

Ky. unemployment insurance implements new procedures to manage influx of claims during COVID-19 outbreak

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FRANKFORT, Ky. — In an effort to serve the large influx of Kentuckians who are filing for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits as efficiently as possible during the COVID-19 outbreak, the Education and Workforce Development Cabinet (EWDC) is implementing new UI filing procedures and starting new local office phone lines for customers.



“My obligation is to keep people safe during this time. I realize many of the steps I am taking to protect Kentuckians during this COVID-19 emergency are affecting employers and workers financially,” said Gov. Andy Beshear. “Temporarily waiving some of the UI benefit rules during this time is one step I can do to help protect Kentuckians financially. I know this is a difficult time but we are going to get through this by working together to help each other.”

Beginning today, Kentuckians filing for UI benefits should follow a schedule that pertains to the first initial in their last name as to what day they can file their claim. The schedule can be found [here](#).

“We are putting this new procedure in place so that we can handle the large influx of new claims that we are seeing this week. The number of UI claims being processed by the cabinet has jumped significantly after new restrictions were placed on restaurants and other public places,” said EWDC Deputy Secretary Josh Benton.

“Please follow this new process if you are filing a UI claim so that our computer and phone systems will perform at optimal levels. We want to make sure we can receive and process claims for all those experiencing job loss,” said Benton.

Effective immediately, Kentucky Career Centers (KCC) across the state have been closed to the public to prevent the spread of COVID-19 but KCC workers are still providing services by telephone and videoconference.

Below is the location and phone number individuals can call for KCC services including UI questions. Please use the phone number for the location nearest you so that no location is overwhelmed by customers.

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Elizabethtown area	270-766-5115
Covington area	859-292-6666
Hazard area	888-503-1423
Hopkinsville area	270-889-6509
Lexington area	859-233-5940
Louisville area	502-595-4003
Morehead area	606-783-8525
Owensboro area	270-686-2502
Paducah area	270-575-7000
Prestonsburg area	888-503-1423
Somerset area	606-677-4124

Claimants can also call the UI Help Line at 502-564-2900, if they have questions.

In addition to these new ways to communicate with KCC staff, other KCC programs are continuing to assist customers through the following services.

- Re-employment Services and Eligibility Assessment (RESEA) helps laid-off people get back to work faster.
- Trade assistance helps workers who have lost their job as a result of increased imports out of the United States.
- Employment services assists job seekers with items such as resume writing, job search and training opportunities.

- Veteran services helps those who have served in the armed forces with finding a job or training opportunities.



On March 16, Gov. Andy Beshear directed EWDC to waive the state's seven-day waiting period to receive UI benefits and the work-search requirement for UI benefits during the state of emergency.

As a result, the following policy has been activated.

1. Individual is laid off and files initial claim application to request UI benefits.
2. After claimant files and requests payment, UI staff conducts eligibility review and processes benefit request concurrently.
3. If approved, initial payment is authorized for 14 days of benefits.
4. Claimant may request benefits every two weeks. This process may continue for a maximum of 26 total weeks or until the claimant obtains employment or returns to work.
5. The weekly benefit amount is based on the worker's past wages.

All of the new measures have been implemented to help people who have temporarily lost their jobs or are quarantined because of COVID-19.

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