

Federal Shutdown: Indiana Unemployment Insurance Benefits Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

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If you have been furloughed as a direct result of the federal government shutdown, you may be eligible for unemployment insurance benefits.

Q: How long will it take to receive benefits after applying?

A: You will not receive your first unemployment insurance payment for approximately three to five weeks after you file for benefits.

Q.: What if the federal government issues back pay?

A: If the federal government issues back pay for the work you missed during the furlough (as it has historically), you will receive an overpayment notice and you will be required to repay any unemployment insurance benefits you collected during that time. If you receive back pay, call us at 1-800-891-6499 and let us know.

Q: What if I am one of the “essential” federal workers who are required to continue to work full time with no pay?

A: You would not be eligible for benefits if you are working full time, regardless of pay. Full time is normally defined as 40 hours per week.

Q. How do I file for benefits?

A. You must file online at <https://uplink.in.gov/CSS/CSSLogon.htm>. If you do not have internet access, there are computers available for online filing at your nearest WorkOne office. Please note that WorkOne offices will be closed on Martin Luther King Day. After you successfully file your initial claim, you must file weekly continued claim reports at <https://uplink.in.gov/CSS/CSSLogon.htm>. Check out these helpful videos for instructions on how to file for benefits and what to expect. <https://www.in.gov/dwd/3252.htm>

Q. When should I file for benefits?

A. For those most recently laid off, you must file your initial claim by midnight on Saturday, Jan. 12, 2019. This step is essential for making sure you receive credit for your waiting week.

Q. Do I have to look for work if I file for unemployment benefits?

A. No, the typical work search requirements are waived because you are job attached.

Q. When I file my claim, what option should I choose as my reason for separation from the federal government?

A. If you are unemployed due to the current federal government shutdown, please select “laid off due to lack of work” for your separation reason.

Q. What should we put in the “approximate date to start full-time work” section?

A. When you file your online application, you will be asked if you have a definite date to return to full-time work. If your employer has provided you this date, select yes and enter the date. If not, answer no to this question.

Q. I received a letter titled “monetary determination.” It shows my weekly eligibility amount is \$.00 and my maximum benefit amount is \$.00. Does this mean I will not receive any unemployment while I am furloughed?

A. If you are a federal employee, your wages are not immediately available to us when you file your claim. We have to request your wage information from the federal government. When you file a claim, you will be sent a monetary determination stating you are eligible for \$0. Once we receive wage information, we will send you a second monetary determination with the wage information they reported to us. Despite the federal shutdown, we are getting responses to wage requests. It is important you continue filing your weekly reports at <https://uplink.in.gov/CSS/CSSLogon.htm> while you wait for your new monetary determination. If you file your weekly reports and are otherwise eligible, you will receive payments for compensable weeks filed once we receive your wage information. It can take up to three weeks to receive your wage information.

Q. How will federal employees receive their first payment?

A. Payment is issued on a debit card. As stated above, normally, a payment is issued about three to five weeks after submitting an initial application. If you applied for benefits during the week of Jan. 13-19, 2019, it would be your first week of unemployment and potentially serve as your waiting week (see waiting week criteria above). The next week would be your second week of unemployment and the first potential payable week. Payment is normally released within three to four business days after your second voucher is filed. Once payment is released, you will be sent a debit card. Normally people receive their debit card within 7-10 business days after the first payment is released.

Q. I am about to be furloughed. The employer has given me the option of using my accrued vacation pay while we are shut down. Can I still collect unemployment if I don't use my vacation pay?

A. Yes. For unemployment insurance purposes, you are not required to use vacation pay.

Q. If I chose to use vacation pay, can I collect unemployment insurance?

A. It depends on how much you are paid in vacation leave. Please ensure this information is entered with your claim. If your vacation pay is an amount that is one and a half times your unemployment insurance weekly benefit amount, it is not a compensable week — meaning you received too much money for an unemployment insurance payment or waiting week credit that week. In order to be eligible for benefits, you also must be fully available for work. It is important that you remain available for work and express your availability for work to your employer, even though you have elected to be paid vacation.

Q. How do I cancel my claim once I return to work?

A. When you return to work, simply stop filing your weekly reports. Once you haven't filed for two consecutive weeks, your claim will go inactive. Even though you are no longer claiming, be sure to keep your contact information up to date to receive year-end tax information.