Delaware Department Of Labor Will Begin Issuing An Additional $300.00 In Benefits Through Lost Wages Assistance Funding

WILMINGTON (Sept. 8, 2020) — The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) approved Delaware's application to receive Lost Wages Assistance funding from FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund. On August 8, 2020, President Trump made available up to $44 billion from
FEMA's Disaster Relief Fund to provide financial assistance to Americans who have lost wages due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We're grateful for the opportunity to apply for and receive approval to provide additional support to Delawareans who have experienced unemployment during the COVID-19 pandemic," said Cerron Cade, Secretary of the Delaware Department of Labor. "We want to emphasize that this benefit is time-limited and not everyone who has filed an unemployment claim will be eligible."

The LWA program was created to provide temporary additional benefits to unemployed workers impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. LWA benefits are retroactive to the week ending August 1st, and eligible individuals will receive $300 per week in benefits in addition to their regular unemployment benefits. The LWA program and the availability of LWA benefits will end when the first of the following occurs: 1) available federal funding is depleted, 2) federal legislation is enacted to provide unemployment benefits covered, or 3) December 27, 2020.

The Delaware Department of Labor applied for and was approved for the Lost Wages Assistance funding on September 2, 2020. **The Delaware Department of Labor expects to begin issuing LWA payments to eligible claimants beginning the week of September 14, 2020.** Because funds for the LWA program are limited, it is uncertain how many weeks will be fully funded and how long the LWA payments will be available.

Individuals are eligible for Lost Wages Assistance if all of the following conditions are met:

1. Your weekly unemployment benefit amount is at least $100 under regular state unemployment insurance (UI), Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), or other eligible federal UI programs, and
2. You certify that you are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, and
3. The Delaware Department of Labor determines that you are eligible for an underlying benefit payment for that week, and
4. The LWA program has available funding from FEMA.

Benefits will be automatically calculated and distributed based on unemployment claims received; individuals do not need to call or apply separately for this . To receive LWA in a given week, you must receive unemployment insurance benefits of $1 or more for that week. If an individual's claim for underlying benefits and LWA is subject to adjudication or in appeal status when the LWA program ends, then the individual will not be entitled to LWA payments.

The Delaware Department of Labor's Division of Unemployment Insurance will coordinate with the U.S. Department of

Labor (USDOL) and FEMA to program, implement, and distribute LWA funds.

For more information about the Lost Wages Assistance program, please see our Frequently Asked Questions.

Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What is the Federal Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program?**
   To ease the economic burden for those struggling with lost wages due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has been authorized to expend funds from the Disaster Relief Fund for lost wage payments as a result of COVID-19. The Lost Wages Assistance program (LWA) supplements the payment of lost wages $300 per week to claimants who:

   a. are eligible for $100 or more of weekly unemployment benefits under a qualifying program, and
   b. self-certify that they are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by COVID-19.

LWA is available for a week of unemployment starting the week ending August 1, 2020. If you are eligible, LWA will be paid automatically to you along with your underlying unemployment benefits.

2. **When will I receive my LWA payments?**
   The Delaware Department of Labor expects to begin issuing LWA payments to eligible claimants beginning the week of September 14, 2020, on a first-come, first-served basis. The LWA payments will be retroactive to the week ending on August 1, 2020. Because the LWA program has a limited budget, it is uncertain how many weeks will be fully funded and how long the LWA payments will be available.
3. **How much money will a person be eligible for each week and for how many weeks?**
   For the state of Delaware, an eligible individual could receive a $300 benefit in addition to their weekly unemployment benefit. The LWA program has a limited budget, so the length of time the LWA program is available, the amount that is paid out, and to whom will be determined by the number of participating states, the number of payments that go out and how fast the limited federal funds are exhausted.

4. **How long will the LWA program continue?**
   FEMA grants for lost wages supplemental payments will continue until the earlier of:

   - FEMA has expended $44 billion from the Disaster Relief Fund (DRF).
   - The Disaster Relief Fund balance reaches $25 billion.
   - Enactment of legislation providing supplemental Federal unemployment compensation, or similar compensation, for unemployed or partially employed individuals due to COVID-19.
   - The program end date of no later than December 26, 2020.

5. **Will I receive LWA benefits if my claim is adjudicated or appealed in my favor?**
   If an individual's claim for underlying benefits and LWA is subject to adjudication or in appeal status when the LWA program ends, then the individual will not be entitled to LWA payments.
6. **How often do I have to self-certify that I am unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused**

by COVID-19?

Just once per claim. There is no requirement for weekly LWA self-certifications. You must continue to file your regular weekly claim certifications to receive your unemployment benefits along with any applicable LWA payments,.

7. **Do I need to submit additional documentation to receive LWA?**
   No additional documentation is required to receive LWA.
8. **My weekly benefit amount is $176 but $80 of that is taken out for child support payments. Do I qualify for LWA if I complete the LWA self-certification?**Yes. The $100 minimum weekly benefit requirement to receive LWA is calculated before any offsets, including tax withholding, child support deductions, or overpayment offsets, are deducted.
9. **How will I receive my LWA payments?**
   You will receive your LWA payments in the same manner that you receive your other unemployment compensation.
10. **What underlying unemployment programs are eligible for LWA?**
    If you are eligible for a weekly benefit of at least $100 in weeks when the LWA is effective from any of the following programs, and you complete the LWA self-certification that you are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by COVID-19, you will be eligible for LWA:

    - Regular unemployment insurance benefits;
    - Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members (UCX);
    - Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE);
    - Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC);
    - Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA);
    - Extended Benefits (EB);
    - Work Sharing Benefits; and
    - Trade Readjustment Allowances (TRA).

11. **Who is ineligible for the LWA?**

    - Primarily, the following individuals are not eligible for the LWA benefit:
    - Individuals who did not receive an unemployment benefit in the week ending August 1, 2020 or later.
    - Individuals whose weekly benefit amount is less than $100 in one of the above listed programs in the week ending August 1, 2020 or later.
    - Individuals who became unemployed, or who become partially unemployed, due to disruptions not caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

12. **Is the $300 LWA weekly payment taxable?**
    Yes, the $300 LWA payment is taxable. If you request to have Federal taxes deducted from your benefits, those taxes will also be deducted from the $300 LWA payments. For specific guidance on the tax treatment of unemployment compensation, please contact the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).
13. **I am back to work now, but I was receiving unemployment benefits for some of the weeks covered by the LWA program. May I receive LWA for those weeks?**
    If you were eligible for at least $100 in weekly unemployment benefits for any week ending on or after August 1,

2020, but you went back to work before LWA payments were available, you are eligible to receive available retroactive LWA if you self-certify that during those weeks you were unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by COVID-19.

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