



**FAQ
CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)
FOR WORKERS AND EMPLOYERS
Updated March 23, 2020**



This guidance is for general informational purposes only, and is not to be used as a substitute for relevant state statutes or regulations.

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(See Latest Updates in **RED**)***

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE (UI)

FOR WORKERS:

How do I file for Unemployment Insurance benefits or get more information about the process and requirements?

- Please go to www.filectui.com to file with your personal computer, tablet or Smartphone.

Do I need any paperwork from my employer before I can file for unemployment benefits?

- You should ask your employer for a Separation Package, available [here](#), but do not delay filing your claim for unemployment benefits even if your employer has not issued you any paperwork.
- It is important to file as soon as you become unemployed to avoid being denied benefits. For faster processing of your claim, please have your employer's registration number and a return to work date readily available when you file your claim online.

How can I contact the Department of Labor for questions related to my claim?

- You should first visit our Online Assistance Center at www.filectui.com
- You may also submit your general question to dol.webhelp@ct.gov. A response can be expected in 3 to 5 business days, depending on volume.
- Our American Job Centers are closed to in-person visits, but you may call 860-263-6975 or 203-455-2653 for general information concerning your unemployment benefits. Unemployment claims cannot be processed or expedited by calling this telephone service.
- DOL's Live Chat for unemployment questions is currently unavailable.

Work-search requirements have been waived for unemployment claimants.

Click [here](#) for more information.

How do I file a weekly continued claim?

Why can't I file a weekly continued claim?

- Go to www.filectui.com and click the **green** button. If you have never filed before, you must first create an account. If you have filed before, use the login information you established previously.
- If your initial claim application is still being processed, you will not be able to file a weekly continued claim until it is. We are doing our best to process claims as quickly as possible but please understand they may be significant delays due to unusually high volume. Please check your email daily for specific instructions on how to file.
- Once your claim is processed, we will process your weekly claims retroactive to the week in which you filed, and you will not lose any weeks of unemployment because of the delay. Also, a "next steps" email will be sent when the claim is processed. Thank you for your patience while your unemployment claim is still pending.
- If you have a definite return to work date within six weeks that you entered when you filed your initial claim, you may qualify for our automatic payment process. Please check your email for instructions from the Department of Labor on this.

I am locked out of my account. What should I do?

- Go to www.filectui.com and click on “My Unemployment Account is Locked.”

Claim Inquiry on your website says that my claim is on hold? What should I do?

- There are many reasons why a claim may be on hold. Please send an email to dol.webhelp@ct.gov to ask for assistance.

I was told that my claim has to go to a fact-finding. How will I know the status of the claim?

- Check your account periodically to see if payment has been made. If your claim was denied, you will receive a letter in the mail.

I forgot to file my weekly claim for unemployment benefits. What can I do?

- You can still file for the current week (week ending the Saturday before this date) up until Friday at 8 p.m. If you missed a week prior to the current week, go to www.filectui.com and click on “Missed filing a weekly claim.”

I didn't receive any payment for this week. What can I do?

- The Department is processing claims as quickly as it can. Please be as patient as possible. Your benefits, if you are eligible, will be paid to the direct deposit bank account or debit card as soon as the claims are processed. If you have further questions about this, please send an email to dol.webhelp@ct.gov to ask for assistance.

My payments are on hold because of remaining balance on a monetary penalty that was assessed on a prior overpayment of benefits. What can I do?

- Go to www.filectui.com and click on “Overpayments and Penalties” for information on how to repay the monetary penalty.

I was denied benefits and need to file an appeal. What should I do?

- Go to www.filectui.com and click on “File an appeal online.” Await further instructions from our Appeals Division via US mail.

I had to move and need to update my address. How do I do this?

- Go to www.filectui.com and click on “Address Change.”

Will there be a federal extension that will allow me to file for unemployment benefits beyond the customary 26 weeks?

- On March 18, 2020, the President signed into law the [Families First Coronavirus Response Act](#) which includes an Emergency Unemployment Insurance Stabilization and Access Act of 2020.
- These two Acts will become effective on April 2, 2020. This is a federal law and CTDOL will not have jurisdiction. Information and guidance will be forthcoming from the US Department of Labor and we will update our website as soon as additional information is available.

Specific Scenarios:

I am confused by the work search question. I am currently out of work due to COVID-19 related reasons and not being paid by my employer. If I am approved for benefits, I am worried because I don't know when I will be allowed to return to work. I am not looking for another job right now because many businesses are closed and I should be returning to my current employer. How should I answer the question and still tell the truth?

- It is understandable to be confused. Just during the pandemic and until Governor has lifted restrictions, please be sure to answer YES to question 1 on your weekly claim. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commissioner has waived the requirement to look for work. If you answer no, your benefits will be stopped.

I am working from home full-time and getting paid by my employer. Can I file for benefits and, if so, will I be eligible?

- You can only receive unemployment benefits if you are totally or partially unemployed. If you are working full-time, unfortunately, you will not be eligible to receive benefits. You may file, but you risk being assessed an overpayment down the road, when the Department has more time to fully review all claims.
- Moreover, if you are working full-time, and you say on your unemployment claims that you are not, that is fraud, and carries monetary and possibly criminal penalties, as well as your needing to pay benefits back, perhaps with interest.

If I need to take time off from work because I come down with COVID-19 and have no paid time off through my employer, can I collect unemployment benefits?

If I am terminated from my job because I come down with COVID-19 can I collect unemployment benefits?

- You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. However, please note that an individual must be physically and mentally able for full time work and ready to return to work in order to qualify for unemployment benefits, unless the individual has a note from a physician stating that the individual is only available for part time work.
- For faster processing of your claim, please have your employer's registration number and a return to work date readily available when you file your claim online.
- Your employer should provide you with an Unemployment Separation Package, found [here](#), but do not delay filing if you do not have it.

My employer is requiring that I self-quarantine for 14 days even though I am not sick, and I am not getting paid. Can I collect unemployment benefits?

My employer closed its doors and is requiring all employees to stay home for 14 days. My employer does not offer teleworking, and we are not getting paid. Can I collect unemployment benefits?

- You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.
- For faster processing of your claim, please have your employer's registration number and a return to work date readily available when you file your claim online.
- Your employer should provide you with an Unemployment Separation Package, found [here](#), but do not delay filing if you do not have it.

I am unable to work because a family member is ill. Can I collect unemployment benefits?

- If you are unable to work, you are most likely ineligible for UI until you are able to work. However, you may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis.
- For faster processing of your claim, please have your employer's registration number and a return to work date readily available when you file your claim online.
- Your employer should provide you with an Unemployment Separation Package, found [here](#) if you do not have it.

I am physically and mentally able to work, but home during the pandemic with my young children. Can I collect unemployment benefits?

- You may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning your eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. You may restrict your availability to return to work due to compelling personal circumstances (childcare) as long as you remain genuinely attached to the labor market. In other words, ready to return to work after a brief readjustment period to make childcare arrangements so that you are available for work.

If my employer only permits me to work part-time rather than my full-time hours, will I be able to collect unemployment benefits?

If I have a full time and part time job and my full-time employer closes because of COVID-19, will I be able to collect while still working part time?

- You should file for benefits as you may be eligible for partial unemployment. Please note: when working and filing, all hours and gross earnings must be reported. A portion of your gross earnings will be deducted from your weekly benefit rate.

Churches and religious schools are generally not covered by unemployment. Are teachers who work for religious institutions eligible for UI benefits?

- Generally, no, unless the specific employer has “opted in” to voluntarily participate in the Unemployment Compensation program.
- Affected workers may file for unemployment benefits, and a determination will be made on the individual’s eligibility for benefits on a case-by-case basis.

My employer may have retaliated against me because I filed for unemployment benefits. Is there any recourse?

- Yes. It is illegal for an employer to retaliate against individuals who have exercised their rights under the Connecticut Unemployment Compensation Act. Conn. Gen. Stat. §31-226a provides individuals who believe that they have been retaliated against with an opportunity for a hearing.

FOR EMPLOYERS:

Employers with questions may call 860-263-6705 or email

DOL.MeritRating@ct.gov

Which businesses are deemed essential under Governor Lamont's Executive Order?

- Governor Lamont has issued guidance on which employers are considered essential under his Executive Order 7H. You can find that guidance, which has been provided by the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), here:
<https://portal.ct.gov/DECD/Content/Coronavirus-for-Businesses/Coronavirus-for-Businesses>.
- Any further questions not answered in this guidance should be sent to DECD at **dec.d.covid19@ct.gov**

I am a business owner and do not pay taxes on my salary. Am I eligible for unemployment benefits?

Am I eligible for unemployment benefits if I'm self-employed or an independent contractor?

- Generally, no, it is very rare. However, you may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made on your eligibility. Please be advised that this is a very lengthy process. Also, you will need to continue to be able and available for full-time work.

Can I require my employees to stay home if they are sick with COVID-19?

- Yes, you can require your employee to stay home. However, you should issue the employee an Unemployment Separation Package, found **[here](#)**.

Your employee may file for unemployment benefits and a determination will be made concerning their eligibility. Determinations will be made on a case-by-case basis. However, please note that an individual must be physically able and available for full time work in order to qualify for unemployment benefits, unless the individual has a note from a physician stating that the individual is only available for part time work.

If I have to close the doors of my business for 14 days because an employee is sick and other employees need to be isolated, how do my employees file for unemployment benefits?

- Please direct your employees to www.filectui.com and click the blue button to file their new claim for unemployment benefits.
- For ongoing weekly continued claims filing, employees should go to www.filectui.com and click the green button.
- The agency issues important emails throughout the initial claim filing process. Please advise your employees to look for these emails and read them carefully for next steps.

If I have to close the doors of my business for 14 days because an employee is sick and other employees need to be isolated, will I be liable for unemployment benefit charges?

- You will be liable in the same way you would be for a layoff or a shut down.
- If the President declares a disaster that includes Connecticut and your company, it is possible you may not be liable.

Is there an alternative to laying off my employees if business has slowed down as a result of COVID-19?

- Yes. The Department of Labor offers a [SharedWork](#) program which is a smart alternative to a layoff. The program allows employers to reduce the hours of full-time employees by as much as 60 percent, while their workers collect partial unemployment benefits to replace a portion of their lost wages.
- All employers with two or more full-time or permanent part-time employees can participate in the program, which is not designed for seasonal separations. To qualify, the business' reduction of work cannot be less than 10 percent or more than 60 percent.

I need to shut down my business immediately due to COVID-19. I won't be able to provide WARN notice. What should I do?

- The WARN Act is a federal law, and not under the jurisdiction of CTDOL. We would encourage you to reach out to the United States Department of Labor. You may want to explore the concept of whether the unforeseeable business circumstances exception applies.

When Governor restrictions have been lifted, am I required to report new and rehired employees to the Department of Labor?

Yes. Please report new employees, defined as workers not previously employed by your business, or workers rehired **after having been separated from your business for more than sixty consecutive days**, to CTDOL within 20 days of the date of hire. Instructions may be found here: <https://www1.ctdol.state.ct.us/lmi/newhire2.asp>

First fiscal quarter payments to DOL are due by April 30, 2020. If my business is closed I will not be able to file by then. What should I do?

As of now, an extension of the date has not occurred. Check back here for updates, as this may change as the date approaches.

PAID SICK LEAVE (PSL) AND OTHER ABSENCES

Does the Paid Sick Leave (PSL) law cover my absence due to COVID-19?

- For covered service workers and employers with 50 or more employees, PSL will cover certain absences caused by COVID-19.

- PSL provides up to 40 hours of leave for certain workers per year for the following reasons:
 - A service worker's illness, injury or health condition
 - The medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a service worker's mental illness or physical illness, injury or health condition
 - Preventative medical care for a service worker
 - A service worker's child's or spouse's illness, injury or health condition
 - The medical diagnosis, care or treatment of a service worker's child's or spouse's mental or physical illness, injury or health condition
 - Preventative medical care for a child or spouse of a service worker

My employer, who has 20 employees in CT, sent me home because I had a fever and then terminated my employment. Can he do that?

- Employees in CT are generally considered at-will employees, which means that either the employer or the employee is free to end the relationship at any time unless there is an applicable contract or collective bargaining agreement.
- Therefore, in most cases, an employer who is not covered by the CT FMLA (over 75 employees in CT), federal FMLA (50 or more employees in a 75-mile radius) or CT's Paid Sick Leave law (50 employees in CT) may terminate an employee for any reason as long as such termination is not based on an employee's protected status such as the employee's race, color, religious creed, age, sex, gender identity or expression, marital status, national origin, ancestry, present or past history of mental disability, intellectual disability, learning disability, physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness or status as a veteran or any other applicable contract or law.
- The employer may institute a more lenient absenteeism policy.

WAGES AND HOURS

If my employer decides not to open the business for the day or my specific work shift, and notifies me not to report for work, must I be paid?

- If you are a non-exempt "hourly" employee, no. An employer is not required to pay a non-exempt employee for the time in which he or she performs no work.
- If you are an exempt employee and you have worked for any portion of the week, yes. The employer is required to pay you the full weekly salary if you work for any portion of the week.
- Also, it is not permissible for the employer to make any deduction for the time that the exempt employee is absent from work from the employee's accrued Paid Time Off ("PTO") benefits, because Conn. State Agencies Regs. § 31-60-14(b)(2)(A) does not permit a deduction "of any kind" when a lack of work is occasioned by the operating requirements of the employer.

If an employer decides to keep the business open, but the employee elects not to report for work, must the employee be paid?

- No. For the non-exempt employee, an employer is not required to pay a non-exempt employee for the time in which he or she performs no work. For the exempt employee, the employer may make a deduction in pay in full-day increments pursuant to Conn. State Agencies Regs. § 31-60-14(b)(1)(B) because the employee is asking for the day off for personal reasons.

I am shutting down my business for 14 days. Do I have to pay a non-exempt or exempt employee who does not work at all during the 14 days?

- No. Employees are not required to be paid for any work week in which he or she performs no work at all during the week.

If I need to send one of my employees home during her shift because she is coughing but I am requiring her to work from home, must I pay that employee?

- Yes, in the same manner as she was paid when she worked on the employer's premises.
- If she is a non-exempt, "hourly" employee, she must be paid for the actual amount of time that you are requiring her to work. You are not required to pay a non-exempt employee for the time in which he or she performs no work.
- If she is an exempt "salaried with qualifying duties" employee, the employer is required to pay her the full weekly salary if she works for any portion of the week. No deductions can be made from the exempt employee's Paid Time Off (PTO) fringe benefit leave banks to cover the time off, pursuant to Conn. State Agencies Regs. § 31-60-14(b)(2)(A).

FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT (FMLA)

- On March 18, 2020, the President signed into law the Families First Coronavirus Response Act which includes the Emergency Family and Medical Leave Expansion Act and the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act.
- These two Acts will become effective on April 2, 2020, and expire on December 31, 2020. This is a federal law and CT DOL will not have jurisdiction. Information and guidance will be forthcoming from the US Department of Labor.
- As part of the Families First Coronavirus Response Act, there is an Emergency Unemployment Insurance Stabilization and Access Act of 2020. Guidance will be forthcoming from USDOL on this Act and we will update our website as soon as additional information is available.

Does the CT FMLA protect my job if my employer sends me home because I have a fever?

You may be protected if:

- You are an eligible employee, who worked for the employer for at least 12 months and 1,000 hours in the past year
- The employer is a covered employer for FMLA purposes (75 or more employees in CT) and you have FMLA time available

Your employer may require you to submit a medical certification from your health care provider, in order to determine if this is a serious health condition under the FMLA.

If your health care provider substantiates a serious health condition, FMLA will protect your job. Also, your employer may institute a more lenient medical certification policy if it so wishes.

Does the FMLA protect me if my employer sends me home because I told him that my 17-year-old daughter just returned from travel to a Level 3 country and has a cough and a fever?

You may be protected if:

- You are an eligible employee, the employer is a covered employer for FMLA purposes, and you have FMLA time available.
- Your employer may require you to submit a medical certification from your daughter's health care provider, in order to determine if she has a serious health condition under the FMLA.
- If her health care provider substantiates a serious health condition, the FMLA will protect your job. Also, your employer may institute a more lenient medical certification policy if it so wishes.

If I send an employee home because he told me that his 17-year-old daughter just returned from travel to a Level 3 country but she has no signs or symptoms of COVID-19, does FMLA protect his job?

- At this time, if his daughter does not have a serious health condition under the FMLA, then his job will not be protected. You may institute a more lenient absenteeism policy if you so wish.

More information about COVID-19 and federal FMLA is available from the USDOL Wage and Hour Division here:

www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fmla/pandemic