



Montana Department of LABOR & INDUSTRY

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Employer Questions

- **When and how will we know if our employees will be covered by UI, if I have to lay them off due to COVID-19 and what will happen with employers?**
 - If you have had to reduce hours of or lay-off workers due to COVID-19 impacts, encourage them to file a claim for unemployment compensation at [MontanaWorks.gov](https://montanaworks.gov); they may be eligible for benefits. An unpaid temporary closure of an employer's operations functions as a lay-off from work, even if the employer intends to have their employees come back to work when operations resume.
 - Keep watching our [COVID-19 FAQ](#) webpage for updates. We will also announce any changes using a variety of mediums including: our website, email, and social networks. Like us on [Facebook](#).
- **How do my employees file for benefits and how much do they get?**
 - File for UI benefits online at [MontanaWorks.gov](https://montanaworks.gov).
 - Use the [benefits estimator](#) to calculate possible weekly benefit amount.
 - Please do not call the state COVID-19 hotline for UI questions.
- **Are employees eligible for benefits if their hours are reduced, cutting them from 40 hours per week to 20?**
 - If an employee is working less than their customary hours, they may be eligible to receive partial benefits.
- **How long will it take for employees to receive benefits?**
 - This is really claim specific. If there are any issues or areas that need to be investigated, it will take longer to process. Please have your employee contact our phone center or review any outstanding issues online at [MontanaWorks.gov](https://montanaworks.gov)
- **Is there anything I can do to help ensure my employees receive benefits as quickly as possible?**
 - If you are not already, sign-up for SIDES right away. Signing up for SIDES will allow us to communicate electronically with you regarding claims filed by your employees, provided you sign-up before they file. The quicker we can gather the information required the better. Review our [SIDES Information Sheet](#) to learn more. To sign-up visit uieservices.mt.gov or call (406) 444-3834 (select option 2) for help.

- **How long will the employees be eligible for UI?**
 - The duration of a claim depends on a claimant's wages during their base period. Steps to determine eligibility, amount and length of benefits can be on page 8 of the [claimant handbook](#).
- **If I lay off my employees due to COVID-19, will they be considered job attached?**
 - Your employees maybe be considered job attached. Advise them to select the Job Attached option when filing or reactivating their UI claim.
- **If employees are considered job attachment, should we send in lists of the affected individuals? If so, where can those lists be sent?**
 - Fax a list to: 406-444-2699 ATTN: Claims Processing. When these lists are received, they are input in our system
- **Will COVID-19 layoffs be treated like any other layoff?**
 - Yes. If you have questions regarding benefit charging to employers, please call our Employer Charging unit at 406-444-0399.
- **How will this effect salaried employees?**
 - It does not affect them any differently than an hourly employee, they can file a UI claim.
- **How will this affect my UI Tax rate? Will the benefit charges be relieved?**
 - Under the emergency rules that went into effect March 17, 2020, employers will not be charged on a COVID-19 claim.
- **If our company must shut down due to a forced closure, are the employee's eligible for unemployment or are we better off doing a layoff so that employees would be covered?**
 - Either would be considered a layoff.