

Off Work Due to the Coronavirus

On March 16, 2020, Governor Whitmer signed an [Executive Order](#) to temporarily expand unemployment eligibility. Below are some highlights. Read the [entire document](#) for full details.

Effective immediately, and continuing until April 14, 2020 at 11:59 pm:

1. For each eligible individual filing an initial claim, not more than 26 weeks of benefits are payable to an individual in a benefit year.
2. If an individual leaves work or becomes unemployed because of self-isolation or self-quarantine in response to elevated risk from COVID-19 due to being immunocompromised, displaying the symptoms of COVID-19, having contact in the last 14 days with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, the need to care for someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, or a family care responsibility as a result of a government directive,
 - a. the individual must be considered to have left work involuntarily for medical reasons.
 - b. the individual must be deemed laid off. The employer of an individual covered by this subsection ([1.b.](#)) must seek a registration and work search waiver from the Unemployment Insurance Agency.
 - c. the individual must file a claim for unemployment benefits within 28 days of the last day worked to be considered to have filed on time.
3. An individual on a leave of absence due to displaying the symptoms of COVID-19, having contact in the last 14 days with someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19, the need to care for someone with a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 must be considered to be unemployed, or a family care responsibility as a result of a government directive, unless the individual is already on sick leave or receives a disability benefit.

Here are 5 steps you should take:

1. [Apply for Unemployment Benefits](#) Unemployment benefits are made available through taxes paid by your former employer(s) to partially replace your regular earnings and help you meet expenses while you look for another job. These benefits are intended to assist workers who lost their jobs through no fault of their own and are **not** based on financial need.
2. [See what other benefits you are eligible for through the Department of Health & Human Services](#) Families and individuals can apply for a variety of services such as Medicaid, food, cash, child care, and emergency relief programs.
3. [Call 2-1-1 or visit their website](#) 211 is the trusted and valued gateway for referrals and information to meet essential needs. 2-1-1 is a free, easy-to-remember telephone number that connects people in need with people who can help ~ 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Alternate phone number: (888) 636-4211
4. [File Your Taxes](#) If you haven't already filed your taxes, now is the time to do so. You may be eligible for a refund that can help provide a financial cushion. Visit [MyFreeTaxes](#) to see if you qualify for free filing through United Way's partnership with H&R Block. Also, the federal government is working on extending the April 15th deadline for some taxpayers. Check the www.irs.gov/coronavirus for official updates.
5. [Call your utility and credit card companies and other lenders](#) Some creditors have hardship plans for when you are going through an emergency. If you are impacted by the COVID-19 Pandemic, reach out to your utility companies, credit card issuer, auto loan provider, mortgage company, and other lenders to see what options are available to you.