

FAQ about Unemployment Insurance

Question / Issue	Answer / Response
I can't get through on the phone lines and need help!	Many questions can be answered by reviewing information on the website https://esd.wa.gov/newsroom/covid-19 . This should be your first stop. If you have specific questions about your claim, contact customer service at 800-318-6022.
I can't get through and am worried I'll miss out on some of my benefits!	You will not lose any benefits. You will be paid retroactively to the date you became unemployed, not the date when you filed your initial claim. First, go to the website https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment to see if your questions can be answered and review the checklist of how to apply. If you still have questions, call 800-318-6022 or use the virtual chat on www.worksourcewa.com .
I can't sign-up for a SAW (Secure Access Washington) account	Please watch this video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JgrLhqbtHQ4&feature=youtu.be . If you still have problems, call the Help Desk: 855-682-0785 Monday-Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Agents on this line cannot help with unemployment benefits.)
I applied and haven't heard back. What's going on?	There is very high demand and ESD is working hard to meet the demand. Check the status on the website and, if you haven't heard back in a couple of days, try calling 800-318-6022.
I was approved and got my first payment, but haven't had any since. What happened?	Once approved, you need to file a claim each week. The unemployment week runs from Sunday to Saturday so you need to file a claim each week during this time frame to be paid for the previous week.
I am self-employed, a sole proprietor, an independent contractor, freelancer or a gig worker. What do I need to do? What documentation will I need to submit?	You can find information about necessary documentation and how to apply at https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment/self-employed .
Should I file for Standby?	Do not request Standby when you apply. The requirement that you search for work each week is optional until further notice, regardless of the type of unemployment program you are on.
Filing your weekly claim over the phone and claims inquiries that can't be answered online	Call 800-318-6022.
Have general questions, not related to an already filed claim	Check the website first https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment , if you can't find the answer online, then call 800-318-6022.
Visit the "Help" page for additional tips for success	https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment/help
Avoid the most common Unemployment Insurance issues	https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment/tips

Compiled by Workforce Southwest Washington from information on the Employment Security Department (ESD) website <https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment>.