

**For Immediate Release:** Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2020  
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## **Federal Unemployment Benefits Ending for Many Claimants**

PIERRE, S.D. – Many South Dakotans currently receiving unemployment benefits through programs funded by the CARES Act could be nearing the end of their weekly payments.

The last day to claim benefits through these federal programs is Dec. 26, 2020. According to federal program rules, many claimants could see their benefits stop before that date if they reach the maximum number of allowable weeks.

The Department of Labor and Regulation encourages claimants to continue searching for work so they can secure employment before their benefits end. Job Service offices will meet with clients in-person by appointment Monday through Friday. Virtual capabilities also exist. Visit [www.sdjobs.org](http://www.sdjobs.org) for more information.

The state of South Dakota currently provides unemployment benefits through three separate programs, two of which are new federal programs created under the CARES Act.

- **Regular State Unemployment Compensation (UC)** – This state program provides benefits to eligible claimants having the required amount of wages earned from a covered South Dakota employer in the applicable base period. Employers pay the premiums that fund the program, and individuals earn eligibility through a wage-earning work history. This program provides a maximum of 26 weeks of benefits during the claimant's benefit year.
- **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)** – This CARES Act program provides benefits to eligible claimants not having wages earned from a covered South Dakota employer and who are not working due to the COVID-19 pandemic. PUA is available to workers not traditionally covered by unemployment insurance, including self-employed individuals, contract workers, and gig workers. An individual out of work due to a covered COVID-19 qualifying event could also be eligible for PUA. This program lasts for up to a maximum of 39 weeks. PUA claimants are not eligible for any extended benefits programs. Per current federal law, this program ends on Dec. 26, 2020.
- **Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC)** – This CARES Act program provides eligible claimants up to an additional 13 weeks of

unemployment after exhausting benefits in the Regular State UC program. Per current federal law, this program ends on Dec. 26, 2020.

Under the CARES Act, claimants who began receiving benefits through the PUA program early in its inception will begin reaching the maximum 39 weeks of payments in the coming weeks. All PUA claimants will receive benefits only through Dec. 26, 2020, regardless of a remaining dollar balance or remaining weeks.

Claimants may continue to request weekly payments in the event Congress passes new legislation or extends current programming.