

N E W S R E L E A S E

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## Department Issues Guidance to Help Workers with Reduced Hours, Update on American Rescue Plan Roll Out

SACRAMENTO—Following the successful launch of the American Rescue Plan and efforts to continue reopening California's economy, the Employment Development Department (EDD) today is highlighting resources and information to help a wide range of claimants—including workers with reduced hours who may be eligible for unemployment benefits.

Unemployment benefits are available for people who lose a job, have work hours reduced or had businesses affected during the pandemic. EDD encourages that workers with part-time, reduced hours, reduced wage, or intermittent employment situations explore their potential eligibility for benefits and file a claim.

EDD encourages claimants to apply online after reviewing the valuable online resource about [Filing an Unemployment Claim](#) to help them smoothly navigate the application process.

EDD has also added new information to the [COVID-19 FAQ's about Unemployment Insurance Benefits](#) page under the "Claims" category to help workers with reduced hours or wages apply for unemployment benefits. This information helps people answer application questions such as "do you have a date to start work?" and others that may have confused people seeking benefits for reduced wages or hours.

There are also FAQs addressing how to report any income earned when claimants [certify for benefits](#) which is required every two weeks for benefit payments. In addition, the EDD offers helpful guidance about [Understanding the Certification Questions](#)—in this case, how to respond to Question 6, which asks about work or earnings during the two-week certification period. There is also an explanation video available to help people [properly report any wages or earnings](#) collected during a certification period.

### Successful American Rescue Plan Launch Continues to Benefit Millions of People

Since passage of the American Rescue Plan last month, [EDD has taken swift action](#) to ensure millions of Californians continue to receive federal benefits under the federal program.

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The Department has continued to pay [an average of nearly 10 million claims a week](#) this year and has paid over \$24 billion in benefits this year.

The federal American Rescue Plan took effect on March 14, 2021. Over the month since, EDD has paid a total of \$2.7 billion in extended federal benefits for millions of Californians under the federal programs extended by ARP:

- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) for small business owners, self-employed, independent contractors, and others who don't qualify for regular UI benefits
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) extension benefits for those who run out of regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits
- Pandemic Additional Compensation (PAC) which is an extra \$300 federal payment EDD automatically adds to each week of benefits claimants receive.

The Department has [continued to meet and move faster on implementation targets](#) for the American Rescue Plan including ensuring all 1.2 million people collecting on an existing PUA claim have been able to certify and receive benefits if eligible since last month—faster than the April 10 target. Californians on regular state Unemployment Insurance or Federal-State Extended Duration have continued to receive the extra \$300 federal payment without interruption since the federal program launched.

### **Department Reminds Claimants to Reapply for Benefits At Benefit Year End**

The massive expansion in federal benefits under the American Rescue Plan comes at a time when many Californians are also reaching the expiration of their initial claims for benefits. At the end of that benefit year, most claimants will need to reapply for benefits.

To help claimants understand what to expect EDD has updated valuable information on the [Benefit Year End page](#) which has been viewed almost 3 million times. The EDD also offers an [Ask Eddy video](#) on our YouTube channel, currently viewed 30,000 times, to assist claimants through the process.

Those on a PUA claim do not need to apply for a new claim when they reach the end of their benefit year. Everyone else—including those with a regular state UI claim, a PEUC extension, or FED-ED—must reapply for federal benefits if they are still unemployed once they reach the end of their benefit year. This is a requirement under state and federal law.

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Individuals will be notified via email and text message, or mailed written notice, when the new claim is processed, which may take up to three weeks. When reapplying, EDD will run claims through fraud screening and identity verification as a standard practice to safeguard the process.

### **Continuing to Help Claimants With Self-Help Guidance**

As previously announced, [Questions #1 and #2](#) on the certification form continue to cause some confusion for claimants regarding the requirement that they remain able and available to accept work if offered. A claimant's answer to the eligibility questions can trigger an eligibility interview in the future.

The Department understands how confusing these certification questions can be in light of the pandemic and has been calling many claimants directly to help them resolve the question and avoid having to schedule a determination interview.

Claimants should answer calls from EDD when they see a caller ID that will show "St of CA EDD" or the UI Customer Service number 1-800-300-5616 during business hours. The representative calling will know the claimant's EDD Customer Account Number.

EDD strongly urges claimants to read the newly revised Help Text available by clicking on the blue question mark next to each certification question before submitting the certification. Claimants can also read the [Understanding the Certification Questions](#) guidance or view this helpful [Ask Eddy video](#).

Some earnings are not deductible from benefit payments. Claimants should select the best description of any earnings—instead of calling them "other"—to avoid delays that can come from having to set up an eligibility determination interview.

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