UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION AND OTHER PUBLIC BENEFITS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA DURING COVID-19
APPLYING FOR SNAP, TANF, & HEALTH INSURANCE IN D.C.
TYPES OF CASES WE HANDLE

- Medicaid, Alliance, TANF, Food Stamp (SNAP) application and renewal problems
- Unemployment Insurance eligibility and disqualification hearings and (some) overpayment cases
- Medicaid coverage (including Home Health Aide (Personal Care Aid and EPD Waiver))
- Medicare Part D
- Social Security and SSI Eligibility Appeals (generally at hearing)
- TANF sanction cases
• To apply, use DHS’s new online application (dcbenefits.dhs.dc.gov). Fax an application (see below) to a Service Center or drop it off in person. In person applications are discouraged at this time for health and safety reasons.
  • Congress Heights, 4049 South Capitol St., SW, 202-654-4524 (fax)
  • H Street, 645 H St. NE, 202-724-8964 (fax)
  • Taylor Street, 1207 Taylor St. NW, 202-576-8740 (fax)
  • As of Monday, April 13, Fort Davis and Anacostia Service Centers are closed due to high volume of applications that DHS is receiving online

• **Verification documents:** Generally, applicants should provide ID (or proof of residency), birth certificates, lease/rent receipt, utility bills, child care receipts, pay stubs, and bank account statements. But they can submit their applications without these documents and provide them later.
GENERALLY

- TANF = 45 days
- SNAP = 30 days (expedited SNAP = 7 days)
- Health Insurance (Medicaid, Alliance, and Immigrant Children's Program) = 45 days

DURING COVID-19 CRISIS DHS HAS MORE FLEXIBILITY TO PROCESS APPLICATIONS

- But as of April 10, 2020 DHS has been able to meet usual deadlines for SNAP and Expedited SNAP.
Federal block grant funds given to states to provide income assistance, job training, and other services to low-income families with children.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAMILY SIZE</th>
<th>MAX TANF/POWER GRANT</th>
<th>10/1/19-9/30/20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>$415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>$515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>$658</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<td>$804</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>$928</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1093</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td>$1383</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TO QUALIFY FOR TANF, APPLICANTS MUST:

• Have a minor child in the home
• Reside in the District of Columbia
• Meet citizenship/immigration status requirements
• Have “countable income below the “payment standard” for their household size
• Meet the asset limit ($2,000 for an assistance unit, or $3,000 if the assistance unit includes a person over 60).
WHAT IS SNAP?

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (also known as Food Stamps) is a Federal program that helps low-income individuals and families buy food to prepare and eat at home.
- Benefits vary by the size of the group getting them, household income, rent or child support expenses, and whether anyone in the household is elderly or disabled.
HOUSEHOLD MUST:

• Be low-income. See next slide for income levels. Federal gross income is under 130% of Federal Poverty Level but through categorical eligibility, DC’s gross income limit is 200% FPL for most families and individuals. Net income limit is 100% FPL.

• Have limited assets (if not categorically eligible). Since most households in DC are categorically eligible, assets are not a concern for these households.

• Be a District resident to get SNAP in the District.

• Meet citizen/immigration requirements. Benefits only provided to members who meet requirements. Income and assets for all members count but are prorated for ineligible members.

• Consist of people who regularly purchase and prepare food together. In most cases, though, all parents, minor children under 22 and spouses who live together must be part of the SNAP household.
## SNAP INCOME LIMITS & MAX BENEFITS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FAMILY SIZE</th>
<th>GROSS MONTHLY INCOME (200% OF POVERTY)</th>
<th>MONTHLY MAXIMUM SNAP BENEFITS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$2127</td>
<td>$194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$2873</td>
<td>$355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$3620</td>
<td>$509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$4367</td>
<td>$646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$5113</td>
<td>$768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>$5860</td>
<td>$921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELIGIBILITY</td>
<td>MEDICAID</td>
<td>ALLIANCE AND IMMIGRANT CHILDREN’S PROGRAM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kids, Parents, Childless Adults based on income; SSI Recipients, Some Elderly and Persons with Disabilities. Must meet immigration requirements.</td>
<td>Adults (alliance) and Kids (Immigrant Children’s Program) who meet Medical income limits but do not meet Medicaid immigration requirements. Alliance Recipients also must meet an asset limit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TYPE OF INSURANCE</td>
<td>Free for Service or Managed Care</td>
<td>Managed Care</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**HEALTH INSURANCE**
# Financial Eligibility

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District of Columbia Health Insurance Program</th>
<th>ABD Medicaid (Disabled &amp; Adults Over 65 Yrs Old)</th>
<th>D.C. Healthcare Alliance</th>
<th>D.C. Childless Adult Medicaid (21-64 Yrs Old)</th>
<th>D.C. Parent/Caregiver and Children/Youth (19/20 Yrs Old)</th>
<th>QHP - Cost Sharing Reductions</th>
<th>Immigrant Children’s Program</th>
<th>D.C. Pregnant Women/Children (18 and Under) Medicaid</th>
<th>QHP - Premium Tax Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Income Eligibility Limit as % of Federal Poverty Guideline</td>
<td>100% ppg per month</td>
<td>200% ppg per month</td>
<td>210% ppg per month</td>
<td>216% ppg per month</td>
<td>250% ppg per month</td>
<td>300% ppg per month</td>
<td>319% ppg per month</td>
<td>400% ppg per month</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Size of 1</td>
<td>$1,063</td>
<td>$2,126</td>
<td>$2,252</td>
<td>$2,296</td>
<td>$2,658</td>
<td>$3,189</td>
<td>$3,391</td>
<td>$4,252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Size of 2</td>
<td>$1,437</td>
<td>$2,874</td>
<td>$3,018</td>
<td>$3,104</td>
<td>$3,593</td>
<td>$4,311</td>
<td>$4,584</td>
<td>$5,748</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household Size of 3</td>
<td>$1,810</td>
<td>$3,620</td>
<td>$3,801</td>
<td>$3,910</td>
<td>$4,525</td>
<td>$5,430</td>
<td>$5,774</td>
<td>$7,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household Size of 4</td>
<td>$2,183</td>
<td>$4,366</td>
<td>$4,884</td>
<td>$4,715</td>
<td>$5,458</td>
<td>$6,549</td>
<td>$6,964</td>
<td>$8,732</td>
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<tr>
<td>Household Size of 5</td>
<td>$2,887</td>
<td>$5,114</td>
<td>$5,370</td>
<td>$5,523</td>
<td>$6,393</td>
<td>$7,671</td>
<td>$8,157</td>
<td>$10,228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add for Each Additional Family Member</td>
<td>+373</td>
<td>+746</td>
<td>+783</td>
<td>+806</td>
<td>+933</td>
<td>+1,119</td>
<td>+1,190</td>
<td>+1,492</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Income eligibility for Medicaid through the EPD waiver is 300% of the SSI maximum income eligibility limit ($783 for an individual and $1,175 or a couple in 2020). Eligible individuals must also be found to need a "nursing home level" of home health care.
UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION IN D.C. DURING COVID-19
LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

• Understand how unemployment compensation can help support workers facing COVID-19 related job losses
• Understand basic eligibility criteria for Unemployment Compensation in DC during COVID-19
• Nuts & bolts of how to apply (and appeal)
• Identify additional resources
FIRST OBJECTIVE

HOW CAN UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION HELP WORKERS NOW?
THE PROBLEM:

• Nationwide, an astounding 6.65 million unemployment claims in March 2020
• In DC, 64,524 workers filed claims since March 13th
  ◦ Compare: In Fiscal Year 2019, DOES received 37,720 claims
THE SOLUTION:

• The U.S. Unemployment Compensation (UC) program was created in response to the Great Depression. Funded by tax on employers and administered by each state.

• The UC program was designed to quickly distribute cash to eligible workers – especially in an economic downturn.
THE SOLUTION:

• Weekly cash payments (max. of $444/week in DC).

• Benefit amount based on past wages (about 50% wage replacement)

• Only for eligible workers
ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS:

• U.S. citizen or immigrant with work permit
• Loses job through no fault of their own
• Sufficient past wages in the “base period”
• Physically able and available to work (some exceptions)
• Searching for work each week
STIMULUS BILL

CONGRESS PASSED STIMULUS BILLS TO HELP UNEMPLOYED WORKERS:

• Extra $600/week payments to eligible workers (until July 25th)
• Extra 13 weeks of payments to those still out of work (until Dec. 31st)
• Special Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) (if worker doesn’t qualify for standard unemployment comp)
DC COUNCIL EXPANDED ACCESS TO UNEMPLOYMENT:

- Workers will qualify if they lose wages due to COVID-19, even if working part-time or if layoff is temporary
- No requirement to search for work each week
- COVID-19 claims not charged to employer tax-rates
- Previously excluded workers (e.g., independent contractors, those without sufficient past wages, or those unavailable for work because of COVID-19) are eligible for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)
THE RESULT:

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION DURING COVID-19:

• Weekly cash benefit replacing about 50% of past wages -- up to $444/week – plus an additional $600/week
• Up to 39 weeks of benefits (unless Congress extends)
• Employees and independent contractors are eligible
• Minimum $180/week for workers with low past wages (PUA)

WHO IS EXCLUDED?

UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION IS STILL NOT AVAILABLE TO:

• Immigrants without work authorization (e.g., undocumented)
• Workers who cannot prove a loss of income due to COVID
• Those who are not physically able and available to work (unless related to COVID)
SECOND OBJECTIVE

BASIC ELIGIBILITY FOR UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION DURING COVID-19
AN “AFFECTED WORKER” (NOW QUALIFIED FOR UNEMPLOYMENT) IS:

• Otherwise eligible for unemployment compensation, and
• Has “become unemployed or partially unemployed as a result of the circumstances giving rise to the public health emergency.”
• B23-0718 (lines 66-70)
# JOB LOSSES INCLUDE:

- Quarantine or self-quarantine of a worker,

- Shut-down of a workplace as required by the Mayor or health department

- Workplace closes because of lost revenue related to COVID-19

- Voluntary quit if employer refuses to follow a public safety order of the Mayor or Health department or forces worker to appear physically at work despite quarantine or self-quarantine of the worker.

**TIP:** Document the reason for the job loss!
DC requires evidence of a “Public Health Emergency Impact,” which may include:

- Letter from medical professional or local health official requiring worker to isolate and/or quarantine,
- Mayor or Department of Health order that applies to you,
- Letter or email from employer confirming lay-off or reduction in hours due to COVID-19.

Proof of COVID-19 Job Loss
PANDEMIC UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE: (PAU)

PUA IS FOR CLAIMANTS WHO ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR STANDARD UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION:

- independent contractors,
- those without sufficient past wages, and
- those unavailable for work because of COVID-19

PUA BENEFITS ARE THE SAME AMOUNT AND DURATION AS STANDARD UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION, WITH A MINIMUM PAYMENT OF $180/WEEK.

PUA CLAIMANTS SHOULD PREPARE TO SUBMIT DOCUMENTATION:

- Past income, e.g., tax returns, paid invoices, and,
- COVID-19 related loss of income or unavailability for work.
- DC is updating its claim system to prepare for PUA applications (estimated release date is April 28th).

EMAIL PUA@DC.GOV TO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION FROM DC WHEN CLAIMANTS CAN FILE FOR PUA.
THIRD OBJECTIVE

NUTS & BOLTS OF HOW TO APPLY AND APPEAL
WHERE DO I FILE FOR BENEFITS:

- You may file for UI benefits in the District of Columbia if your last workplace (of at least 1 day) was in the District -- even if you live in another state.
- Maryland and Virginia have different rules and may allow claims if you live in those states.

MARYLAND & VIRGINIA

- To file in MARYLAND, 877-293-4125 or www.mdunemployment.com
- To file in VIRGINIA, 866-832-2363, or http://www.vec.virginia.gov/unemployed/online-services/apply-for-unemployment-benefits
YOU MUST FILE ONLINE OR BY PHONE. ALL AMERICAN JOB CENTERS (IN-PERSON OFFICES) ARE CURRENTLY CLOSED.

- PHONE: (202) 724-7000
  - LANGUAGE ACCESS: Ask for Language Line.
- WEBSITE: https://dcnetworks.org
  - Website available in Spanish
  - TIP: Use a computer (not a mobile) with Internet Explorer
You must file by phone or online (OAH is closed).

- PHONE: (202) 442-9094
- WEBSITE: Filing by email or by uploading documents to the website.
  https://oah.dc.gov
• You do not need to search for work while you receive unemployment because of the Public Health Emergency.

HOWEVER, ALL OTHER ELIGIBILITY RULES APPLY.

• You must file claim cards each week by telephone or online
• You must report severance pay or pension benefits
• Must be physically able and available for work (unless sick or quarantined by COVID-19)
• You must report if you accept a new full-time job
• You must report GROSS earnings from part-time work on weekly claims
FOURTH OBJECTIVE

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA LAW
• D.C. Code 51-101 et al.
• D.C.M.R 7-300 et al.
• D.C. Emergency Bills No. 1 (B23-017) and No. 2 (B23-033), available at: http://lims.dccouncil.us/

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM
LETTERS (UIPLS):
https://wdr.doleta.gov/directives/

• UIPL 17-20 (Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation)
• UIPL 16-20 (Pandemic Unemployment Assistance)
• UIPL 15-20 (Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation)
• DC Coronavirus information: https://coronavirus.dc.gov/ (unemployment data, recovery info for workers and businesses)

• DC Department of Employment Services: https://does.dc.gov/ (Unemployment Compensation program updates and rules)

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