



NEWS RELEASE

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
No. 161 - April 23, 2020

For more information contact:
[Jason Moon](#)
517- 282-0041

\$1.37 Billion in Benefits Sent to 820,000 Unemployed Michigan Workers Affected by COVID-19

UIA continues to increase staff, hours and resources to ensure all eligible workers are provided the emergency financial assistance they deserve

LANSING, MICH. The Michigan Unemployment Agency (UIA) has already provided an estimated 820,000 unemployed Michigan workers \$1.37 billion in benefits. Today, the U.S. Dept. of Labor released numbers showing that 1,178,021 Michiganders have filed for unemployment since March 15, with 134,119 workers filing claims just last week.

The vast majority of workers who have yet to receive benefits will receive payments shortly after they complete the federal requirement to [certify their claim](#) two weeks after filing.

“We are committed to providing this emergency financial assistance to Michigan workers as quickly as possible, but we know we still have a lot of work left to do to get every dollar in benefits to the working families that need it most,” said Michigan Dept. of Labor and Economic Opportunity Director Jeff Donofrio. “We’re working around the clock to add capacity to the system so that we can continue to process all claims during this historic demand for benefits.”

Michigan is among the first states in the nation to begin sending the additional \$600 federal payments under the CARES act and make the unemployment application available to self-employed workers and independent contractors.

Added Capacity

The UIA has [extended its call center hours](#) and added hundreds of customer facing staff. More than 600 UIA employees are now dedicated to answering questions over the phone and through the website. The agency has also built in [new tools](#) to its online system to connect to an online resource of more than 100 staff to resolve technical issues like locked accounts. An equivalent of 300 full-time staff will also be added to the agency soon.

Historical Demand

In the weeks preceding the pandemic, the UIA received around 5,000 new weekly unemployment claims. During the Great Recession, the weekly high was around 77,000 in 2009.

Unemployment claims during COVID-19:

Week-Ending April 18:	134,119
Week-Ending April 11:	222,207
Week-Ending April 4:	388,554
Week-Ending March 28:	304,335
Week-Ending March 21:	128,806
Five Week Total:	1,178,021

How to File

The fastest and easiest way to file and certify a claim is online at [Michigan.gov/UIA](https://www.michigan.gov/UIA) where it takes around 25 minutes. More than 90% of all claims are filed and certified on the 24hr website. Customers are urged to use the site during off-peak hours between 8pm-8am. For anyone having difficulty with their account, the UIA Call Center - 866-500-0017 - is available 8am-6pm Mon-Fri and 7am-2pm on Saturday. Customers in the call center and online chat queues before closing time will have their calls or chats resolved that day.

Information around this outbreak is changing rapidly. The latest information is available at [Michigan.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.michigan.gov/Coronavirus) and [CDC.gov/Coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/Coronavirus).

###