



LOCAL 8  
**PLUMBERS & GASFITTERS**  
— EST. 1890 • KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI —

## FILING FOR UNEMPLOYMENT IN MISSOURI

Brothers and Sisters:

Below you will find information and resources regarding filing [unemployment claims in Missouri](#). Generally, you should file your claim with the state where you worked. Please be advised that the information below is subject to change in light of anticipated federal and state action to address the growing number of unemployment claims in connection with COVID-19.

For those filing for unemployment for the first time, here is a helpful video that provides step-by-step instructions: [https://youtu.be/yjspqVgB\\_Po](https://youtu.be/yjspqVgB_Po)

Here is the information you will need to file:

- Your Social Security number;
- Any amount you were paid in the past week, before taxes and deductions;
- The name and mailing address of each job you worked in the past 18 months;
- The dates you started and ended work at each of those jobs.

You can file online at [uinteract.labor.mo.gov](http://uinteract.labor.mo.gov). This website is available 24/7. If your job loss is related to coronavirus issues, make sure to check a box that says “COVID-19” in your application to waive a requirement to search for a new job amid the crisis. **You’ll also need to file a request for payment each week, including the week you file.** You can make such request using the same website. Missouri currently provides benefits for up to 20 weeks. If you need assistance, Missouri Department of Labor representatives are available by phone 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. on weekdays. The phone number is 816-889-3101 or 800-320-2519. You can also email [esuiclaims@labor.mo.gov](mailto:esuiclaims@labor.mo.gov).

Please find below additional FAQ. There are also more FAQ here: <https://molabor.uservoice.com/knowledgebase/topics/38070-unemployed-workers>

Again, unemployment benefits are subject to change in light of legislative efforts to provide additional benefits to workers. We will provide updates and guidance as they become available. If you have any other questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. Thank you.

## **Coronavirus (COVID-19) and Unemployment Insurance Benefits Questions and Answers from the Missouri Department of Labor**

Last Updated 3/19/20

**Question: When should an individual file for unemployment benefits?**

**Answer:** Once the individual is separated from work, they should immediately file a claim for unemployment benefits.

**Question: If I am off of work due to the coronavirus and am receiving pay such as paid sick leave, vacation pay or family medical leave pay, am I eligible to receive unemployment benefits?**

**Answer:** No. Generally speaking, an individual still receiving pay while off of work is not “unemployed” and is ineligible for unemployment benefits.

**Question: If the coronavirus (COVID-19) causes an employer to shut down operations temporarily, will workers qualify for unemployment benefits?**

**Answer:** In most situations, yes. Missouri unemployment benefits are available to individuals who are unemployed through no fault of their own. If an employer must shut down operations temporarily and no work is available, individuals may be eligible for unemployment benefits if they meet the eligibility criteria. Weekly work search requirements are not required when there is a recall date within eight weeks of the temporary lay-off. If the recall date changes but is within the initial eight weeks from the last day worked, the employee must contact a Regional Claims Center representative to update the recall date. An employer may apply for approval of an extended recall and work search waiver for employees of up to sixteen weeks. For more information about recall and extended work search waiver please visit: [labor.mo.gov/DES/Employers/extended\\_waiver](https://labor.mo.gov/DES/Employers/extended_waiver).

**Question: Will an employee be eligible for unemployment benefits if they are in mandatory quarantine because of suspicion of having the coronavirus?**

**Answer:** In most situations, yes. Weekly work search eligibility requirements are not required when there is a recall date within eight weeks of the temporary lay-off.

**Question: If an asymptomatic individual imposes a self-quarantine because of the coronavirus, will they be eligible for unemployment benefits?**

**Answer:** The individual may be eligible for benefits. Unemployment benefits are available to individuals who are totally or partially unemployed due to no fault of their own. In this example, the individual—not the employer—is choosing not to work. However, the facts of each circumstance are essential. If the employer allowed this individual to telework and the individual chose not to accept that work, they would not qualify for benefits because they would not be unemployed. If the employer required the individual to stay home but did not offer telework, the individual might be eligible for benefits.

**Question: If an individual has exhausted unemployment benefits for the benefit year, are they eligible for additional unemployment benefits due to the Coronavirus?**

**Answer:** Not at this time.

**Question: If an individual leaves work to care for children due to school/daycare closures as a result of COVID-19, are they eligible to receive unemployment benefits?**

**Answer:** In most cases, no. Unemployment benefits are available to individuals who are totally or partially unemployed due to no fault of their own. In this example, the individual is not available for work due to caring for children and would be ineligible. However, the facts of each circumstance are essential in determining eligibility for unemployment benefits.

**Question: If an individual is ill because of the coronavirus, will they be eligible for unemployment benefits?**

**Answer:** Maybe. The facts of each circumstance are essential in determining eligibility for unemployment benefits and each situation must be handled on a case by case basis.

**Question: Will employees be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits if an employer lays off employees due to the loss of production caused by the coronavirus?**

**Answer:** In most situations, yes. Missouri unemployment benefits are available to any individual who is unemployed through no fault of his or her own. If an employer must lay off employees due to the loss of production caused by the coronavirus, individuals may be eligible for unemployment benefits if they meet the eligibility criteria. Employers may be able to avoid a lay-off with a partial shut down by applying for the Missouri Shared Work program.

**Question: Can an employer participate in Missouri's shared work program whose business has temporarily declined due to the coronavirus (COVID-19)?**

**Answer:** An employer can participate in a shared work plan if they meet the eligibility requirements for Missouri's shared work program. The Shared Work Unemployment Compensation Program is an alternative to layoffs for employers faced with a reduction in available work. It allows an employer to divide the available work among a specified group of affected employees instead of a layoff. These employees receive a portion of their unemployment benefits while working reduced hours. For more information about the eligibility requirements for Missouri's shared work program, please visit [www.sharedwork.mo.gov](http://www.sharedwork.mo.gov) , email [sharedworkinfo@labor.mo.gov](mailto:sharedworkinfo@labor.mo.gov) or call 573-751-WORK (9675).

**Question: Can an employer participate in a mass claim filing?**

**Answer:** Yes. The Electronic Mass Claims Filing System is available to employers during a temporary mass lay-off. Employee information provided by the employer, allows the DES to file an initial or renewed unemployment claim on behalf of employees quickly and efficiently. An employer can participate in a mass claim filing if they meet the eligibility requirements below:

- The lay-off must be due to a lack of work;
- The lay-off must be less than eight weeks in duration;
- An employee is not on a leave of absence;
- The employee is not receiving pay; for example, sick pay, vacation pay, family medical leave pay, etc.
- For more information about the Mass Claims Filing System, please call 573-751-0436.

**Question: Can an individual receive Disaster Unemployment Assistance due to the coronavirus?**

**Answer:** If the President of the United States declares the coronavirus a national disaster with individual assistance available, and if the individual experiences a loss of work in Missouri as a result, they may be eligible for unemployment benefits and/or Disaster Unemployment Assistance. NOTE: The March 13, 2020, national disaster emergency declaration did NOT include individual assistance.

**Question: What if a claimant is required to participate in the Reemployment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) program?**

**Answer:** If an individual is required to participate in the RESEA program the RESEA interview will be completed over the phone at this time. Claimants should contact the MO Job Center at the phone number listed on the appointment letter. If the individual is unable to participate, they may reschedule their interview appointment by contacting the job center at the phone number listed on their appointment letter.

## **MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF LABOR FAQ**

### **When and how do I file an unemployment claim?**

File an unemployment claim as soon as you are separated from your employer. UInteract, the online claim filing system is mobile friendly and available 24 hours a day. You may use UInteract to file your initial claim and your weekly request for payment by visiting <https://uinteract.labor.mo.gov>.

For questions or assistance, Regional Claims Centers (RCC) representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Central Time, Monday through Friday, except holidays. Calls are answered in the order that they are received. The phone number is 816-889-3101 or 800-320-2519. If the phone lines are busy when you call, please try again in a few minutes. Once you are in line to speak with a representative, do not hang up and call back. That will only increase your wait time by putting you again at the back of the line.

### **When will I receive benefits?**

Benefits can be paid within 22 days after establishing a new claim or renewing an established claim, unless an issue is being investigated. Any situation that requires a determination to be made regarding your eligibility to receive benefits is called an “issue”. An issue can take on average 4-6 weeks to be completed. If an issue arises on your claim, you are given the opportunity to provide information electronically via UInteract, through mailed questionnaire or by phone. A determination will be made even if you do not provide information. Be sure to file a weekly request for payment each week, even if you are not yet receiving a benefit payment. You will not receive unemployment benefits for any week that was not requested in a timely manner. Benefits are not paid on the same day each week. If eligible, payments are made the following business day after the week requested is processed. This does not include weekends or State/Federal holidays. The Division of Employment Security (DES) will not notify you when a payment is processed. If receiving payments on the Missouri Access MasterCard® debit card, you may check your account balance or sign up for text alerts at [www.mo-access.com](http://www.mo-access.com) free of charge. [Click here](#) for more information about charges associated with the Missouri Access MasterCard® debit card. If receiving payment through direct deposit, you may check with the financial institute handling your account to determine whether they offer a payment alert system.

### **What do I do after starting a claim?**

Filing a new claim, or renewing an existing claim, is the first step in the unemployment process. After you have filed a new claim, or renewed an existing claim, you will need to file a weekly request for payment for each week and, if required, you also must search for work.

A claim week begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday. You must wait until the week is over before you make the weekly request for benefits. Beginning on the Sunday after you file your initial or renewed claim, you should file your first weekly request. Continue to file each week until you return back to work. You must file your weekly request for payment within 14 days from the end of the week (Saturday) you are claiming.

Visit [uinteract.labor.mo.gov](http://uinteract.labor.mo.gov). Make sure you complete the form and receive a confirmation page, or you will have to start again.

You may only claim the weeks presented to you, which will not exceed the three prior weeks. If you have any problems or questions, call your area RCC. Once you have completed the weekly filing, you must contact your area RCC to change or correct an answer.

### **How are benefits paid?**

You must choose to receive benefits via direct deposit or through the Missouri Access MasterCard® debit card. You will be asked to choose one of these options when you file your unemployment claim online at [uinteract.labor.mo.gov](http://uinteract.labor.mo.gov). You may also change your payment method at any time on your account.

*Direct Deposit:* This is the easiest way to access your benefits using your current bank account or credit union.

*Missouri Access MasterCard®:* If you do not file for direct deposit you will receive the debit card and its information in the mail within two weeks of your claim being established. Receiving a card does not guarantee payment of benefits. Even if you are not eligible to receive benefits right away, keep your card through its expiration date in case you become eligible later. Losing your card will delay access to your benefits.

### **How do I make my weekly request for payment?**

Make sure you have the following items available:

1. Your Social Security Number and your PIN (Personal Identification Number).
2. If you worked and earned wages during the week you are claiming, or you received or will receive vacation, holiday or [Workers Adjustment and Retraining Notification \(W.A.R.N.\)](#) pay for the week, be sure you know the gross amount (total dollars and cents before any deductions) of the pay before you file. These wages will be verified with the employer(s). Related Links: [Unemployment Benefits Calculator](#), [Partial Unemployment Benefits Calculator](#)
3. If self-employed during the week for which you are filing, be sure you know how many hours you worked, even if you had no earnings. If you worked but had no

earnings, contact your Regional Claims Center (listed below) for assistance in filing.

You can file your weekly request for payment online.

Online 24/7: Visit [uinteract.labor.mo.gov](http://uinteract.labor.mo.gov). Log onto the claims filing system and answer the questions and click "Submit". You will receive a confirmation page to indicate your claim has been filed.

- You must report all wages earned during the week even though you may not be paid until later.
- You must report tips, commissions, bonuses, show-up time, and military reserve drill pay.
- Board, lodging and any other payments not in cash or by check also must be reported.
- If your income for the week is from self-employment or National Guard drill, you need to discuss this with your RCC each week. They will instruct you on how to answer.
- You also must be able and available to work full time each day. This means no illness, injury, or personal circumstances would keep you from working during the week claimed.

### **What happens when I file a new claim?**

The effective date of your claim will be the beginning (Sunday) of the week that you file. The Division of Employment Security will mail you a form called Notice of Initial Determination of Status as an Insured Worker. Even if the form shows that you are an insured worker, it does not mean that you will receive unemployment benefits. This form will show:

- Your weekly and maximum benefit amounts
- The beginning date of your claim
- Your base period
- The amount of wages reported by each employer by quarter in the base period.

After your new claim is filed, you must begin filing weekly requests for payment and, if required, search for work.

If you believe wages are listed incorrectly, some of your wages are missing, or if you disagree with the effective date of the claim, contact your [Regional Claims Center \(RCC\)](#) by the date shown on the bottom of the form. Failure to respond by that date may cause you to lose the right to use these additional wages. You may need to provide proof of the correct wages, such as check stubs, W-2 statements, or other documents.

Even if you have asked the DES to look into the wages used on your claim, begin filing weekly requests and continue to file for each week you are unemployed.

### **What do I do if I go back to work?**

If you go back to work full-time, stop filing weekly requests for payment. Or, if you are earning enough wages part-time that you are not getting any weekly benefits, you should stop claiming. Your claim will automatically close after 28 days.

### **How do I renew my claim?**

Your claim for benefits will become inactive if you do not file a weekly request for payment within 28 calendar days (four weeks) from the end (Saturday) of the last week you claimed. Your claim must be renewed or reopened if it becomes inactive. This must be done before weekly requests for payment can be filed. Your renewed claim will be started the Sunday of the week you file the renewal.

If you have not filed a weekly request for payment for three weeks (21 calendar days) and you plan to claim the fourth week, visit [uinteract.labor.mo.gov](http://uinteract.labor.mo.gov) to renew or reopen your claim. Be sure to print and keep the confirmation page.