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Tennessee Unemployment Benefits Information - HELP4TN Blog



If you are one of the millions of Americans who have filed for unemployment because of the coronavirus/COVID-19 crisis, this blog can help you learn more about your rights and how to get unemployment.

In addition to regular unemployment insurance, Tennesseans may also be eligible for three new COVID specific programs: Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC), and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC).

For more information on your rights during coronavirus/COVID-19, [visit our HELP4TN Coronavirus page.](#)

To keep learning about unemployment benefits, [visit our HELP4TN Unemployment page.](#)

How do I apply to receive unemployment benefits in Tennessee?

- You can file a claim by visiting Jobs4Tn.gov or calling 844-224-5818.
- Due to large call volumes, ***the fastest and most efficient way*** to file a claim is to fill out an application online at Jobs4TN.gov.
- You can also file a claim on your **smartphone**--there is a Jobs4TN.gov phone application available on both the Apple Store and Google Play.
- [Instructions on how to use the phone app are available by clicking here.](#)

Am I eligible to receive ***regular*** unemployment benefits in Tennessee?

Typically, in order to qualify for ***regular*** unemployment insurance in Tennessee you must:

- Be unemployed through ***no fault of your own***
- **You must have qualifying base period wages**
- You must be **able** to work
- You must be **available** and **searching** for work**
- If you are *typically* not eligible for regular unemployment insurance, you may be eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA).
- ** In response to the COVID-19 crisis, Governor **Lee's Executive Order No. 15** modified the work search requirements for unemployment insurance claimants. To learn more visit: [TN.gov](#)

Am I eligible to receive ***Pandemic Unemployment Assistance?*** (PUA)

Individuals are eligible for **PUA** if they do not qualify for regular UI benefits (including **self-employed workers** and **independent contractors**) and cannot work because they:

- Are diagnosed with COVID-19 or have COVID-19 symptoms and are seeking diagnosis;

- Have a member of the household who is diagnosed with COVID-19;
- Are providing care for a family or household member diagnosed with COVID-19;
- Are the primary caregiver for a child whose school or care facility closed, due to COVID-19;
- Are unable to reach their place of employment due to an imposed quarantine, or because advised by a medical provider to self-quarantine, due to COVID- 19;
- Were scheduled to start new employment and cannot reach the workplace as a direct result of COVID-19;
- Became the major breadwinner because the head of household died from COVID-19;
- Quit their job as a direct result of COVID-19;
- Had their place of employment closed as a direct result of COVID-19; or
- Meet any additional criteria specified by U.S. Secretary of Labor

What is the *Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation* program? (FPUC)

This program is for those who use up their regular unemployment insurance benefits (up to 26 weeks). It provides an additional 13 weeks of benefits.

Anyone who used up regular unemployment benefits after July 1, 2019, is eligible to receive 13 additional weeks of benefits. These thirteen additional weeks include the \$600 from the FPUC.

Questions & Important Points

- *Typically*, the first full week of an unemployment claim is a waiting week. Governor Lee's **Executive Order No. 15** waived this requirement. Because he waived this requirement, you will receive **retroactive payment** to the first week of your claim if your claim is approved
- Reduced hours **might** qualify someone for unemployment. The TN Department of Labor & Workforce recommends that you go ahead and file the claim.
- If you are not able to work because a **medical professional** told you to quarantine, you **may be eligible for unemployment benefits**. Governor Lee's **Executive Order No. 15** opened the door for eligibility.

- If you were furloughed, you are eligible for unemployment only if your pay was ***cut or eliminated.***

This blog is not legal advice, but it is legal information to help you learn about your rights. Need more help? HELP4TN free legal helpline has attorneys ready to answer your questions. Give us a call at 844-435-7486.

Last updated on February 06, 2026.

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