

DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE

Frequently Asked Questions

I lost my job after the disaster. Am I eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)?

If you are unemployed because of the disaster, you may be eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) even if you do not qualify for regular Unemployment Compensation/Reemployment Assistance (RA/UC). For example, you may be eligible for DUA if:

- A. You became unemployed as a direct result of the disaster; or
- B. You are unable to reach your workplace because of the disaster; or
- C. You were supposed to start work at a new job, but you lost the job because of the disaster; or
- D. You became the breadwinner for your household after the head of household died because of the disaster; or
- E. You cannot work because of an injury caused by the disaster.

Can I qualify for Disaster Unemployment Assistance if I am self-employed?

Yes, if you are self-employed, you may qualify for DUA if:

- A. You became unemployed as a direct result of the disaster; or
- B. You are unable to reach the place where you perform your services; or
- C. You were supposed to start self-employment but you don't have a place to perform the work because of the disaster; or
- D. You cannot work because of an injury caused by the disaster.

What else do I need to show to be eligible for DUA benefits?

You will also need to show that:

- A. You worked enough during the last calendar year; and
- B. You have registered for work at your local CareerSource Center and are able and available for work, unless:
 - o You were injured as a result of the hurricane and are unable to work because of the injury; or
 - o You were self-employed before the hurricane, and you are trying to get your business back in order.

Are immigrants eligible for DUA?

Yes, if you have valid work papers and are a U.S. citizen, lawful permanent resident (green card holder), refugee, asylee, Cuban/Haitian entrant, parolee for one year or more, conditional entrant, victim of domestic violence, or you have been granted withhold of deportation.

Where do I apply for Disaster Unemployment Assistance?

There are three ways to apply:

1. On the internet - at www.floridajobs.org.
2. By telephone - Call 800-204-2418 (if internet filing is not practical or the claimant needs special assistance). Paper applications may be faxed to the Department of Economic Opportunity, Unemployment Compensation Records Unit at (850) 921-3912 or mailed to them at:
P.O. Drawer 5750
Tallahassee, FL 32314-5750
3. The CareerSource Center nearest you has a computer you can use to apply.
 - Whichever way you apply, be sure to let them know that you are filing a disaster-related claim.

When should I apply for DUA?

You must file for DUA **within 30 days after the disaster**, unless the application deadline is extended. You should apply as soon as possible since you may have to wait three weeks before your first check is sent to you. If you were not able to apply before the deadline, please contact our office for help.

How long can I receive DUA benefits?

You can only receive DUA benefits for 26 weeks (6 months) after a disaster.

What if I am told that I am not eligible for DUA benefits?

You have the right to appeal the decision within sixty (60) days from the date on the Notice of Determination. This is longer than regular UA benefits. Your case will be scheduled for a hearing before an Appeals Referee. If you need a translator, you should ask for one right away. At the hearing, you will need to explain to the Appeals Referee why the decision was wrong and you are entitled to DUA. You should bring witnesses and documents with you to prove your case.

For more information, you can contact:

Legal Aid Service of Broward County, Inc. 954/765-8950 or

Coast to Coast Legal Aid of South Florida, Inc. 954/736-2400

