

How Many Weeks of Unemployment Compensation Are Available?

Workers in most states are eligible for up to 26 weeks of benefits from the regular state-funded unemployment compensation program, although 13 states provide fewer weeks, and one provides more. Extended Benefits (EB) are not triggered on in any state. Additional weeks of pandemic federal benefits ended in all states on September 6, 2021.

The federal-state unemployment insurance (UI) system helps many people who have lost their jobs by temporarily replacing part of their wages. (See “[Policy Basics: Unemployment Insurance](#).”) Under certain circumstances, unemployed workers who exhaust their regular state-funded unemployment benefits before they can find work can receive additional weeks of benefits.

Under the CARES Act responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, all states received access to federal funding to provide additional weeks of Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Assistance (PEUC) benefits to people who exhausted their regular state benefits, and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) to many others who lost their jobs through no fault of their own but who were not normally eligible for UI in their state. These and other pandemic-related emergency UI programs ended nationwide the first weekend of September 2021, but many states stopped providing these federal benefits before that.

The map below shows the maximum number of weeks of benefits that are currently available in each state.

Montana, which provides a maximum of 28 weeks, is now the only state providing more than 26 weeks. Massachusetts has reduced its maximum to 26 weeks for those who file a new claim after July 2, 2023. (Massachusetts provides 28 weeks of UI except when its unemployment rate is very low, as it now is, or when a federal extended benefit program is in place, as it was in the pandemic.)

The states providing fewer than the standard 26-week maximum include:

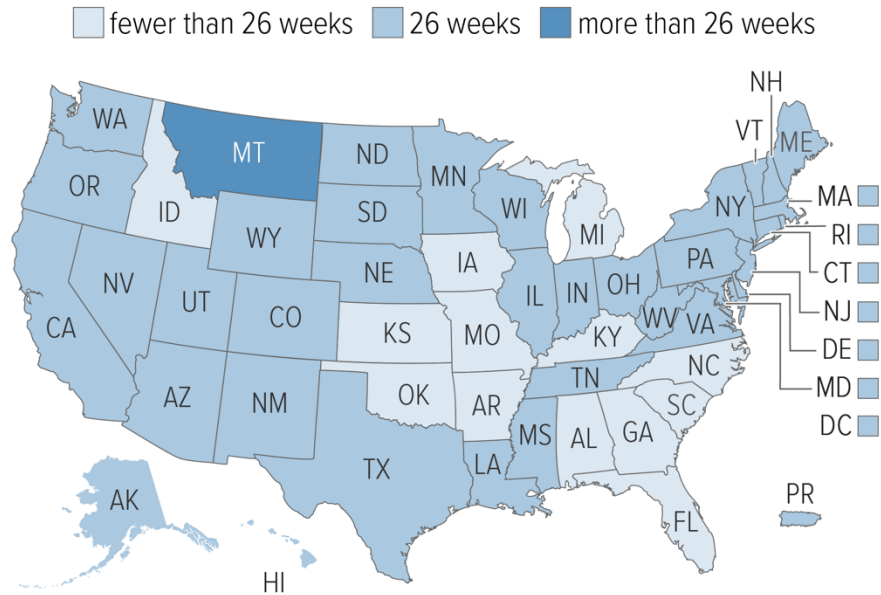
- Arkansas, which provides up to 16 weeks of regular benefits;
- Iowa, which reduced its maximum to 16 weeks for claims filed after July 3, 2022;
- Michigan, which increased the maximum number of weeks to 26 earlier in the COVID-19 emergency but cut back to 20 weeks for new applicants in 2021;
- Oklahoma, which provides 16 weeks of UI;

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- South Carolina and Missouri, which provide up to 20 weeks of UI.

Maximum Duration of Unemployment Insurance

Maximum number of weeks available



Source: Congressional Research Service, Department of Labor

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The remaining seven states periodically update their maximum weeks of UI available based on changes in the state's unemployment rate:

- Alabama currently provides up to 14 weeks of UI for new enrollees, with an additional five-week extension for those enrolled in a state-approved training program;
- Georgia currently provides 14 weeks of UI. An increase to 26 weeks in the COVID-19 emergency has now expired;
- Florida currently provides up to 12 weeks for claims filed after January 1, 2022;
- Idaho currently provides up to 21 weeks for new enrollees based on its November unemployment rate;
- Kansas currently provides up to 16 weeks of UI;
- North Carolina currently provides up to 12 weeks;
- Kentucky currently provides up to 12 weeks based on its average unemployment rate of less than 4.5 percent from July to September 2022.

State laws in many states with a maximum of 26 weeks employ a sliding scale based on a worker's earnings history to determine the maximum number of weeks for which an individual worker qualifies. Except in

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Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Georgia, Hawai'i, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, West Virginia, and Puerto Rico, many UI recipients' maximum is fewer than 26 weeks.

The table below shows the latest three-month average unemployment rate for the period ending in February for each state, as well as the maximum number of weeks of benefits currently available through regular UI. EB is currently not triggered on in any state. When EB is triggered, the number of weeks of extended benefits in a state equals the smaller of 13 weeks or half the maximum number of weeks of regular UI in the state – unless the state has adopted an alternative trigger that adds up to seven more weeks when the state's unemployment rate triggers on a High Unemployment Period (HUP), allowing up to 20 weeks of EB (but no more than 80 percent of the number of regular weeks the state provides).

TABLE 1

Unemployment Rates and Weeks of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Available

State	Unemployment (3-month average)	Maximum number of weeks of benefits available
Alabama	2.9	14 weeks
Alaska	4.6	26 weeks
Arizona	4.1	26 weeks
Arkansas	3.6	16 weeks
California	5.2	26 weeks
Colorado	3.4	26 weeks
Connecticut	4.4	26 weeks
Delaware	4.0	26 weeks
District of Columbia	5.0	26 weeks
Florida	3.1	12 weeks
Georgia	3.1	26 weeks
Hawai'i	3.1	26 weeks
Idaho	3.3	21 weeks
Illinois	4.7	26 weeks
Indiana	3.5	26 weeks
Iowa	3.0	16 weeks
Kansas	2.6	16 weeks
Kentucky	4.3	12 weeks
Louisiana	4.1	26 weeks
Maine	3.4	26 weeks
Maryland	2.3	26 weeks
Massachusetts	3.1	26 weeks
Michigan	4.0	20 weeks
Minnesota	2.7	26 weeks

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State	Unemployment (3-month average)	Maximum number of weeks of benefits available
Mississippi	3.2	26 weeks
Missouri	3.3	20 weeks
Montana	3.3	28 weeks
Nebraska	2.5	26 weeks
Nevada	5.2	26 weeks
New Hampshire	2.6	26 weeks
New Jersey	4.8	26 weeks
New Mexico	4.0	26 weeks
New York	4.5	26 weeks
North Carolina	3.5	12 weeks
North Dakota	1.9	26 weeks
Ohio	3.7	26 weeks
Oklahoma	3.5	16 weeks
Oregon	4.1	26 weeks
Pennsylvania	3.4	26 weeks
Puerto Rico	5.7	26 weeks
Rhode Island	3.6	26 weeks
South Carolina	3.1	20 weeks
South Dakota	2.1	26 weeks
Tennessee	3.4	26 weeks
Texas	3.9	26 weeks
Utah	2.8	26 weeks
Vermont	2.3	26 weeks
Virgin Islands	1.8	26 weeks
Virginia	3.0	26 weeks
Washington	4.6	26 weeks
West Virginia	4.3	26 weeks
Wisconsin	3.2	26 weeks
Wyoming	2.9	26 weeks

Updated April 16, 2024