per month. Please review the information issued with your card for more details surrounding these fees. Our card provides additional methods to check your balance including SMS notifications (text messages), checking at approved ATMs, as well as a web portal to view your balance information. Please visit [www.goprogram.com](http://www.goprogram.com) for more information.

## **Q: Why isn't my CONNECT PIN working for my debit card?**

**A:** Your CONNECT PIN is separate from the debit card PIN. You will need to follow the instructions included with the debit card in order to activate and establish a PIN.

**Q: Why can't I enter my banking information in CONNECT?**

**A:** There are several reasons your banking information may be rejected:

- The information you entered is incorrect.
- The interface to verify the information is currently down.
- Your bank is not approved for direct deposit.
- You are attempting to use a prepaid card for direct deposit purposes.

Please note, not every financial institution is accepted; your bank may not be eligible for direct deposit. Please select debit card if you have no other financial institution.

**Q: What is the duration and maximum amount of benefits I can receive?**

**A:** Florida's duration of benefits may adjust based on the state's unemployment rate, but the maximum amount of benefits remains the same.

**2019 Claim Maximums: 12 weeks**

- Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA): \$275
- Maximum Benefit Amount (MBA): \$3300

**2020 Claim Maximums: 12 weeks**

- Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA): \$275
- Maximum Benefit Amount (MBA): \$3300

**Q: How are my benefits calculated?**

**A:** Your benefits are calculated as followed:

- The wages used to determine your benefit amounts are the first four of the last five calendar quarters.
- Claims filed as of April 1, 2020, use wages earned between January 1, 2019 through December 31, 2019.
- Once we have the wages on record, we verify the following to determine if you are eligible for benefits:
  - \$3,400 minimum gross earnings during base period.
  - You must have a minimum of two quarters of covered wages.
  - Total base period gross wages must be more than 1.5x the highest wage quarter.
- Once we complete those checks, the last steps are simple:
  - Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA) is the highest quarter divided by 26 or the weekly amount \$275, whichever is less.
  - Maximum Benefit Amount (MBA).
    - MBA is your total base period wages divided by 4 OR the yearly maximum, whichever is less.

**Q: I do not see my employer on my monetary determination. Why is that?**

**A:** This could be due to several factors:

- It is possible your employment was not during the base period under review.
- Your employment and wages may not have been covered wages for Reemployment Assistance purposes.
- It is possible the wages you earned were reported incorrectly or reported late.
- There are two quick steps to check for common issues:
  - Verify the missing employment is during the base period under review.
  - Verify your information (specifically your Social Security number) is correct on any tax forms.

If you find an error or if you still have concerns regarding your missing wages, you can submit for monetary reconsideration following the instructions on your monetary determination. This must be requested within 20 days of the monetary determination date.

**Q: After filing a claim, my remaining balance was low. I went back to work, why do I not have more money available?**

**A:** You cannot receive more than the maximum benefit amount allocated during a claim's benefit year.

**Q: I see that I have benefits available on an older claim, am I able to receive this money?**

**A:** Once the claim passes its expiration date, the funds are no longer available, and a new claim must be filed and reviewed for eligibility.

**Q: What changes were made to the Reemployment Assistance debit card?**

**A:** The state of Florida has changed debit card providers. The Wells Fargo Visa-Branded EPPICard Program stopped receiving funds as of October 25, 2019, and the card itself is no longer valid as of December 11, 2019. A new Comerica Mastercard-Branded Way2Go Card Prepaid Debit Card was issued 2-3 weeks prior to the changeover. Any Reemployment Assistance benefits received after October 25, 2019, will be available on this new card. You will not receive a new Way2Go Card if you are not actively receiving benefits.

**Q: I am no longer receiving Reemployment Assistance benefits. Why am I receiving a notice regarding the Reemployment Assistance debit card?**

**A:** The notice would be received because our records indicate that you have an outstanding balance on your EPPICard from when you were receiving benefits. The funds are no longer accessible on the card after December 11, 2019. If you have any additional questions about accessing your card balance call 1-888-898-3584.

**Q: What happens if I do not use the funds on my current card?**

**A:** Your EPPICard is no longer valid after December 11, 2019. If you are currently collecting Reemployment Assistance benefits, any remaining balance was transferred to the new Way2Go Card. If you do not have an active claim, you will no longer have access to your funds after the deadline. You may contact customer service at 1-888-898-3584 to receive instructions on how to get the remaining funds.

**Q: Can I transfer the remaining balance on the current card to a bank account?**

**A:** Yes, you can transfer the remaining balance to any US-based bank account that you own by calling the customer service automated line at 1-888-898-3584. There is a \$1.50 charge per transfer. If you are currently collecting benefits, changing to direct deposit in CONNECT will only affect future payments.

**Q: Is the current card still valid even if I receive and activate the new card?**

**A:** No, funds that had been sent to your EPPICard were available until December 11, 2019. Any benefits sent to you on or after October 25, 2019 will only be accessible on the new Way2Go card.

**Q: Are my funds accessible by both the current and new card?**

**A:** No, they are separate balances. All payments until October 24, 2019, were made to the EPPICard. All payments made October 25, 2019 onward are made to the Way2Go Card. Any balance remaining on your EPPICard as of December 11, 2019, was transferred to the Way2Go Card.



**Q: What steps do I need to take to set up my new card?**

**A:** You will need to go to [GoProgram.com](https://GoProgram.com) and create a user ID and password. Make sure that you have your new Way2Go Card with you when you go to register your new account. If you have any issues, call their customer service line at 1-833-888-2780.

**Q: When can I expect to get paid?**

**A:** Prior to the COVID-19 epidemic, it took three to four weeks (assuming there were no issues with the claim) to process a claim. We do not have an exact timeframe of when individuals will get paid. However, we are working diligently to process claims as quickly as possible.

# Adjudication

## **Q: What is the adjudication process?**

**A:** The department will review the details surrounding an issue to determine your eligibility for benefits. Involved parties will receive a fact-finding to request the necessary information to make a determination. An adjudicator may contact you or an employer to clarify any details received before making a determination. This contact may be by phone, e-mail, or through your CONNECT Inbox.

## **Q: Why does my claim say it is pending for adjudication or pending eligibility?**

**A:** Anytime your claim has a pending item for resolution, you will have a message indicating that your claim is pending for adjudication. While this frequently means payments must remain on hold until after the review is completed, some issues do not hold benefit payment and are merely background reviews or verifications.

## **Q: How long is the adjudication process?**

**A:** Time frames vary based on several factors including the depth of the issue being reviewed. Usually, adjudication time frames fluctuate between three to six weeks. Due to the high volume of claims, some cases may take longer than six weeks to resolve.

## **Q: I received eligible determinations, why haven't I been paid yet?**

**A:** Issues are reviewed separately. While you may receive an eligible determination, you may still have additional issues pending for review or issues that are disqualifying. If you receive a *Notice of Disqualification* and you disagree, you can follow the appeal rights on the Notice and request an appeal hearing on the issue. Payments cannot process until all determinations have been completed and you have no disqualifications.

## **Q: Why have I not received a determination after completing my fact-finding?**

**A:** Responding to a fact-finding does not complete the review on an issue. The employer must respond (or fail to respond by their deadline) and an adjudicator must be available to review all submitted forms.

## **Q: Can I speak with an adjudicator?**

**A:** Most issues under review do not require direct contact with an adjudicator for a determination to be made. Adjudicators review the fact-finding responses regarding the issues they review and will make a determination based on the available information. It is important that you complete any fact-findings as thoroughly as possible. An adjudicator will contact you if they need more information.

## **Q: I missed a call from an adjudicator. What should I do?**

**A:** Please review their voicemail carefully. They may request that you speak with them directly and set a return call deadline. Other times they may request that you log-in to CONNECT and complete additional fact-finding questions, so they can render a determination.

## **Q: I have disqualified weeks. What does that mean?**

**A:** Disqualified weeks will not release payment because of an adjudicator's determination. Verify the related disqualification by checking the "Determination, Pending Issues and Decision Summary" section of CONNECT or the CONNECT Inbox. If you disagree with the *Notice of Disqualification* you have the right to appeal.

**Q: I disagree with my adjudication determination, what should I do?**

**A:** You have the right to appeal the determination if you disagree with the “Reasoning and Findings” of the determination. Click [here](#) to file an appeal.

# Appeals

## **Q: What if I don't agree with my Reemployment Assistance benefit determination?**

**A:** You have the option to request an appeal with our team within 20 calendar days after the distributed date of the determination. Visit [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org) to download a Notice of Appeals Form.

\*Select one of the options below to submit your request for an appeal.

**Online:** Through [CONNECT](#)

**Email:** [RA.AppealsClerks@deo.myflorida.com](mailto:RA.AppealsClerks@deo.myflorida.com)

**Mail:** Office of Appeals  
P.O. Box 5250,  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-5250

**Fax:** 1-850-617-6504

## **Q: I've been denied unemployment, but I was let go because of COVID-19. Do I need to submit an appeal?**

**A:** You may submit an appeal if you receive a determination that negatively impacts you, and you disagree with the 'Reasoning & Findings' section on the determination. Your determination will have appeal rights that provide you with the necessary information on how to file your appeal.

## **Q: Was my request for monetary reconsideration received?**

**A:** CONNECT will not display a confirmation screen when submitted. Verify the request was received by checking the "Determination, Pending Issues and Decision Summary" section of CONNECT and reviewing the "Monetary Pending Issues" section. You should see a pending item attached to the employer's name that you reported wage issues on.

## **Q: What is an appeal hearing?**

**A:** An appeal hearing is scheduled when you or an employer disagree with a department determination and wish to have a hearing with an appeals referee. To protect your rights, participating in the hearing is important, even if the other party filed the appeal. The decision from this hearing will replace the determination that was appealed.

## **Q: How do I file an appeal?**

**A:** You must request an appeal hearing within 20 calendar days after the distributed date of the determination. If the 20th day falls on a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday you may file the appeal the next business day. You may submit your request for an appeal by mail, fax, email, or online through CONNECT. Please complete a Notice of Appeal for your request by mail or fax. Please use the CONNECT guide to file online. To submit by email, attach your Notice of Appeal and send to [RA.AppealsClerks@deo.myflorida.com](mailto:RA.AppealsClerks@deo.myflorida.com)

**Q: How do I file a late appeal?**

**A:** You may fax, email, or mail the request and include justification for the late appeal, if you missed the 20-day appeal period, it has been more than 90 days from the date of your determination, and you would like to request a late appeal.

**Fax:** 1-850-617-6504

**Email:** [RA.AppealsClerks@deo.myflorida.com](mailto:RA.AppealsClerks@deo.myflorida.com)

**Mail:** Office of Appeals

P.O. Box 5250

Tallahassee, FL 32399-5250

**Q: How do I know an appeal was filed?**

**A:** You will receive notification in your CONNECT inbox or by mail depending on your correspondence preference.

**Q: Should I continue to request benefit payment?**

**A:** Yes, you should continue to request benefit payments as long as you are unemployed, even if a hearing was requested or held, a decision was issued, or an appeal was made to the Reemployment Assistance Appeals Commission or Judicial Court. Be sure that you continue to follow all other instructions for Reemployment Assistance benefits.

**Q: Where are hearings held?**

**A:** Appeal hearings are held by telephone. You will receive a Notice of Hearing indicating the date and time an appeals referee will be calling you for your hearing.

**Q: How is the appeal hearing conducted?**

**A:** The hearing officer will call you on the day and time of your scheduled hearing. The hearing is your opportunity to present all information, including verbal statements and documentation. During the hearing, you will have an opportunity to respond to questions and provide information about the noticed issue. If there are other parties or witnesses present during the hearing, you will also be able to hear their testimony and ask them questions. If you provided or received documents for the hearing, the documents may be discussed during the hearing.

**Q: What happens if I don't participate?**

**A:** If the party who filed the appeal participates, a hearing will be held. The decision will be based on the evidence presented. If you do not participate, your evidence will not be considered. If you filed the appeal and do not participate, your case will be dismissed.

**Q: How can I arrange for witnesses?**

**A:** Contact and ask the witness to testify. The best witness is one with personal knowledge of the facts. A witness who was present at an event is much better than one who was told about it by someone else. If possible, you and your witness(es) should be at the same location for the hearing. If a witness cannot be at your location and must be contacted at a different telephone number, provide the witness' name and telephone number to the Office of Appeals by fax, mail or by email. Instruct the witness to be available at the scheduled hearing time and to remain available until dismissed by you or the appeals referee. If a witness refuses to testify voluntarily, a subpoena can be requested by writing to the address on the Notice of Hearing.

Mail or fax the request as soon as possible, so the subpoena can be served before the hearing. Include the case docket number; the witness' name, address, and telephone number (if available), as well as a detailed description of any document(s) the witness should furnish for the hearing.

**Mail:** Office of Appeals  
P.O. Box 5250  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-5250  
Fax number: 1-850-617-6504

**Q: What if I need a translator?**

**A:** Translation will be arranged for parties who indicate a primary language other than English. If a translator is needed and the Notice of Hearing does not indicate a translator was arranged, contact the Office of Appeals at once to advise what language is needed so arrangements can be made.

**Q: What if I need to change my hearing date?**

**A:** A postponement may be requested if there is a compelling reason why you cannot participate as scheduled. The request can be made in writing before the hearing or on the record during the hearing. A written request can be submitted through CONNECT, by fax, mail or by email to [DEOAppeals.Magistrate@deo.myflorida.com](mailto:DEOAppeals.Magistrate@deo.myflorida.com). The Request for Continuance form should be used. If you are unable to use this form, include a statement of good cause for continuance and reference your docket number. The referee will let you know in writing if the request is granted. If a written reply is not received, assume the request was denied. Be available for the hearing and prepared to present your case.

**Q: What if I missed the hearing?**

**A:** If you missed a hearing you must exercise due diligence in requesting re-opening. Any request for rehearing must be filed online through your CONNECT account or by mailing, emailing or faxing a written request to the address or fax number on the Notice of Hearing or Decision. To submit by email, attach a statement with your reason for not attending the hearing and send it to [RA.AppealsClerks@deo.myflorida.com](mailto:RA.AppealsClerks@deo.myflorida.com). The Docket Number for the missed hearing must be included in the statement. An appeals referee decision will only be rescinded if good cause for nonappearance is shown. Only compelling and necessary reasons constitute good cause. If your rehearing request is granted, you must present evidence of good cause at the new hearing and show due diligence in trying to re-arrange your schedule or requesting postponement. If good cause is not shown, the prior decision will be reinstated.

**Q: Can I withdraw my appeal?**

**A:** You may withdraw an appeal by submitting a written withdrawal request in CONNECT, by mail or fax to the Appeals Office address or fax number on the Notice of Hearing. Include your name and docket number and reason for withdrawal. In most situations, a withdrawn appeal cannot be reopened.

**Mail:** Office of Appeals  
P.O. Box 5250  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-5250  
Fax number: 1-850-617-6504

**Q: Should I hire an attorney?**

**A:** Professional representation is not required, and most people represent themselves at Reemployment Assistance hearings. You have the right to be represented by an attorney or authorized representative at your own expense. Fees for representing you must be approved by the appeals referee but paid by you. Legal representation may be available through a local Legal Aid Office at reduced or no cost for low-income claimants. For information about hiring an attorney, contact the Florida Bar Association toll-free at 1-800-342-8011. If you hire an attorney or authorize someone to represent you, provide the person's name, address, and telephone number to the Office of Appeals to ensure all notices are sent to that person.

**Q: When will I receive a decision?**

**A:** You will receive a decision electronically or in the mail as soon as possible after the hearing. The decision will include findings of fact, conclusions of law, and the result, which will affirm, reverse, or modify the determination or dismiss the appeal. An appeal decision can be viewed in your CONNECT inbox or by selecting the Determination, Pending Issues and Decision Summary page in your CONNECT account.

**Q: What if I disagree with the decision?**

**A:** If you disagree with the decision, you can request a review by the RA Appeals Commission. Instructions for requesting review are on the decision document. Any request for review must be filed within 20 calendar days after the decision was distributed. Generally, the Appeals Commission will not hold another hearing; its decision will be based on the testimony and other evidence presented to the referee and how the referee used that evidence to reach a decision. Therefore, presenting all of your evidence at the appeal hearing is very important. Upon completing its review, the Appeals Commission will mail a written order to all parties.

**Q: Will the case record be confidential?**

**A:** Only final decisions are disclosable along with any exhibits that are offered into evidence and used by the Appeals Referee in rendering their decision.

# Fraud and Overpayment

## Q. What is an overpayment?

**A:** Overpayments can occur on your account at any time. Overpayments may be the result of oversight, misunderstanding, technical errors, redetermination, adjudication, appeals decisions, Reemployment Assistance Appeals Commission orders, court decisions or other mitigating circumstances.

When the department determines an overpayment has occurred on a Reemployment Assistance claim, a Notice of Determination will be distributed. The Notice of Determination will state the claimant has an overpayment and the amount the claimant must repay. The claimant has the right to appeal the Notice of Determination.

## Q: How do I send a repayment to DEO for an overpayment?

**A:** Repayments are accepted by check or money order with an attached payment coupon or by credit card. Overpayments are expected to be paid in full. If you are unable to make repayment in full, you may make payments on a monthly basis. DEO will accept any repayments toward an overpayment.

You have the option to pay back overpayments multiple ways. These options are listed below:

- **Check Payments** - Please mail a check payment to the address below. Please make your check payable to the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity and provide your claim ID number in the memo line.

**Mail:** The Department of Economic Opportunity  
Benefit Payment Control  
P.O. Drawer 5050  
Tallahassee, FL 32314-5050

- **Credit Card Payments** - You have the option to pay your overpayment online by credit card. Please visit the link below and follow the directions to repay your overpayment by credit card. [Click here](http://www.floridajobs.org/Reemployment-Assistance-Service-Center/reemployment-assistance/claimants/repay-overpayment) to visit the overpayment webpage on FloridaJobs.org. ([www.floridajobs.org/Reemployment-Assistance-Service-Center/reemployment-assistance/claimants/repay-overpayment](http://www.floridajobs.org/Reemployment-Assistance-Service-Center/reemployment-assistance/claimants/repay-overpayment))

## Returning Federal Reemployment Assistance Overpayments:

To return federal payments, please follow the options listed above to repay any overpayment you think you have received on your account. Please allow several business days for all repayments to be received and processed.

## Q: Why did I get this letter regarding the Treasury Offset Program (TOP)?

**A:** Eligible debts owed to DEO will be noted within the issued letter and sent to the Department of Treasury in an effort to collect the amount due through your eligible federal tax refund. In addition, a \$17 processing fee is added to the collection. The following are considered eligible debts:

- Delinquent debt as a result of fraud.
- Delinquent debt as a result of non-reported earnings.
- Legally enforceable debts.



**Q: I received a collections notice; do I pay it to you or pay it to the collection agency?**

**A:** You should pay the collection agency once any delinquent debts have been referred elsewhere and you have received notification.

**Q: Why does the actual overpayment balance differ from what was provided by collections/TOP?**

**A:** If an overpayment requires a third party, either through a collection agency or through the TOP program, they will attach processing fees to the amount due. Any overpayment determined to have been fraudulent by the department will also incur an additional 15% penalty to the original amount overpaid.

**Q: Can I view my overpayments in CONNECT?**

**A:** If a Notice of Disqualification with an overpayment has been distributed, you can view the Notice of Disqualification and the debt owed in CONNECT. Otherwise, you are not able to view overpayments in CONNECT. If you have questions regarding an overpayment balance, please contact the department at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759).

**Q: What constitutes fraud related to overpayments?**

**A:** To receive a fraud determination, the department must conclude that you:

- Made false statements that may alter or increase benefits, or
- Withheld information that may alter or increase benefits, or
- Failed to report work in order to obtain or increase benefits; or
- Failed to report earnings in order to obtain or increase benefits.
- Being “unaware” of Reemployment Assistance laws does not exempt you from a fraud determination.

Please read all fraud statements carefully when submitting your application and any requests for benefits.

**Q: How can I avoid committing Reemployment Assistance fraud?**

**A:** You can avoid committing fraud by:

- Accurately report the reason you are unemployed. After applying for benefits, the separating employer(s) is sent a Notice of Claim Filed and Request for Separation Information, UCB-412.
- Actively search for work. You are required to conduct an active search for work for each week you claim benefits. You are required to make a minimum of 5 (or 3 in certain counties) verifiable job contacts each week and submit evidence of your job contacts, when requesting benefit payment in CONNECT. DEO conducts a random audit on claimants’ work search records. Employers are contacted to verify the information provided. **Governor DeSantis has waived the work registration requirement for individuals filing an application for benefits from March 15, 2020 until August 1, 2020.**
- Report any wages you have earned. You must report your gross wages (earnings before taxes and other deductions) for each week you work and claim benefits, even if you have not actually been paid for the work. This includes part-time or temporary work. DEO utilizes a quarterly wage cross-match system. The cross-match compares benefits paid to wages reported by employers under the same Social Security number during the same calendar quarter.
- Report when you are not able or available to seek or accept work. You must be physically able and available to perform some type of work (even if it is not your regular field of work). Notify DEO if you are not ready, willing and able to work (e.g. out of the area, on vacation, sick,

suffering total disability) while collecting RA benefits.

- Report all job refusals. If you refuse an offer of work, you must report your refusal to DEO, who will determine if there was good cause to refuse the work.
- Avoid errors and ensure proper payment of benefits. To prevent errors that may result in an overpayment, read all of the information in the [Reemployment Assistance Handbook](#).
- Know your responsibilities and ask for help. Navigating through the Reemployment Assistance system can be confusing. Do not risk losing your benefits because you do not know your rights and responsibilities. If you have a question, Reemployment Assistance Customer Service Representatives are here to help. Call **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759), Monday through Friday from 7:30 AM until 6:30 PM EST. For more information about Reemployment Assistance Fraud click [here](#).

# Scams and Identity Theft

## Reemployment Assistance Scams

During these difficult times, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) warns of an increased threat of scams for individuals applying for Reemployment Assistance and small businesses applying for loans. Be aware of false website, emails, text messages, job offers, online surveys and many other notifications and avenues used to target vulnerable Floridians.

### **Q: How or where do I report Reemployment Assistance Scams and Identity Theft?**

**A:** Please report any cases of fraud online at [FloridaJobs.org/ReportScam](https://FloridaJobs.org/ReportScam) or click [here](#). You can also report suspected fraud by calling **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759), extension 4.

### **Q: How can I avoid a Reemployment Assistance scam?**

**A:** You can report any cases of fraud online, [here](#). You can also report suspected fraud by calling **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759), extension 4

#### **Tips to Avoid Scams:**

- **No Fees.** If you get a phone call from someone on behalf of DEO telling you that you need to pay to file for any assistance, whether for your business or you personally, do not give any information to the caller or send money.
- **False Websites.** There are several websites that advertise they can provide you free money. Some of those sites offer services free of charge and others charge for the services. These websites often ask for confidential or private information such as your Social Security number, address, work history and email address. Use only the official DEO website: FloridaJobs.org.
- **Emails and Text.** DEO will not ask for personal information or for you to verify your eligibility or identification by email or text message. If you receive an email or text message and you are unsure if it came from DEO, contact a representative by phone at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759), extension 4.
- **Job Offers.** If you receive a call from someone representing themselves as an employee of DEO requesting your credit card number and personal information in order to be hired, do not provide the information. DEO will not ask you for your credit card information.
- **Online Surveys.** DEO does not pay individuals to take surveys. If you receive an email requesting and promising to pay you to complete the survey, do not complete the survey. This is likely an attempt to get your personal information.

## Reemployment Assistance Identity Theft

Identity theft is on the rise in both the private and public sector. Identity theft occurs when someone uses another person's information to take on his or her identity. Identity theft can include wages and employment information as well as credit card and mail fraud. In the case of Reemployment Assistance benefits, it could mean using another person's information such as name, Social Security number and employment information.

#### **Identity theft is often discovered when:**

- The victim attempts to file a Reemployment Assistance claim and one already exists for them.
- The victim receives an IRS statement of benefits collected (Form 1099G) from the Reemployment Assistance program.

- The victim's federal or state income taxes are intercepted.
- The victim's employer is notified that a claim for benefits has been filed while victim is still employed.
- The victim receives a request of information from RA.

**Q: How can I protect myself from becoming a victim of Identity Theft?**

**A:** There are multiple ways you can protect yourself from becoming a victim of Identity Theft. Some examples are listed below. Please also [click here](#) to view Florida's Identity Theft Victim Kit.

- When a person files a claim for Reemployment Assistance, they will receive a Monetary Determination. Reviewing this form may be the best way to stop a fraudulent claim from being processed. The monetary determination will provide information about whether or not the person is entitled to receive benefits, when the claim was filed, and information about wages. If you receive a monetary determination and you have not applied for Reemployment Assistance Benefits, or the name on the form is not yours, you may be a victim of identity theft. If this happens, contact Reemployment Assistance Customer Service Center immediately. Reporting an incorrect Monetary Determination may be the best way to stop a fraudulent claim from being paid.
- Guard your Social Security number. Give out the number only when absolutely necessary, and don't carry your Social Security card with you.
- Don't respond to unsolicited requests for personal information (name, birthdate, Social Security number or bank account number) by phone, mail, or online.
- Shred receipts, credit offers, account statements and expired cards, to prevent "dumpster divers" from getting your personal information.
- Review your credit report at least once a year to be certain that it doesn't include accounts that you have not opened. Check it more frequently if you suspect someone has gained access to your account information.

# Ending Claims

## **Q: When does a claim end?**

**A:** The claim expires after 365 days. Payments end when the balance runs out or the end date passes. Your monetary determination will notify you of your maximum balance available as well as the end date of your claim. The maximum number of weeks of assistance available is 12 weeks.

## **Q: I have returned to work. How do I close/cancel my claim?**

**A:** Congratulations on your new job! You may continue to request benefit weeks up to the week when you started working. When you request the week overlapping with your job, please indicate that you have worked and earned money during the week. If you expect to work full-time and/or earn over \$275 in gross earnings during the week of overlap, you do not need to request benefits for that week.

## **Q: My claim ran out of money, what do I do now?**

**A:** Under normal circumstances, there are no additional funds available when your claim reaches a \$0 balance. The message on your “Claimant Home” in CONNECT will provide the earliest date you are able to file a new claim for benefits. However, due to the federal CARES Act program, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) allows up to an additional 13 weeks of unemployment benefits once state Reemployment Assistance benefits have been exhausted. This means, eligible claimants may collect unemployment benefits for a longer period of time. Please view the PEUC step by step guide on [FloridaJobs.org/Cares-Act](https://www.floridajobs.org/Cares-Act) for information about applying for PEUC.

## **Q: Do you have extensions available?**

**A:** Under normal circumstances, there are no extension programs available. For other government programs offering assistance, you can visit [www.benefits.gov](https://www.benefits.gov). However, due to the federal CARES Act program, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) allows up to an additional 13 weeks of unemployment benefits to the end of state Reemployment Assistance benefits. This means, eligible claimants may collect unemployment benefits for a longer period of time. Please view the PEUC [step by step guide](https://www.floridajobs.org/Cares-Act) on [FloridaJobs.org/Cares-Act](https://www.floridajobs.org/Cares-Act) for information about applying for PEUC.

# Business

## Reemployment Assistance Resources and Questions

**Q: I may have to lay off employees due to business demand slowing down as a result of COVID-19. Will my tax account be impacted?**

**A:** There are two types of employers, contributory and reimbursing. Contributory employers may be relieved of benefit charges associated with COVID-19. This means that Reemployment Assistance benefits that former employees receive because they were separated from work as a direct result of COVID-19 may not be used in computing the employer's future Reemployment tax rate. This exception also applies to contributory employers who are participating in the Short-Time Compensation Program, but the exception does not apply to reimbursing employers.

**Q: Can my employees apply for Reemployment Assistance benefits if they are told to go home for medical reasons and receive paid leave?**

**A:** While on paid medical leave, an employee would not be considered "unemployed" under Florida Reemployment Assistance laws. Therefore, if an employee is receiving paid leave benefits, they are ineligible for Reemployment Assistance benefits.

**Q: What if my employees are not getting paid leave, are they eligible for Reemployment Assistance?**

**A:** If an employee is on unpaid leave, they may be eligible to receive Reemployment Assistance benefits depending on the circumstances surrounding the leave of absence.

**Q: Do my employees get Reemployment Assistance benefits even if they are too sick to work?**

**A:** Any employee can file a claim for Reemployment Assistance benefits. However, they must meet the eligibility requirements to be eligible to receive benefits.

**Q: What is the base period?**

**A:** The base period is the period of time that claimant's earnings are used to qualify a claimant for Reemployment Assistance. The base period is the first four of the last five completed calendar quarters. It can be located by accessing the monetary summary. Employment that occurred outside of the base period is not applied to the claimant's wages but in some cases (lag quarter wages) a separation may still be adjudicated for non-base period employment.

**Q: How do I find out what my CONNECT username is?**

**A:** If you do not know your log-in credentials, you will need to create your username by putting the letters E and P, then the number zero in front of your 7-digit Employer Account Number (EAN). Your EAN can be found on some of the correspondence from Reemployment Assistance. It is sometimes referred to as the RT Account #.

Here is an example of how you would create your username. If your EAN was 1234567, your username would be: EP01234567

Please contact the Employer Customer Service Center at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759), extension 6 if:

- You do not have the EAN or
- You have the username but need to have your password reset

**Q: What is the difference between a contributory employer and a reimbursable employer?**

**A:** A contributory employer is a standard employer who pays quarterly into the Unemployment Compensation Trust Fund and benefits charged to their account effect their rate. Employer requesting information about their charge rate, should contact the Department of Revenue. A reimbursable employer is a government employer (Federal, Military, County, or State Agency), certain nonprofit organizations, and Indian tribes with an EAN that starts with a “99.” These employers pay back the exact amount paid as claimants receive benefits.

**Q: I believe a claim has been filed fraudulently. What should I do?**

**A:** You should contact the department as soon as possible by calling our Reemployment Assistance Customer Service Center at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759), extension 4 or complete the online Fraud [form](#). It is important to respond to any forms sent to you, even if you have already reported the fraud to us by telephone. When responding to a UCB-412, it is important to clearly indicate that you believe this claim was filed as the result of identity theft. The department will then investigate the issue and lock the fraudulent claim’s account as well as non-charge any benefits that may have been charged to your employer account.

**Q: I received the letter that tells me my password, but I do not know my username. What do I do?**

**A:** Your username is created by putting the letters E and P, then the number zero in front of your Employer Account Number (EAN). The EAN is on some of the correspondence from Reemployment Assistance. It is sometimes referred to as the RT Account #, which stands for “Reemployment Tax.” It is a seven-digit number. Here’s an example of how you would create your username. If your EAN was 1234567, your username would be: EP01234567.

**Q: I am locked out of the system because I entered my password incorrectly too many times; what do I do?**

**A:** If you entered the incorrect password more than three times, your password will need to be reset. If you have added someone else as an administrator, that person can reset your password. Otherwise, call the Employer Customer Service Center at **1-833-FL-APPLY** (1-833-352-7759), extension 6. If you entered it incorrectly fewer than three times, you can select ‘Forgot Password,’ answer the security questions and a temporary password will be sent to the e-mail address on file.

**Q: How do I find out if Reemployment Assistance received a response or protest that I faxed?**

**A:** You can view the correspondence you have sent to the department in your employer portal in CONNECT. If the correspondence was faxed, it should be viewable within your portal within a few hours. If it wasn’t bar-coded, it should be processed and searchable in your employer portal within 48 hours.

**Q: I do not own my business anymore. What do I do?**

**A:** If you no longer have the business and have notified the Department of Revenue, there is nothing you need to do in relation to CONNECT.

**Q: How can an Out-of-State Employer or a Non-liable employer who is not in the base period and not subject to being charged Reemployment Tax submit a UCB-412?**

**A:** To respond to the notice of a claim (UCB-412), log into CONNECT by entering the Unique Document ID and Claimant ID that are listed on the notice. Then select ‘Continue.’ You then review the pre-populated information on the next screen. Then follow the additional steps below.

1. Respond to the questions in the 'Response' section.
2. Select 'Yes' or 'No' to indicate the claimant worked for you.
3. Enter period of employment.
4. Enter earnings.
5. Enter reason for separation.
6. Enter any post-employment payments.
7. Enter Employment in Educational Services information.
8. Enter work refusal information.
9. Enter remarks about the notice of claim filed.
10. Upload any relevant attachments.
11. Enter contact information.
12. Select 'Submit.'

These directions are from the Employer Guide, which can be found on the [FloridaJobs.org](https://www.floridajobs.org). Go to the tab labeled "Employers" on the home page and follow the prompts to the information about CONNECT.

**Q: How do I report new hires?**

**A:** New hires can be reported at <https://servicesforemployers.floridarevenue.com/Web/Public/Login.aspx>

**Q: What resources are available for my small business to prevent me from laying off staff and to help me pay bills I may have trouble paying because of COVID-19?**

**A:** The COVID-19 AID, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act provides funding for multiple programs, including the Paycheck Protection Program and the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Debt Relief Program. There are also traditional SBA Loans, such as the SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan Programs and Florida's Short Time Compensation program. See below for more information about each program. More information can also be found on our website at [Floridajobs.org/COVID-19](https://www.floridajobs.org/COVID-19).

- **Paycheck Protection Program-** In order for small businesses to have an incentive to keep employees on payroll, the CARES Act bill offers extensive debt relief through the SBA. The Paycheck Protection Program is a loan designed to provide businesses with fewer than 500 employees loans to keep their workers on the payroll. The program provides eight weeks of cash-flow assistance through 100 percent federally guaranteed loans. SBA will forgive loans if all employees are kept on the payroll for eight weeks and the money is used for payroll, rent, mortgage interest or utilities.
- **SBA Debt Relief Program-** The SBA Debt Relief program will provide a reprieve to small businesses as they overcome the challenges created by this health crisis. Under this program the SBA will pay the principal and interest of new 7(a) loans issued prior to September 27, 2020. The SBA will also pay the principal and interest of current 7(a) loans for a period of six months.



- **SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program-** The SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan program is available to small businesses and nonprofits that have been severely impacted by COVID-19. These targeted, low-interest loans of up to \$2 million can provide vital economic support to help overcome the temporary loss of revenue during this time.
- **The Short-Time Compensation Program-** The Short-Time Compensation Program helps employers retain their workforce in times of temporary slowdown by encouraging work sharing as an alternative to layoff. To avoid total layoff of some employees, the Short-Time Compensation program permits prorated Reemployment Assistance benefits to employees whose work hours and earnings are reduced as part of a Short-Time Compensation plan. To apply for the Short Time Compensation Program, please follow this link to the Employer Log-in page of [CONNECT](#).