

## **DES Website language for COVID-19**

### **[COVID-19 Webpage]**

#### **[page header] COVID-19 and Unemployment Insurance**

This page includes FAQs and information from the North Carolina Division of Employment Security relating to COVID-19 and unemployment insurance. This page will continue to be updated as needed as the response to COVID-19 in North Carolina develops.

Under the guidance of North Carolina [Executive Order No. 118](#), the North Carolina Department of Commerce Division of Employment Security is working to ensure necessary unemployment insurance benefits are available to eligible North Carolinians whose employment is temporarily affected by the coronavirus disease COVID-19.

The order relates to individuals who, as a direct result of COVID-19, are separated from employment, have had their hours of employment reduced, or are prevented from working due to a medical condition caused by COVID-19 or due to communicable disease control measures.

The fastest and most efficient way to file a new claim for unemployment insurance benefits is to file online at [des.nc.gov](https://des.nc.gov). If you're temporarily out of work or working reduced hours due to COVID-19, please select one of those two separation reasons when filing your claim.

An individual's eligibility, exact amount of benefits and duration of those benefits cannot be determined until after they file their claim.

### **FAQS**

#### **[section header] For Individuals**

##### **Q. What if I am temporarily laid off work because business has slowed down as a result of COVID-19?**

**A.** If you are laid off work temporarily or if your hours are reduced due to a business slowdown or a lack of demand as a result of COVID-19, you may be able to receive unemployment benefits. In order to determine eligibility, you must first apply for unemployment. If you're temporarily out of work or working reduced hours due to COVID-19, select one of those two separation reasons when filing your claim.

##### **Q. What if my employer goes out of business as a result of COVID-19?**

**A.** You may be eligible for unemployment benefits if you're laid off. If you're out of work due to COVID-19, indicate that while filing your claim.

Revised: March 17, 2020

**Q. My employer has shut down operations temporarily because an employee is sick, and we have been directed to be isolated or in quarantine as a result of COVID-19. Am I eligible for unemployment benefits?**

**A.** If you are not receiving payment from your employer, such as paid sick leave or paid time off, you may be eligible for unemployment benefits during this time. If you are laid off work temporarily or if your hours are reduced due to a business slowdown or a lack of demand as a result of COVID-19, you may be able to receive unemployment benefits. In order to determine eligibility, you must first apply for unemployment. If you're temporarily out of work or working reduced hours due to COVID-19, select one of those two separation reasons when filing your claim.

**Q. What if I need to take time off work because I contract COVID-19?**

**A.** The first and best option for employees who need to miss work due to illness is to use their employer-paid time off.

**Q. What if I am directed by a medical professional or public health official to quarantine as a result of COVID-19, but I am not sick?**

**A.** If your employer is not offering paid time off, you should apply for unemployment insurance. If you are laid off work temporarily or if your hours are reduced due to a business slowdown or a lack of demand as a result of COVID-19, you may be able to receive unemployment benefits. In order to determine eligibility, you must first apply for unemployment. If you're temporarily out of work or working reduced hours due to COVID-19, please select one of those two separation reasons when filing your claim.

**Q. I am a part-time employee. Am I eligible for unemployment?**

**A.** Anyone can file for unemployment insurance. In order to determine eligibility, you must first apply for unemployment. If you're temporarily out of work or working reduced hours due to COVID-19, please select one of those two separation reasons when filing your claim.

**Q. Do I qualify for unemployment benefits if I become seriously ill and I am forced to quit my job as a result of COVID-19?**

**A.** When filing for unemployment insurance, an employee must provide information about their decision to leave the job. In order to determine eligibility, you must first apply for unemployment.

**Q. How am I supposed to meet requirements related to my existing unemployment claim if I am in isolation or quarantine as a result of COVID-19?**

**A.** Report your activities each week when you file your weekly certification. Further direction will be provided as it becomes available.

**Q. Must I still attend a previously scheduled in-person appointment?**

**A.** No, please contact the unit who scheduled the appointment or our Customer Call Center for other options to complete your appointment.

**Q. Do I have to search for work while filing for unemployment?**

Revised: March 17, 2020

**A.** Further direction will be provided as it becomes available.

**Q. How do I file for unemployment insurance?**

**A.** The fastest and most efficient way to file a new claim is to file online at [des.nc.gov](https://des.nc.gov). If you don't have access to a computer, you may file over the phone by calling 888-737-0259.

Learn more about [Applying for Unemployment](#).

**[section header] For Employers**

Employers, if you have questions about unemployment insurance, please contact our Employer Call Center at 919-707-1150 for assistance.

**Q. Am I able to file unemployment benefits on behalf of my employees who may be affected by COVID-19?**

**A.** Employers who wish to file claims for employees must meet the requirements of employment security law. More information can be found on our website at [link].

**Q. Will I receive relief of benefit charges for claims related to COVID-19?**

**A.** Yes. The Department of Commerce Division of Employment Security has been directed to not allocate charges to employers' accounts for individuals who are paid benefits for reasons related to COVID-19. Employers responding to requests for separation information should indicate that the separation was due to COVID-19.

**[Section header] Where can I get more information about the COVID-19 response in North Carolina?**

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is providing updates on [COVID-19 in North Carolina](#) on its website.