

N E W S R E L E A S E

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Employment Development Department Releases Unemployment Benefit Claim Data

20.5 million Unemployment claims and \$124 billion in benefits paid since pandemic began

Sacramento – The Employment Development Department today released the [latest data](#) on unemployment claim activity in California since the pandemic began. Californians have filed 20.5 million claims for unemployment insurance benefits and the state has paid approximately \$124 billion in unemployment aid.

Today's data also show that 3.7 million people have collected benefits in the last month alone. Approximately one-third of these payments are from the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program—a federal program for people who are not eligible for state unemployment insurance benefits. About two-thirds of payments included state Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits, benefits under Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) extension, or the Federal-State Extended Duration (FED-ED) extension--which provided up to 20 weeks of extra benefits for people who used all their regular UI or extension benefits.

Since January, the Department has also been issuing an extra \$300 a week in federal additional assistance payments. These additional payments to people total approximately \$6.5 billion so far this year. The Department is also continuing to take action to add 11 weeks of benefits to PUA or PEUC benefits to help approximately 1.5 million people who would have otherwise lost benefits after the federal CARES Act ended on December 27, 2020. EDD automatically added the additional benefits to claims for 1.3 million people as part of Phase One of the rollout in January—over 90 percent of people who were eligible for these federally extended benefits at the time.

The first of the remaining approximately 185,000 people as part of Phase Two are being notified this week that they can now certify their eligibility for the extended payments. This includes those who ran out of PUA or PEUC benefits before the last week of December 2020 which created a gap in benefits and required more complex programming. All people in this group should see emails, texts or mailed notices in the days ahead and be able to certify by March 7.

The Department is continuing to provide information to help people file and continue to obtain unemployment insurance benefits. EDD encourages Californians to view the [Unemployment Benefits Flow Chart](#) for information about what program they may qualify for, [helpful guidance](#) specifically aimed at people impacted by Covid-19, as well as answers to the most [frequently asked questions](#) by people seeking unemployment benefits.