



# NEWS RELEASE

STATE EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTER

## UIA Offers Update on Unemployment System, Provides Tips to Get Help as Soon as Possible

**LANSING, MICH.** The State of Michigan's Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) today provided updated information for workers affected by COVID-19. Workers are encouraged to apply online at [Michigan.gov/UIA](https://Michigan.gov/UIA) or over the phone at 866-500-0017, but due to the tremendous call volume, certain callers may receive a busy signal.

"The UIA is working hard and fast to handle the influx of applications for unemployment benefits as we deal with the COVID-19 crisis. While an unprecedented number of calls and clicks has challenged the system, particularly during peak hours, we want to assure Michiganders that the system is providing emergency financial relief," said UIA Director Steve Gray. "Our website may be operating a little slower, and phone queues are full resulting in busy signals for some callers, so the UIA is urging patience and recommending that workers go first to the online system at [Michigan.gov/UIA](https://Michigan.gov/UIA)."

In addition, applying online in off-peak hours will expedite the process. The 24-hour website operates faster when there are fewer people on the site at any given time. The UIA also urges Michiganders using the website to expect longer load times. It may take several minutes for a page to load at this time. Users are asked to be patient and not click more than once to reload a page. Filing online remains the fastest way for Michiganders to apply for unemployment benefits.

### **Off-peak hours: 8 p.m. to 8 a.m.**

Applicants with questions can also access information on the website [Michigan.gov/UIA](https://Michigan.gov/UIA), including frequently asked questions about the process and current challenges due to COVID-19. Checking the website for answers may help alleviate pressure on the phone line. A downloadable handout on the filing process can be found [here](#)

"Though it is best to file your claim as efficiently as possible, and we understand residents are eager to receive their checks quickly, the UIA wants to remind Michiganders that the eligibility window to apply has been increased from 14 to 28 days from the date of their work stoppage," added Gray. "The UIA is shifting as many resources as possible to handle the increase in applications and is exploring further solutions to help Michiganders get the assistance they need as soon as possible. We appreciate your patience during this unprecedented time."

Gov. Whitmer signed [Executive Order 2020-10](#) on March 16, 2020 to expand unemployment benefits to eligible workers:

- **Sick Workers:** Workers who are sick, quarantined, or immunocompromised and who do not have access to paid family and medical leave or are laid off.
- **Workers Caring for Loved Ones:** Workers who have an unanticipated family care responsibility, including those who have childcare responsibilities due to school closures, or those who are forced to care for loved ones who become ill and who do not have access to paid family and medical leave or are laid off

The [governor's order](#) also extends access to benefits for unemployed workers:

- **Increased Weeks:** Benefits will be increased from 20 to up to 26 weeks.
- **Longer Application Time:** The application eligibility period will be increased from 14 to 28 days.
- **Fewer Requirements:** The in-person registration and work search requirements will be suspended.

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

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