

N E W S R E L E A S E

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## **Disaster Unemployment Assistance has been approved for those impacted by widespread California fires**

### **Disaster benefits now available in Plumas, Lassen, Placer, and Nevada counties**

SACRAMENTO – Californians in Lassen, Nevada, Placer, and Plumas counties who have been impacted by wildfires that started in July and August 2021 can now file for federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA).

The California Employment Development Department (EDD) administers these benefits, which are available to workers, business owners, and self-employed individuals who lost their jobs or businesses, or had their work hours reduced due to the ongoing wildfires.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has determined that individuals who lost work or self-employment as a direct result of the Dixie Fire in Plumas and Lassen Counties, and the River Fire in Placer and Nevada counties, are now eligible to apply for DUA benefits. The FEMA approval is for [FEMA designated disaster area 4610-DR](#).

DUA applies to losses beginning the week of July 18, 2021 for claimants impacted by the Dixie and River fires. [Eligible full-time workers are able to receive](#) between \$147 and \$450 a week in benefits for a maximum period of 32 weeks. Part-time workers may also be eligible for benefits. The last payable week of this emergency benefit ends February 26, 2022.

DUA benefits are offered to victims of a federally-declared disaster and are available to individuals who meet any of the following criteria:

Worked or were a business owner or self-employed, or were scheduled to begin work or self-employment, in the disaster area. This includes, and is not limited to, those in the agricultural and fishing industries.

- Cannot reach work because of the disaster or can no longer work or perform services because of physical damage or destruction to the place of employment as a direct result of the disaster.
- The work or self-employment they can no longer perform was their primary source of income.

(more)

- Cannot perform work or self-employment because of an injury as a direct result of the disaster.
- Became the head of their household because of a death caused by the disaster.
- Have applied for and used all regular unemployment benefits, or do not qualify for regular unemployment benefits and remain unemployed as a direct result of the disaster.

Applications for DUA benefits must be filed by October 1, 2021 unless the individual has good cause to file a late application.

In addition, to receive DUA benefits, all required documentation must be submitted within 21 days from the day the DUA application is filed. Required documentation includes the most recent federal income tax form or check stubs, or other documentation to support that the individuals were working or self-employed when the disaster occurred. Documentation for the self-employed can be obtained from banks, government entities, or affidavits from individuals having knowledge of their business.

The fastest and easiest way for new claimants to apply for DUA is to use [EDD's UI Online application](#), which is available in both English and Spanish.

Applicants can also get assistance [at local job centers](#) and Local Assistance Centers or Disaster Recovery Centers.

Claimants can also apply for DUA by phone between 8 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., seven days a week:

- English: 1-800-300-5616
- Spanish: 1-800-326-8937
- Chinese (Cantonese): 1-800-547-3506
- Chinese (Mandarin): 1-866-303-0706
- Vietnamese: 1-800-547-2058

Due to high call volumes, callers are advised that they may experience long wait times when reaching a representative by telephone. EDD implemented a callback feature to hold a caller's place in the telephone queue without the need to wait on hold. Callers may need to call multiple times to get into the queue.

[EDD's Disaster-Related Services](#) webpage includes more information for individuals and businesses impacted by disasters, including tax filing extensions for affected employers. EDD also encourages individuals to visit the [Governor's Office of Emergency Services](#) wildfire recovery website for information on Local Assistance Centers where individuals, families and businesses can access disaster assistance programs and services.

The EDD administers the federal disaster-benefits program in California for the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment & Training Administration, on behalf of the Emergency Management Agency.