

LOST WAGES ASSISTANCE (LWA) PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions



What is the Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) Program?

The Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program is a federal program that provides an additional \$300 in unemployment compensation to monetarily eligible claimants who certify that they are unemployed or partially unemployed as a result of COVID-19. The LWA program is effective beginning the benefit week ending August 1, 2020 through September 5, 2020 and payments will be issued with claimant's regular weekly benefit. Claimants do not need to reapply or complete an application to receive LWA.

When does the LWA Period of Assistance End?

FEMA announced that the LWA Period of Assistance will end on December 27, 2020. This means that unless an individual applies for unemployment benefits by December 27, 2020, they will not receive LWA even if they have retroactive eligibility during the weeks LWA was available.

Who is Eligible for LWA?

LWA is available for unemployment claimants who certify that they are unemployed or partially unemployed as a result of COVID-19 **and** are monetarily eligible to receive at least \$100 per week of unemployment benefits in any of the following programs:

- Unemployment Insurance (UI)
- Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE)
- Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Servicemembers (UCX)
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)
- Extended Benefits (EB)
- Shared Work (SW)
- Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA)

When will LWA end?

Per an announcement made by FEMA officials on September 9, 2020, LWA will expire after 6 weeks of payments with the benefit week ending September 5, 2020.

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If my claim is still in process will I be able to get LWA?

As long as you apply within the period of assistance, you will receive LWA for eligible weeks of unemployment between the week ending August 1, 2020 and the week ending September 5, 2020, even if DES is still processing your claim. The period of assistance ends on December 27, 2020. If you apply for unemployment benefits after the period ends, DES cannot provide retroactive LWA payments for the weeks in which you were eligible.

How much will my weekly benefit amount be after LWA ends the benefit week ending September 5, 2020?

Unless there is additional action taken by the Federal government, starting with payments for benefit week ending September 12, 2020, you will receive the Weekly Benefit Amount provided to you on your monetary determination. For regular UI, PEUC, and EB that is between \$187 and \$240, for PUA that is between \$117 and \$240.

How do I apply for LWA?

There is no application for LWA. Claimants eligible for LWA will automatically receive LWA funds in addition to their weekly benefit amount as long they are monetarily eligible for unemployment benefits, unemployed or partially unemployed as a result of COVID-19, and applied within the period of assistance. There is an opportunity during the weekly certification process for UI, UCFE, UCX, PEUC, PUA, and EB to indicate your unemployment is due to COVID-19. Employers will provide this certification for Shared Work participants.

When is LWA available?

LWA payments are available between the benefit week ending August 1, 2020 and benefit week ending September 5, 2020. Claimants must apply for unemployment benefits prior to the end of the period of assistance in order to be considered for LWA.

Is LWA taxed?

Yes. The LWA payment is subject to both federal and state income taxes.

Do I need to submit any additional documentation to receive LWA?

No additional documentation needs to be provided in order to receive LWA.

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For Shared Work program participants, is it the claimant or the employer who needs to provide the “self-certification” that unemployment or partial unemployment is due to COVID-19?

Your employer can complete the COVID-19 self-certification on your behalf if they can certify that you were laid off or your hours were reduced due to COVID-19. If your employer is unable to certify on your behalf, then the Department will contact you directly to self-certify.

Will claimants who already received unemployment benefits for the weeks ending August 1, 2020 and August 8, 2020 also receive retroactive LWA for these weeks?

Yes. LWA is payable retroactively to eligible claimants beginning with the week ending August 1, 2020. However, if an individual becomes unemployed after the week ending August 1, 2020, they will not receive LWA for weeks prior to their unemployment.

Will child support or past debt of unemployment benefits (overpayments) be deducted or offset from LWA payments?

Offsets of, or deductions from, of LWA payments will only be made for tax withholding. Offsets or deductions cannot be made for child support obligations or unemployment overpayments.

If child support was deducted from your LWA payment, the amount will be refunded to you in the form of a check. This payment will not be credited to your child support balance or current child support monthly payment. You do not need to take any action for this correction to be made to your payment. However, please note that child support obligations may be taken from a portion of your regular UI or PUA payment. For questions about your child support case, please call the DCSS call center at 1-800-882-4151 or visit their website des.az.gov/dcsc.

What appeal rights does an individual have if the state denies payment of LWA benefits?

LWA determinations are subject to review and appeal in the same manner and to the same extent as unemployment insurance determinations under the Arizona Revised Statutes and the Arizona Administrative Code, and only in that manner and to that extent. Therefore, the only method for appealing your LWA determination is an appeal of your determination of eligibility in the underlying unemployment program, using the [standard appeals process](#). If you believe you are eligible for LWA but are not receiving an LWA payment, you can [contact DES](#) for assistance.