

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)

Administered by the Louisiana Workforce Commission

What is Disaster Unemployment Assistance?

The Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) program provides assistance to individuals whose employment has been either lost or interrupted as a **direct** result of a major disaster, as declared by the President of the United States. A number of Louisiana parishes qualify for DUA assistance as a result of Hurricane Laura occurring August 22, 2020 through August 27, 2020.

Who is eligible for DUA?

DUA is available to unemployed workers or self-employed individuals who became unemployed as a **direct** result of the disaster that are otherwise ineligible to receive state unemployment insurance benefits.

If you are on a DUA claim, you will not receive Lost Wage Assistance via the President's Executive Order.

If you are already receiving state unemployment insurance benefits due to COVID-19, there is no need for you to apply for DUA and you should continue filing your weekly certifications.

If you were already unemployed and did not lose your job as a result of the disaster, please do not apply for DUA.

DUA is also available to those individuals who became the breadwinner, or major support provider, due to the death of the head of household and as a **direct** result of the disaster.

When can I file a claim?

The deadline to file a DUA claim as a result of Hurricane Laura is September 30, 2020 for Allen, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Jefferson Davis, and Vernon Parishes.

The deadline to file a DUA claim as a result of Hurricane Laura is October 2, 2020 for Acadia, Grant, Jackson, Lincoln, Ouachita, Natchitoches, Rapides, Sabine, Vermillion, and Winn Parishes.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission is also accepting applications for DUA from residents and businesses in the following parishes until the deadline of October 12, 2020: Morehouse and Union.

The Louisiana Workforce Commission is now accepting applications for DUA from residents and businesses in the following parishes until the deadline of October 14, 2020: Caddo, La Salle and St. Landry.

How do I file a claim?

Claims can be filled online at www.laworks.net or through the UI Claim Center at 1-866-783-5567. Proof of employment at the time of the disaster is required within 21 days of filing the DUA application. Instructions will be provided for submitting this required documentation. Your personal income tax return (Federal Form 1040 and attachments) or other proof of employment (e.g., 1099) and wages you earned in calendar year 2019 is also requested.

Things to keep in mind when filing a DUA claim:

- Regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits supersede DUA – Any person determined eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits or the Federal Extended Benefits Program, even in the case of a disaster, would not be eligible for DUA.
- Fraudulent claims will be prosecuted, including jail time – You are required to report all earnings when worked, not when received. Intentional false reporting of reason for separation or last employer information may also be considered fraudulent.
- You must report all earnings weekly – If you are paid by your employer during your absence from work or if you return to work, you must report these earnings on your weekly request for payment. Vacation pay must also be reported on your weekly request for payment.

How much assistance can I expect to receive?

Individuals eligible for DUA will be paid weekly benefits in accordance with federal and state regulations. The DUA benefit duration is determined weekly up to 27 weeks. Currently, the maximum weekly assistance amount in

Louisiana is \$247 and is based on the individual's gross earnings or net income if self-employed for the most recent tax year. The minimum DUA benefit amount is \$108 weekly based on full-time employment.

How long will it take before I receive my benefits?

DUA benefits will be paid as soon as administratively possible. Generally, benefits are held until such time that sufficient evidence of employment and wages is provided, and it is determined that the unemployment was a **direct** result of the disaster. Each claim must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Continue to file your weekly continued claims as long as you are unemployed as a direct result of the disaster. Our goal is to ensure a determination is made as quickly as possible.

As of 9/16/2020

