

4.16.20 update –

Additional \$600 weekly Federal Pandemic Unemployment payments began rolling out yesterday, 4.15.20, in NC

<https://files.nc.gov/des/press-release/files/4-15-nr-des-begins-600-dollar-payments.pdf>

Filing Your Unemployment Application

You can *apply for benefits **online 24 hours a day, seven days a week!***

<https://des.nc.gov/apply-unemployment/filing-your-unemployment-application>

If you need *personal assistance, contact the Customer Call Center at 888-737-0259*

Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, when call volumes are high: Your unemployment application questions can be answered by calling your local NCWorks Career Center – Gaston at (704) 853-5328. You may also request that a career center staff member place your name and phone number on the Unemployment “Contact List” that is sent to DES. A customer service representative from DES will contact you hopefully within 48-72 hours to answer your unemployment questions over the phone! *Please be patient – they will assist you just as quickly as they can.*

Note: If you are interested in job search assistance, the NCWorks Career Center – Gaston staff can also help you with basics services including updating your resume, giving you job referrals, and/or setting up a virtual recruiter that will automatically send you notifications when employers list new job orders in NCWorks. During times of career center closure to the public, due to COVID-19, these services may be provided over the phone or virtually.

Note: Unemployment applications are NOT filed in person in Gaston County!

If you want to apply online, you must create an “online account” to file an application for *Unemployment Insurance online*.

Your account also provides access to the Claimant Self-Service Portal, where you can get information about your claim at any time, such as:

- Claim status.
- Payment detail.
- Documents and determinations sent to you regarding your claim.
- Address, payment method, and tax withholding updates.

To create your online account, you will need your Social Security Number and a valid email address.

Create Your Online Account

1. Select [Sign Up](#) on the DES webpage link above.
2. Enter your Social Security Number twice.
3. Select 'Next.'
4. You will then reach the 'Account Creation' page. Here you will:
 - Create a user name.

- Enter your email address twice.
 - Create a pin number.
 - Enter your contact phone number.
 - Create a password.
5. Select 'Create Account.'
6. After your new account is created, an email will be sent to the email address you provided during your account creation. Select the link in the email to activate the account. The link is only valid for one hour. You can now [Sign In](#) to the website using your user name and password.

Unemployment Insurance Changes Due to COVID-19 (Coronavirus)

The North Carolina Employment Security Division is publishing instructions and guidance on the following webpage: <https://des.nc.gov/need-help/covid-19-information> to help you understand new changes to the state's unemployment system, due to the current impacts of the COVID-19 coronavirus in North Carolina.

These changes were ordered by Governor Cooper on Tuesday, March 17, 2020, as outlined in his [Executive Order 118](#).

We are working to ensure that necessary unemployment insurance benefits will be available to eligible North Carolinians affected by job loss due to the COVID-19 coronavirus disease in our state.

On this page, you will find answers and instructions:

- For people seeking to apply for unemployment insurance benefits, due to the COVID-19 situation
- For employers seeking guidance for how to navigate the new changes to the unemployment insurance system

This page will be updated frequently with new information as it becomes available, as we continue to monitor all available data and evaluate its impact on both workers and employers.

For people facing job loss due to the COVID-19 coronavirus situation, Governor Cooper's Executive Order specifically addresses:

- Individuals who are separated from employment;
- Individuals who have had their work hours reduced,
- Individuals who are prevented from working due to a medical condition or under direct quarantine orders as a result of COVID-19.

If you're temporarily out of work OR your working hours have been reduced *due to COVID-19*, file a claim for unemployment benefits online and *choose one of those two separation reasons* on the screen where you'll enter and submit your claim information.

As an individual, your eligibility, exact amount of benefits, and duration period of those benefits cannot be determined until after you file and submit your claim.

Unemployment Benefits - Questions & Answers 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.

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. Individuals currently filing for unemployment insurance benefits who have to quarantine due to COVID-19 will be considered able and available to work as long as the individual has not removed themselves from the labor market.

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?

A. If you are out of work as a result of COVID-19, you do not have to conduct a work search while filing for unemployment.