



For Immediate Release

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Iowa Workforce Development reports initial unemployment insurance claims filed for week of March 21- 27, 2021

DES MOINES - The number of initial unemployment claims in Iowa, filed between Sunday, March 21, and Saturday, March 27, was 4,846, a decrease of 283 from last week's adjusted numbers. There were 4,380 initial claims by individuals who work and live in Iowa, and 466 claims by individuals who work in Iowa and live in another state. The number of continuing weekly unemployment claims was 40,186, an increase of 2,646 from the previous week. For the week ending March 27, 2021, nearly 52.0% of claimants indicated their claims were not COVID-19 related, which is a decrease from 57.1% the previous week.

The U.S. Department of Labor adjusted last week's initial claim number to 5,129 (a decrease of 369) and continuing claims to 37,540 (a decrease of 625 for a total decrease of 994 overall). Iowa Workforce Development relies upon the weekly data released by the U.S. Department of Labor to report its numbers and as such, adopts the revisions to the previously published data.

On March 11, 2021 the President signed into law extensions for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA), Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC), and Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) through September 4, 2021. If you are receiving PEUC or PUA, your benefits have been extended and you do not need to take any additional action to receive the additional weeks. You must continue filing your weekly claims to receive payments. The FPUC additional \$300 payment has also been extended for all programs. If you do exhaust regular state benefits, you will be automatically enrolled in the PEUC program. If you are notified that your benefit year has expired, you must file a new claim online to determine your continued eligibility. Due to current call volumes, we encourage customers to call only if they need assistance filing their claims. Additional customer questions can be answered by emailing uiclaimshelp@iwd.iowa.gov. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Claimants who have received a notice of federal benefit overpayment now have the option to request an overpayment waiver for PEUC, FPUC, PUA and Lost Wages Assistance (LWA)

benefits. The overpayment waiver form is available online: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/application-overpayment-waiver>

IowaWORKS centers and satellite offices are providing limited in-person services to assist customers with work search activities and basic employment assistance. Services include assistance with job searches, applications, resume preparation, and other services to help Iowans with their employment needs. Individuals should telephone their local office first to schedule an appointment as walk-in services may be limited in order to follow social distancing recommendations. Workshops and classes will not be offered at this time. Customers with questions regarding unemployment insurance benefits should continue to contact the IWD call center at 1-866-239-0843 or email uicclaimshelp@iwd.iowa.gov to obtain information about their claims.

For the week ending March 27, 2021, unemployment insurance benefit payments totaled \$13,287,062.58. The following industries had the most claims:

- Industry Not Available - Self-employed, Independent Contractors, etc (988)
- Manufacturing (793)
- Construction (400)
- Retail Trade (377)
- Accommodation & Food Services (359)

A total of \$22,410,300 in FPUC benefits was paid, which include retroactive payments and reauthorized payments that went into effect on Dec. 27, 2020. Since April 4, 2020, a total of \$1,880,672,833 in FPUC benefits has been paid.

A total of \$3,359,011 was paid in PUA benefits. Since April 13, 2020, a total of \$225,175,149.54 in PUA benefits has been paid.

A total of \$9,755,974.08 in benefits has been paid in PEUC benefits this week. Since May 27, 2020, a total of \$296,263,168.50 in PEUC benefits have been paid.

Claimants receiving unemployment are required to perform weekly work searches. Those who will be required to begin work searches will be notified by IWD. We have also posted updates on our website regarding this requirement. There are currently almost 60,000 job openings at <https://www.iowaworks.gov>. Not all claimants will be required to begin work searches, including for example, those who are receiving PUA benefits due to a medical condition or lack of childcare.

Employers are required to notify their employees about Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits in accordance with Iowa Administrative Code Section 871-22.19. The requirement ensures that workers are aware of the benefits they may be eligible for if they become unemployed or experience a reduction in hours.

Employees and employers who have questions regarding returning to work should review the Frequently Asked Questions for each group on our website. Assistance for employers can be found here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/covid19-information-employers>

Employees can find assistance here: <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/covid19-information-workers>

For more information on the total data for this week's unemployment claims, please visit <https://www.iowalmi.gov/unemployment-insurance-statistics>

This week's *Mission: Employable* Podcast guests included Iowa Economic Development Authority and Iowa Finance Authority Director Debi Durham and a special episode featuring both Iowa Lieutenant Governor Adam Gregg and Iowa Workforce Development Director Beth Townsend. **LISTEN HERE:** <https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/podcast>

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