

## HR Tracker, ¶46,841, Unemployment Insurance Program Letter outlines CARES Act benefits — AGENCY REGULATION, (Apr. 7, 2020)

On April 2, the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration released Unemployment Insurance Program Letter 14-20 (UIPL), outlining relevant provisions of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act related to the administration of and eligibility criteria for state unemployment insurance (UI) programs, including Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) for those not typically eligible for UI, such as gig workers, and expanded UI benefits.

The new guidance is the first of several upcoming UIPLs to states on the unemployment insurance provisions of the CARES Act, according to the DOL. The UIPL outlines several new programs under the recent CARES Act:

**Pandemic Unemployment Assistance.** PUA provides benefits for eligible individuals who are self-employed, seeking part-time employment, or who otherwise would not qualify for UI benefits under state or federal law. To be eligible, among other requirements, individuals must demonstrate that they are otherwise able to work and available for work within the meaning of applicable state law, except that they are unemployed, partially unemployed, or unable or unavailable to work because of COVID-19 related reasons.

**Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC).** Under the FPUC program, eligible individuals who are collecting certain UI benefits, including regular unemployment compensation, will receive an additional \$600 in federal benefits per week for weeks of unemployment ending on or before July 31, 2020.

**Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC).** The PEUC program allows those who have exhausted benefits under regular unemployment compensation or other programs to receive up to 13 weeks of additional benefits. States must offer flexibility in meeting PEUC eligibility requirements related to "actively seeking work" if an applicant's ability to do so is impacted by COVID-19.

**Summary table.** This UIPL includes a summary of all the UI-related provisions in Title II, Subtitle A of the CARES Act, and helps states implement the temporary emergency state staffing flexibility provision. A handy summary table of these provisions is included with the UIPL in Attachment 1, "Summary of Programs for the Relief for Workers Affected by Coronavirus Act."

**Coordination of programs.** The Program Letter notes that an individual may establish eligibility for multiple benefit programs, including multiple programs authorized in the CARES Act, contingent on the individual meeting all eligibility criteria for the respective program(s), and the state having entered into an agreement with the Secretary of Labor to administer such program(s).

"As workers across the country make sacrifices to combat the coronavirus, the U.S. Department of Labor is focused on supporting them and their families during a time of economic hardship," said Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia. "The Department is offering guidance and support so that States can provide benefits quickly while protecting the integrity of the unemployment insurance system."

**Further information.** Further information on UIPLs and previous guidance is available here, please visit: [wdr.doleta.gov/directives/](https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/). DOL resources on COVID-19 are posted here.

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