



**FISCAL RESEARCH DIVISION**  
A Staff Agency of the North Carolina General Assembly

**House Select Committee on COVID-19  
Economic Support Working Group**

**Unemployment Benefits: Overview of Federal  
Programs enacted by CARES Act**

**April 7, 2020**

# CARES Act

## Highlights of Unemployment Provisions

### Major CARES Act Unemployment Insurance (UI) Provisions:

- Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) (additional \$600 per week)
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) (additional 13 weeks of UI benefits)
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)



# Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC)

- Provides an additional \$600 per week in UI benefits paid for weeks after March 29, 2020 – July 31, 2020.
- Additional compensation of \$600 per week is provided concurrently with regular UI benefits.
- Maximum weekly benefit amount (WBA) for individuals eligible for maximum regular UI benefit in NC:  
 $\$350(\text{max}) + \$600 = \$950$ .
- Additional compensation of \$600 per week is available for majority of UI programs during eligible weeks.
  - Receipt of FPUC is not dependent on unemployment being related to COVID-19.



# Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)

- Provides up to 13 additional weeks of UI benefits to individuals who have exhausted their regular UI benefits with respect to their benefit year; have no rights to regular UI benefits; and are able, available and actively seeking work.
- The UI benefit during this period is the amount the individual would have otherwise been entitled to under State law, plus \$600 for weeks claimed after March 29, 2020 – July 31, 2020.
- After July 31, 2020, UI benefit amount reverts to regular UI benefit available under State law.



# Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)

- Covers individuals who do not qualify for regular UI benefits
  - Exhausted regular UI benefits
  - Self-employed and independent contractors
  - Otherwise do not qualify for any other UI programs, such as an individual with non-covered employment, insufficient work history, or insufficient wages
- Does *not* include individuals with the ability to telework with pay; or who are receiving sick leave or other paid benefits.
- Provides up to 39 weeks of UI benefits, minus any other weeks claimed under regular UI or Extended Benefits (EB).
- Does *not* include PEUC weeks.



# Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)

- Claimants must self-certify that they are unable to work for specified reasons related to COVID-19.
- The amount and duration of benefits is equal to the amount the claimant would have otherwise be entitled to as a regular UI benefit under State law, plus an additional \$600 per week for weeks after March 29, 2020 – July 31, 2020.
- PUA is payable for weeks of unemployment, partial unemployment, or inability to work caused by COVID-19 related reasons beginning on or after January 27, 2020.
- PUA is *not* payable for any week of unemployment ending after December 31, 2020.



# WBA = State amount + \$600 FPUC (through 7/31)

## Regular UC

- Must be eligible
  - Covered employment
  - Sufficient work history
  - Sufficient wages
- Flexibility in satisfying work search requirements through 12/31/20
- Maximum of 12 weeks
- Must exhaust regular UC

## PEUC

- For claimants who qualify for regular UI benefits, but have exhausted regular State UI benefits
- Provides an additional 13 weeks of benefits
- Provided regardless if reason for unemployment is COVID-19 related
- Federally funded

## PUA

- Available to claimants **who do not qualify for regular UI benefits**
  - Self-employed
  - Exhausted State benefits
  - Non-covered employment or insufficient work history or wages
- Reason for unemployment must be COVID-19 related
- Federally funded



# Summary of CARES Act UI Provisions

- Provides an additional \$600 per week in UI benefits, through July 31<sup>st</sup> .
- Extends UI benefit duration by 13 weeks.
- Provides UI benefits to workers impacted by COVID-19 that are not covered under any other UI program for a period up to 39 weeks.
- PUA, PEUC, and FPUC are 100% federally funded. This includes expenses related to associated expansion of benefits, duration and administrative costs.
- All federal programs expire Dec. 31, 2020.

