

Unemployment FAQs Related to COVID-19 from our Partner 501c.com (DC)

1. Are individuals impacted by Covid-19 eligible for Unemployment Benefits?

If you were furloughed by the YMCA of Metropolitan Washington the termination reason cited is Layoff-Covid-19. Monetary eligibility will be determined by individual base period wages paid by ALL employers.

DC - The standard base period uses the first four (4) of the last five (5) completed calendar quarters immediately preceding the effective date a claim is filed.

2. Is there a waiting period before someone can receive Unemployment Benefits?

Some states have a waiting week and some do not. In states with a waiting week the individual will not receive any benefits for the first week they claim benefits. Some states are waiving the waiting week for COVID-19 related claims.

DC - Initial claims filed after March 15, 2020 will have their waiting period week waived, which will now be payable within 30 days of filing. DC legislation has waived the UI work search requirement due to Coronavirus (COVID-19).

3. How long can someone collect Unemployment Benefits?

This varies by state but usually ranges anywhere from 13-26 weeks. Check your specific state's website for state specific information.

DC - All claimants will receive 26 weeks of UI benefit payments.

4. Who can file for unemployment benefits?

Anyone can file unemployment regardless of whether they are full-time or part-time, exempt, or non-exempt, etc. Eligibility is a separate issue.

5. How is eligibility for Unemployment Determined?

DC - To be eligible for Unemployment Insurance benefits, you must meet the following wage requirements:

- Work must have been performed in the District of Columbia within the base period.
- Wages must be reported in at least two quarters of the base period.
- At least \$1,300 in wages must be reported in one quarter of the base period.
- At least \$1,950 in wages must be reported for the entire base period.



- Total base period wages must be at least 1.5 times the wages in the highest quarter or be within \$70 of that amount. For example, an individual has total base period wages of \$5,000, with \$3,500 in the highest quarter and \$500 in each of the other three quarters. This individual would not be eligible, because total base period wages of \$5,000 is not at least 1.5 times the wages in the high quarter ($1.5 \times \$3,500 = \$5,250$), nor is it within \$70 of that amount.

In addition to the wage requirements (above), you must also meet the following requirements:

- Must be unemployed through no fault of your own.
- Available for work; i.e. ready and willing to accept work considered suitable based on past training, education, or experience.
- Physically able to work; you may not collect benefits while sick, injured, or disabled.
- Actively seeking work, using methods that are customary for the occupation.
- Conduct two new job searches each week. Periodically, you may be required to report to an American Job Center to show proof of your work search activities.
- Not receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits from another state.

6. How does Partial Unemployment work?

If you have employees that become “underemployed” they can file for partial benefits. The state will determine their weekly benefit amount (WBA) based on the wages paid by all employers during the base period. This would be their full WBA if they were totally unemployed. The employee then reports any wages earned each week to the state and they offset these wages and reduce the benefit amount leaving a partial benefit. The formula for determining the amount they offset varies by state.

7. What is the best way for someone to file for benefits?

Online is the quickest and easiest way to file. Every state has this option.

DC - <http://www.dcnetworks.org> or <http://www.ui.dc.gov>

8. What is the difference between a furlough and a layoff?

A furlough is a mandatory, temporary, unpaid leave from work. Employees will come back to their jobs when the employer notifies them that the leave has ended. A layoff can be temporary or permanent. Employers may also consider reducing the daily hours of some employees.

9. Can furloughed employees take outside employment while on leave?

Furloughed employees have the right to seek new employment and may consider taking temporary jobs while on furlough.