

News Release



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Filing Period for Disaster Unemployment to Close August 4, 2017 for Three Counties Authorized for Benefits

Disaster Unemployment Assistance claims must be filed by August 4, 2017, for individuals affected by the severe storms, tornadoes, straight-line winds and flooding that began in Prairie, White and Woodruff counties on April 26, 2017 through May 19, 2017.

At the request of Gov. Asa Hutchinson, a federal disaster declaration was issued designating Benton, Boone, Carroll, Clay, Faulkner, Fulton, Jackson, Lawrence, Prairie, Pulaski, Randolph, Saline, Washington White, Woodruff and Yell counties as federal disaster areas. Among the different types of assistance available to individuals and households by the federal disaster declaration is DUA. Individuals who have temporarily lost jobs because of the disaster and do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits (such as self-employed individuals) may be eligible for DUA, which provides unemployment benefits up to 33 weeks. The first possible week of compensation for DUA purposes is the week ending May 6, 2017 and the last possible week of compensation is the week ending December 16, 2017.

DUA claims may be filed at the following DWS offices:

Prairie County	Forrest City Local Office, 300 Eldridge Road, Suite 2	(870) 633-2900
	Helena Local Office, 839 Newman Drive	(870) 338-7415
White County	Searcy Local Office, 500 West Arch Avenue	(870) 268-8601
Woodruff County	Newport Local Office, 7648 Victory Blvd., Suite B	(870) 523-3641

Claims for these three counties must be filed between July 6, 2017 and August 4, 2017, at DWS offices from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. DWS offices also will provide re-employment assistance where appropriate. Claims filed after the deadline will be considered untimely and benefits denied, unless the individual provides good cause for filing after that date.

To be eligible for benefits, individuals must have worked or have been scheduled to work in the disaster area, but because of the disaster, they no longer have a job, a place to work in the area or could not get to their place of work because of disaster damage. They also may qualify if they have been prevented from working because of an injury or illness resulting from the disaster or if they have become the head of household and need employment because the head of the household died as a result of the disaster. This benefit also may be available to self-employed individuals who have lost all or part of their livelihood as a result of the disaster.

Each claim is considered individually; therefore, individuals who believe they may be eligible should bring a copy of their government issued photo identification, Social Security card, the name and address of their last place of employment, and documents verifying income, such as income tax statements, recent pay stubs, W-2 forms or other proof of net income for 2016.

DWS officials understand that because of property losses some claimants may not have the necessary 2016 income information. Although some delays may result without this information, DWS staff will make every effort to work with DUA claimants to confirm their income information and expedite the claims-taking procedure.

