

Washington State Unemployment Insurance FAQ

Question / Issue	Answer / Response
I cannot get through on the phone lines and need help!	Many questions can be answered by reviewing information on the website https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment . This should be your first stop. If you have specific questions about your claim, contact customer service at 833-572-8400.
I can't get through and am worried I will miss out on some of my benefits!	You will not lose any benefits. You will be paid retroactively to the date you became unemployed, not the date when you filed your initial claim. First, go to the website https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment to see if your questions can be answered and review the checklist of how to apply. If you still have questions, call 833-572-8400 or use the virtual chat on www.worksourcewa.com .
Do I need to do anything to get the additional \$600 per week through the CARES Act?	No, continue to file your weekly claim. Most Washingtonians receiving unemployment insurance will receive the additional \$600 per week automatically and it will be paid retroactive to March 29. This includes workers on Shared Work, Standby, and SEAP.
I am already on UI – am I eligible for the new benefits? Do I need to do anything to access them?	Yes, you are eligible. The Federal CARES Act includes an additional \$600/week through the end of July and 13 additional weeks of benefits. Anyone on unemployment benefits is eligible. You do not need to do anything for the \$600, but will need to add the 13 weeks to your existing benefits. Watch for an email that will explain the action you need to take to access those 13 additional weeks. Please see the website https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment for more information.
I can't sign-up for a SAW account	Please watch this video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgrLhqbtHQ4&feature=youtu.be . If you still have problems, call customer service at 833-572-8400.
I applied and have not heard back. What's going on?	There is very high demand – with 1,000% increase in call volumes since the crisis began. ESD is working hard to meet the demand. Check the status on the website and, if you have not heard back in a couple of days, try calling 833-572-8400.
When I am approved, how long will it take to get my money?	Approximately 7-10 days.
I was approved and got my first payment, but haven't had any since. What happened?	Once approved, you need to file a claim each week. The unemployment week runs from Sunday to Saturday so you need to file a claim each week during this time frame to be paid for the previous week.
I am self- employed, a sole proprietor, an independent contractor, freelancer or a gig worker. What do I need to do? What documentation will I need to submit?	You can find information about necessary documentation and how to apply at https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment/self-employed

Should I file for Standby?	Do not request Standby when you apply. The requirement that you search for work each week is optional until further notice, regardless of the type of unemployment program you are on.
I applied for Standby and received a denial, what now?	Continue to file a claim each week. The denial is due to a glitch in the computer system and ESD is working to manually approve these claims.
To file your weekly claim over the phone and for claims inquiries that can't be answered online	Call 800-318-6022.
For general questions, not related to an already filed claim	Check the website first https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment , if you can't find the answer online, then call 833-572-8400.
Visit the "Help" page for additional tips for success	https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment/help

Compiled by Workforce Southwest Washington from information on the Employment Security Department (ESD) website <https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment>.