

Disaster Unemployment Assistance

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The Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) program is available to state, tribal, and territorial (STT) governments under a Presidentially declared major disaster that includes Individual Assistance and authorizes DUA, pursuant to section 410 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, Public Law 93-288, as codified at 42 U.S.C. § 5177. DUA provides unemployment benefits and reemployment services to individuals who became unemployed as a direct result of the declared incident and who are not eligible for regular state unemployment insurance.

In coordination with FEMA, the U.S. Department of Labor oversees the DUA program. Following a Presidentially declared major disaster, FEMA provides funds to the U.S. Department of Labor for payment of DUA benefits and reimburses the state for administrative costs associated with DUA benefits. The Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor is responsible for administering the DUA program and payment of DUA benefits. Implementing regulations for DUA are at 20 C.F.R. Part 625.

DUA is administered by the state or territorial^[1] unemployment insurance agency. Once funding is in place, the unemployment insurance agency will issue public announcements throughout the declared disaster area publicizing its availability. Payments to eligible applicants will be issued for up to 26 weeks after the declaration date, as long as the individuals' unemployment was, and continues to be, a direct result of the declared disaster event.

General Requirements

To be eligible for DUA, individuals must:

- Provide proof of identity.
- Be a U.S. citizen, non-citizen national, or qualified non-citizen.



- File an application for DUA with the local unemployment insurance agency within 30 days of the date of the public announcement of availability of DUA^[2].
- Be ineligible for regular unemployment insurance.
- Be unemployed or partially unemployed as a direct result of the major disaster.
- Be able and available for work, unless injured as a direct result of the disaster (see conditions below).
- Have not refused an offer of employment in a suitable position.

Conditions of Unemployment

Applicants must meet one of the following conditions of unemployment or inability to perform services in self-employment as a direct result of the disaster:

- The individual has had a week of unemployment following the date the major disaster began.
- The individual is unable to reach their place of employment.
- The individual was scheduled to start work and the job no longer exists due to the major disaster, or the individual was unable to reach the job.
- The individual became the major support of the household because the head of the household died as a direct result of the disaster.
- The individual cannot work because of an injury caused as a direct result of the major disaster.
- The individual experienced a lack of work or loss of revenue when the employer (or the self-employed individual's business) lost a majority of income or revenue from an entity in the major disaster area that was damaged, destroyed, or closed by the federal, state or local government as a direct result of the major disaster.

Suffering a monetary loss due to damage of property or crops does not automatically entitle an individual to DUA. Applicants must follow the instructions in the public announcements and file for DUA based on the filing method used by the applicable unemployment insurance agency (i.e., in-person, mail, telephone or internet).

Individuals who moved or evacuated to another state, tribe, or territory should contact the unemployment insurance agency for the affected area or the state in which they are currently residing for claim filing instructions and assistance.



For additional information concerning the DUA program, contact the U.S. Department of Labor at 1-866-487-2365 or your state or territory unemployment insurance agency or visit the [Department of Labor's DUA website](#).

Roles and Responsibilities

Non-Discrimination

All forms of FEMA disaster assistance are available to any affected household that meets the eligibility requirements. No federal entity or official (or their agent) may discriminate against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, age, nationality, sex, disability, English proficiency, or economic status.

Documentation

Individuals are required to substantiate employment or self-employment or to substantiate work that was to begin on or after the date of the disaster. If proof of employment cannot be provided at the time the claim is filed, individuals have 21 calendar days from that time to meet this requirement. Failure to submit this documentation within 21 days will result in a denial of DUA, and any benefits already paid will be considered overpaid. Individuals are required to repay any benefits that are overpaid.

Footnotes

1. If a tribe receives a Presidential major disaster declaration with IA, requests DUA, and is approved, the DUA program is administered through the state in which the tribal headquarters is located. Any approved funding is processed through the same state or territorial workforce agency that processes regular unemployment insurance claims.
2. While 30 days is the standard deadline, under extenuating circumstances unique to the disaster, the U.S. Department of Labor may extend the deadline. Survivors should consult with their local unemployment or workforce agency to confirm deadlines for applying.

