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## **Labor Department Accepting Unemployment Claims from Self-employed, Independent Contractors, Gig Workers**

PIERRE, S.D. – The Department of Labor and Regulation is now accepting Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) claim applications. Visit [dlr.sd.gov/pua](http://dlr.sd.gov/pua) for filing instructions.

A claimant can be compensated with the PUA benefit beginning Feb. 2, 2020, or the first week a claimant was unable to work as a result of COVID-19, whichever date is later. The last week this benefit is payable is the week ending Dec. 26, 2020.

“Documentation showing proof of earnings should be submitted to best determine the weekly benefit payment amount,” said state Labor and Regulation Secretary Marcia Hultman. “The minimum PUA benefit payment is \$172 per week.”

PUA is a provision of the CARES Act providing up to 39 weeks of unemployment compensation to individuals who are self-employed, independent contractors, nonprofit employees and gig workers. This includes individuals working part time, or who otherwise would not qualify for unemployment benefits under state or federal law.

“PUA claimants must file a weekly request for payment each week to receive benefits, even though the work search requirement is currently waived,” said Secretary Hultman. “You cannot file this request until the week is over on Saturday at midnight.”

PUA claimants are eligible for the additional \$600 weekly extended unemployment benefit under the Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) provision. This does not need to be separately requested but will be paid with the regular weekly payment.

Attempts to collect unemployment benefits after quitting a job without good work-related cause is considered fraud. The CARES Act specifically provides for serious consequences for fraudulent cases including fines, confinement and an inability to receive future unemployment benefits until all fraudulent claims and fines have been repaid.