



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Lost Wages Assistance Program

What is the Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) program?

President Trump signed four Presidential Memorandums on Aug. 8, 2020, including one to offer enhanced unemployment insurance benefits of \$300 per week for eligible individuals **with at least \$100 weekly benefit amount**. Arkansas' application to receive LWA funding was approved by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on August 26, 2020.

Who is eligible for the LWA?

The state must follow the federal guidelines. DWS will send letters to all individuals who are potentially eligible for the additional benefits with instructions detailing next steps.

You could be eligible for the LWA benefit if:

- You are eligible for state or federal unemployment benefits and have a weekly benefit amount **of at least \$100** and
- You are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic

Note: Since the minimum weekly benefit amount for PUA is \$132, PUA claimants who are otherwise eligible for benefits will automatically receive the \$300 LWA benefit.

How much money will a person be eligible for each week and for how many weeks?

Under LWA, eligible claimants could receive a payment of \$300 in addition to their regular weekly benefit amount. LWA benefits will be distributed based on available state and federal funds.

Do I need to apply for the LWA?

No, individuals do not need to call or apply separately for this benefit. DWS will send letters to all individuals who are potentially eligible for LWA benefits with instructions detailing next steps.

If I am eligible, when will I receive the LWA benefit?

DWS hopes to begin issuing payments the second week of September. Payments will begin no later than October 2, 2020. Benefits will be paid retroactively for those determined eligible as long as funding is available.

If I am eligible, how will I receive the funds?

If you are eligible, LWA benefits will be distributed in separate payments to the same account set up for your regular unemployment payments. Future LWA benefits will be based on federal funds, therefore, payments may stop at any time.

What if I am not eligible to receive the LWA funds?

We are committed to helping Arkansans in need weather this uncertain period as we recover from this crisis together. Under the direction of Governor Hutchinson and the Arkansas Department of Commerce, the Division of Workforce Services (DWS) has implemented an emergency assistance program using existing Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) funds to provide benefits to UI claimants with families who lost wages and are experiencing financial challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The emergency assistance program will be available for UI claimants who are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by COVID-19. In order to qualify, you must:

- be a custodial parent with a child under the age of 18 or a woman who is currently pregnant; and
- have a family income less than 200% of the Federal Poverty Level; and
- have a demonstrated need that can be verified through documentation.

Those who qualify for the emergency assistance program will be eligible for benefits in an amount that is, at a minimum, equal to the amount of benefits that other UI claimants will receive through the LWA program.

The application for the emergency assistance program will be available through the Local Workforce Development Boards and other service providers in your area. Please visit the DWS website at www.dws.arkansas.gov and click on the yellow "INELIGIBLE FOR LWA" button at the top of the homepage for a list of service providers and their contact information. The service provider in your area will provide instructions for submitting your application. Applicants should be prepared to submit all necessary documentation with their application to expedite processing and avoid having to apply again.