

FAQs Regarding Unemployment -- Texas

Important: This information is based on information currently available to the Company. In all circumstances, the applicable state or federal agency -- and not the Company -- makes all decisions regarding your eligibility for unemployment compensation benefits and the amount (if any) of those benefits.

Q. If I am furloughed or on a reduced pay/reduced work schedule, can I apply for unemployment?

A. Yes, anyone can apply for unemployment, and you may be entitled to unemployment benefits if your gross pay is below the weekly base benefit maximum for your state. The federal government also has passed a new law, the CARES Act, that provides Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation in addition to state unemployment benefits.

Q. Is there a waiting period before I can start collecting unemployment benefits?

A. Usually there is a one-week waiting period, but most states have already either waived that waiting period. The CARES Act also provides funding to all states that permits waiver of any waiting period.

Q. For how many weeks does unemployment last?

A. Most states only permit unemployment for 26 weeks, but under the federal CARES Act, state unemployment benefits have been extended to up to 39 weeks. Some states have extended benefit periods as well. Also, the CARES Act provides qualifying employees with an additional \$600 of unemployment assistance per week until July 31, 2020.

Q. Is there a maximum amount of benefits that I can receive from unemployment?

A. Yes. Many states are revisiting and generally increasing the amount of unemployment pay available. Currently the maximum weekly unemployment benefit in **Texas** is **\$521** per week. The federal CARES Act will add an additional weekly benefit of \$600 per week through July 31, 2020, on top of whatever amount of full or partial unemployment benefit you are eligible to receive.

Q. Is the amount I receive while on furlough/reduced work schedule considered for purposes of the state unemployment benefit?

A. Yes. If your earnings are in excess of the maximum weekly base unemployment benefit, you will not receive additional benefits from the state. Although it is unclear, if your earnings are higher than your state's maximum weekly base unemployment benefit, you also may not be eligible to receive the federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation payment.

If your earnings are below the maximum amount allowed, there is a formula for how to offset interim earnings, which is different in every state. In Texas, if your additional earnings are 25 percent or less of your weekly base benefit rate, you can still receive the full weekly unemployment benefit. Earnings above 25 percent are deducted dollar-for-dollar from your weekly benefit, until you reach 125% of the weekly benefit amount. If

your earnings are below this amount such that you receive partial unemployment, you should be eligible to receive the federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation payment as well.

Q. What are the requirements to prove I am eligible for the state unemployment benefit? Do I have to actively be looking for work?

A. Normally, you would have to be actively looking for work to receive benefits. However, many states have waived these kinds of requirements to receive state benefits. Many states also would disqualify employees who have quit, but these rules are also changing when it comes to the COVID-19 pandemic. In general, if you are out of work through no fault of your own, you should apply for unemployment benefits. There is no penalty associated with applying for benefits even if you do not qualify, provided the information you provide is accurate and that you honestly report your earnings and work situation. Note that because of the passage of the federal CARES Act, many state websites are currently in flux and include disclaimers asking for patience while the final rules are put in place. There is a process that each state must go through with the Federal Department of Labor to fully actuate and coordinate the state and federal unemployment benefits, hopefully over the week of March 30th.

Q. How do I contact unemployment in Texas?

A. The Texas Workforce Commission's website is:
<https://www.twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/applying-unemployment-benefits>