



Catalyst Center COVID-19 Resource Series THE CARES ACT AND EMPLOYMENT

What Does the CARES Act Offer Regarding Income Supports due to Unemployment?

The goal of this fact sheet is to provide Title V programs and allies with a summary of guidance in clear language in order to build understanding of key financing and coverage provisions during the COVID-19 emergency, support care coordination, benefits and coverage counseling, and aid in reducing the risk of family financial hardship.

The [CARES Act](#) became law on March 27, 2020. This \$2.2 trillion package builds on two previous Congressional legislative efforts to address the health and economic impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic. The following are brief highlights of some of the income-related provisions of the CARES Act that have implications for states, children and youth with special health care needs, their families, and providers.

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) (Section 2102)

- Expands unemployment compensation to those who would not otherwise be eligible for unemployment benefits, such as self-employed workers, independent contractors, and “gig” workers who are out of work or whose hours have been reduced due to COVID-19 related circumstances, including:
 - The worker or a member of the worker’s household has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
 - The worker is providing care for a family or household member who has been diagnosed with COVID-19.
 - The worker is caring for a child (or other person for whom the worker has primary caregiving responsibilities) whose school or care facility is closed as a result of COVID-19.
 - The worker has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine due to COVID-19 concerns.
 - The worker’s scheduled commencement of employment has been delayed or canceled due to COVID-19.
 - The worker has become the primary breadwinner due to the death of the head of the household from COVID-19.
 - The individual’s place of employment is closed as a result of COVID-19.
- This provision is in effect retroactively to January 27, 2020 and runs through December 31, 2020. Benefits for individuals are capped at 39 weeks.

Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (Section 2104)

A temporary additional federal payment of \$600 per week is available to all recipients of traditional unemployment insurance or Pandemic Unemployment Compensation from January 27 through July 31, 2020.

Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (Section 2107)

The length of time for traditional unemployment benefits varies between states, with an average of 26 weeks. This CARES Act provision provides a continuation of state benefits for 13 additional weeks. To be eligible, individuals must have exhausted their state benefits and be actively looking for work. The benefit is the state’s regular unemployment compensation amount, plus the additional \$600 under Section 2104.

The information presented is accurate as of its publication date. Further federal agency guidance, regulations and rules are being issued rapidly and may have an impact on this content. For the most up-to-date information on Medicaid/CHIP guidance, state flexibility-related tools and checklists, waiver and amendment approvals, and clinical/technical guidance please view [Coronavirus resources for states at Medicaid.gov](#).

This project (U1TMC31757) is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of an award totaling \$500,000, with no financing by nongovernmental sources. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.