

We point out to the Claimant that although the Claimant is denied benefits under state unemployment law, **this does not bar receipt of certain special pandemic related benefits**. In fact, being ineligible from state unemployment benefits is a prerequisite to some of these benefits. Of particular interest to the Claimant is Pandemic Unemployment Assistance [PUA]. That law provides benefits to persons who are unavailable for work due to certain pandemic related reasons, or who lost work as a direct result of the Pandemic. Such persons may be able to collect PUA during any week this situation persists, going back to February 8, 2020 (for a maximum of 39 weeks). The federal Department of Labor has instructed that **eligible persons would include:**

- a) The individual has been diagnosed with COVID-19 or is experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 and is seeking a medical diagnosis. ...
- b) A member of the individual's household has been diagnosed with COVID-19. ...
- c) The individual is providing care for a family member or a member of the individual's household who has been diagnosed with COVID-19. ..
- d) A child or other person in the household for which the individual has primary caregiving responsibility is unable to attend school or another facility that is closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency and such school or facility care is required for the individual to work....
- e) The individual is unable to reach the place of employment because of a quarantine imposed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. ...
- f) The individual is unable to reach the place of employment because the individual has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to concerns related to COVID-19. ...
- g) The individual was scheduled to commence employment and does not have a job or is unable to reach the job as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. ...
- h) The individual has become the breadwinner or major support for a household because the head of the household has died as a direct result of COVID-19. ...
- i)The individual has to quit his or her job as a direct result of COVID-19. ...
- j)The individual's place of employment is closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. ...
- k) The individual meets any additional criteria established by the Secretary for unemployment assistance under this section....

UIPL 16-20, Attachment 1.

(https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/attach/UIPL/UIPL_16-20_Attachment_1.pdf).

It is further our understanding that federal law requires all PUA claims to be backdated to as early as February 8, depending on when the applicant's COVID-related unavailability or job loss began. The upshot is that if Claimant can make the necessary PUA showing Claimant may very well be eligible for PUA for any qualifying week. **Our ruling today is no bar to PUA.**

Should the Claimant wish to apply for PUA, and the information on how to do so is found at:
<https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/pua-information> .

Ashley R. Koopmans

James M. Strohman

Myron R. Linn