



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Virginia Employment Commission

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Commissioner

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Virginia Announces Changes in Unemployment Insurance program as a result of the Federal CARES Act

—\$600 increase in benefits for workers—

The CARES Act provides increased benefits for workers collecting unemployment insurance by \$600 for claims effective March 29th until July 31st. Increased benefits for eligible claimants under traditional unemployment insurance will start to be paid as soon as next week. The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) recently received guidance from the United States Department of Labor and is working to implement needed system changes to make this happen as soon as possible. Payments to eligible claimants will be retroactive and will be made automatically in conjunction with their weekly claim.

New Benefits for Previously Uncovered Workers

Affected workers, like the self-employed, who are not eligible under traditional unemployment insurance may be eligible under a brand new federal program called Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). To be eligible for this new program, workers must first apply through traditional unemployment by visiting www.vec.virginia.gov or www.vawc.virginia.gov. The state is required to verify eligibility under traditional unemployment before allowing claimants to be considered for the new PUA program. If you are determined to be ineligible for traditional unemployment, you will be contacted by phone (text or voice message) on how to file the supplemental information to complete your claim under the new PUA program. VEC will be announcing more details on the start date for this new program later this week.

(more)

More information

Please note that there are many requirements in the legislation and every worker has unique circumstances and criteria that affect eligibility. The VEC will be posting additional updates on our website at vec.virginia.gov as new information is available.

As a reminder, after completing an initial claim, claimants must file a weekly certification each following week in order to be paid. This can be done by calling the interactive voice response line at [1-800-897-5630](tel:1-800-897-5630) or through your online account at www.vec.virginia.gov or www.vawc.virginia.gov.