

Ohio Dept. of Job & Family Services Office of Unemployment Insurance Operations Q&A – Independent Contractors

Question: Are self-employed individuals and contractors eligible for unemployment benefits?

Answer: Currently, self-employed individuals and 1099 contractors are not eligible for unemployment benefits. However, Governor DeWine has asked the federal government to implement a Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) program. DUA programs are sometimes implemented after natural disasters and offer benefits to individuals who do not qualify for regular unemployment. For continuing updates, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/ouio/CoronavirusAndUI.stm>.

Question: When will independent contractors be able to take advantage of the new unemployment laws?

Answer: The new federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program will provide up to 39 weeks of benefits to self-employed workers, 1099 tax filers, and some other individuals who previously were not eligible for unemployment benefits. The benefit amount will be similar to traditional unemployment benefits, plus an additional \$600. The program's effective date is Jan. 27 through Dec. 31.

This is a new program, which we look forward to implementing. Like other states, Ohio is waiting for further guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor on how to operationalize it. Once it is up and running, retroactive benefits will be provided. We will share more information as soon as we have it.

Lucas County Dept. of Job & Family Services Public Assistance Benefits

Lucas County residents may apply for SNAP, Ohio Works First (OWF) cash assistance, and Medicaid by going to www.ohiobenefits.gov. Applications may also be made over the phone at 1-844-640-6446.

The Prevention, Retention & Contingency (PRC) Program was amended effective 4/7/2020, to permit one-time cash payments to individuals who are unemployed or who had a significant reduction in hours as a result of executive orders made in response to COVID-19. The PRC applications can be found at <http://co.lucas.oh.us/DocumentCenter/View/8260/3800-PRC-Application?bidId=> and may be submitted with any required verifications to lucas_documents@jfs.ohio.gov.