

What is the LWA program?

This funding was made available to states on August 8, 2020 by Presidential Memorandum. It directs FEMA to make up to \$44 billion from its Disaster Relief Fund available for financial assistance to Americans who have lost wages due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It offers “lost wage assistance” of \$300 per week to the unemployed through the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Has Maine applied for and been approved for the LWA program?

Yes, Maine was approved for the LWA program the night of August 25. It began issuing payments on September 11.

How much money will a person be eligible for each week and for how many weeks?

An eligible individual would receive a \$300 additional benefit in addition to their weekly unemployment benefit.

The LWA program is time-limited. The funding covers 6 weeks: the weeks ending August 1, 2020 through September 5, 2020.

Do I need to submit an application for the LWA?

No, there is no application for the LWA program.

Individuals who do not need to take any action are:

- Those who are receiving state unemployment, Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC), or Extended Benefits and have already indicated that they are out of work due to COVID-19
- Individuals who are receiving Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA)

There are some individuals that the Department needs additional information from, about whether they are unemployed due to COVID-19. If the Department needs additional information from individuals, they will receive a letter in the mail and through their ReEmployME account correspondence tab. LWA is a FEMA program, and so has different eligibility requirements than unemployment programs. Responses to the LWA questions will not affect an individual’s eligibility for pandemic unemployment programs PEUC and PUA.

Who is eligible for the LWA?

According to federal guidelines, eligible individuals include recipients whose weekly benefit amount is at least \$100 per week in the following unemployment-related assistance programs:

- Unemployment Insurance or Compensation (state benefits)
- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (13-week federal extension)
- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (federal benefits for those who are not eligible for state unemployment)
- Extended Benefits

In addition, an individual must have attested that they are unemployed, or partially unemployed, as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Who is not eligible for the LWA?

- Individuals who did not receive an unemployment benefit during the weeks covered by LWA.
- Individuals whose weekly unemployment benefit amount before deductions is less than \$100 in one of the above listed programs
- Individuals who did not lose employment, or become partially unemployed, as a direct result of the COVID-19 pandemic

I earned some money from my job during one of the covered LWA weeks. Will I still receive the LWA benefit?

It depends on how much you earned. If you earned more than your weekly benefit under unemployment then, no, you will not receive the LWA payment.