



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD
OF SOLANO COUNTY

COVID-19 INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR JOB SEEKERS

Updated March 29, 2020

The Workforce Development Board (WDB) of Solano County is closely monitoring COVID-19 developments and will provide information regarding services and resources for individuals as they become available. At this time, the centers will remain open in order to provide the growing need of workforce services to the community. We are, however, taking extra precautions to ensure the health and safety of staff and participants during this time and some services, such as workshops, may be limited. Please check our website for additional information on services and resources at <http://solanoemployment.org>

Solano County Resources

Effective March 18, 2020, Solano County issued its countywide [Shelter at Home Health Order and Directive](#) to continue protecting the health and safety of our community, clarify directive guidance in accordance with the Governor, and ensure consistent compliance across the County with social distancing and self-isolation measures. In addition to this, Governor Newsom signed a [Shelter in Place Executive Order](#) that went into effect on March 19, 2020 for the State of California.

For more information from Solano County Public Health:

1. Visit the Solano County [Public Health website](#) for regular COVID-19 updates
2. Visit the Solano County Public Health Facebook page ([@SolanoCountyPH](#)) for COVID-19 updates
3. Register for [Alert Solano](#) to receive emergency alerts on your mobile device, including COVID-19

California Protections and Resources

There are a number of protections and resources available to job seekers and workers through the California Employment Development Department (EDD) that can be found at: https://www.edd.ca.gov/about_edd/coronavirus-2019.htm. Please review the following frequently asked questions below:

Disability or Paid Family Leave Benefits

1. What benefits are available if I'm sick and can't work?

If you're unable to work due to having or being exposed to COVID-19 and if you have the necessary supporting medical documentation (see question #2), you are encouraged to [file a Disability Insurance \(DI\) claim](#). DI provides short-term benefit payments to eligible workers who have a full or partial loss of wages due to a non-work-related illness, injury, or pregnancy. Most California workers are covered by DI through deductions from their paychecks (noted as "CASDI" on most paystubs). The [Governor's Executive Order](#) waives the one-week unpaid waiting period, so you can collect DI benefits for the first week you are out of work. If you are eligible, the EDD processes and issues payments within a few weeks of receiving a claim. For fastest processing of your claim, [submit your claim online](#) and have your supporting medical documentation submitted online immediately after.

2. Can I qualify for disability benefits if I'm quarantined?

Yes, if your quarantine is certified by a medical professional or a state or local health officer. If you are not found eligible for DI, you are encouraged to apply for an Unemployment Insurance (UI) claim.

3. Are there benefits available to me if I'm sick and I'm self-employed or otherwise not covered by the State Disability Insurance (SDI) program?

You may be eligible for benefits if you pay into Disability Insurance Elective Coverage (DIEC). DIEC is an option for self-employed individuals (such as independent contractors) and employers to apply for coverage under SDI. That includes school district and state employees who are exempt from SDI, but can negotiate to participate in the DIEC. For more information, see the Information Sheet: [Elective Coverage for Employers and Self-Employed Individuals \(DE 231EC\) \(PDF\)](#).

4. What benefits are available if a family member is sick and I have to miss work to care for that person?

If you're unable to work because you are caring for an ill or quarantined family member with COVID-19, you are encouraged to [file a Paid Family Leave \(PFL\) claim](#). PFL provides up to six weeks, this extends to eight weeks starting July 1, 2020, of benefit payments to [eligible workers](#) who have a full or partial loss of wages because they need time off work to care for a seriously ill family member or to bond with a new child. For the purposes of PFL coverage, a family member is defined as seriously ill child, parent, parent-in-law, grandparent, grandchild, sibling, spouse, or registered domestic partner. To be eligible for PFL benefits, you must submit certain medical documentation regarding the family member in your care who is either ill or quarantined due to COVID-19. For fastest processing of your claim, [submit your claim online](#) and have the supporting medical documentation submitted online immediately after.

Unemployment Insurance Benefits

The California Employment Development Department (EDD) encourages all individuals to apply for Unemployment Insurance benefits [online](#) for faster processing. EDD provides a [Quick Reference Guide](#) to assist individuals through the online process.

5. What benefits are available if I am subject to quarantine, am not ill, and am not found eligible for a Disability Insurance claim?

You are encouraged to apply for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits if you are unemployed, which includes reasons such as:

- Your hours are reduced due to the quarantine.
- You were separated from your employer during the quarantine.
- You are subject to a quarantine required by a medical professional or state or local health officer.

You can be eligible for benefits if you have enough earnings over the past 12-18 months and meet other [eligibility criteria](#). The [Governor's Executive Order](#) waives the one-week unpaid waiting period, so you can collect UI benefits for the first week you are out of work. If you are eligible, the EDD processes and issues payments within a few weeks of receiving a claim.

EDD representatives may need to set up a phone interview with you to collect more details.

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- If you are temporarily out of work and plan to return to the same employer, you do not need to meet the usual requirement of looking for work while you are collecting unemployment benefits. The EDD will inform you if you are not required to look for work each week.
- If you are not connected to a certain employer with a job to return to, you are required to look for work while collecting benefits. The EDD will inform you if you are required to look for work each week.

6. Would I qualify for benefits if I choose to stay home from work due to underlying health conditions and concerns about exposure to the virus?

You could be eligible for unemployment benefits. Our EDD representatives will seek details from you to determine eligibility based on the reason you are unemployed and the reason for restricting your availability to work. You may be required to actively seek work each week to show that you are still making yourself available for work.

7. Would I qualify for benefits if my child's school shuts down and I have to miss work to care for that child who is not ill?

You may be eligible for unemployment benefits. Our EDD representatives will determine eligibility on a case-by-case basis by scheduling a phone interview with you. For example, you may be eligible for unemployment benefits if your employer has temporarily allowed you to work less than full-time hours due to your child care situation. In such case, you may be eligible for reduced benefits based on the amount of your weekly earnings, as long as you meet all other eligibility requirements. The EDD will contact you and your employer for information to determine your eligibility.

8. Are benefits available if my employer reduces my hours or shuts down operations due to impacts of the coronavirus?

If your employer reduced your hours or shut down operations due to COVID-19, you are encouraged to [file an Unemployment Insurance \(UI\) claim](#). UI provides partial wage replacement benefit payments to workers who lose their job or have their hours reduced, through no fault of their own. Workers who are temporarily unemployed due to COVID-19 and expected to return to work with their employer within a few weeks are not required to actively seek work each week. However, they must remain able, available, and ready to work during their unemployment for each week of benefits claimed and meet all other eligibility criteria.

9. Can I still collect unemployment benefits if I am able to work remotely from home?

Working your full normal hours remotely would not qualify you for benefits. However, you could collect some Unemployment Insurance benefits if your usual number of work hours are reduced through no fault of your own.

10. Can I collect disability and unemployment benefits at the same time?

You have the right to apply and file a claim for unemployment and disability benefits at the same time, but you can only collect payments under one benefit program at a time. You're encouraged to file a claim under one program based on your circumstances or file under both programs if you are unsure of which program is most appropriate. The EDD will review the facts and determine your eligibility for the appropriate program.

11. How does the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) affect me?

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act, signed into law March 18, 2020, provides emergency expansion of the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), federal paid sick leave, and emergency Unemployment Insurance stabilization and access. Emergency FMLA provides protections for employees who work for an employer with less than 500 employees and have been employed for at least thirty (30) calendar days. The federal paid sick leave apply to employees who work for an employer with less than 500 employees and provides up to 80 hours of paid sick leave at full-time employee's regular rate or 2/3 of that rate for COVID-19 depending on the reason. The Department of Labor's Wage and Hours Division released guidance on March 24th [FFCRA Rights for Employees](#).

12. Can my employer require me to exhaust my paid sick leave?

Your employer cannot require that you use paid sick leave; that is your choice. If you decide to use paid sick leave, your employer can require that you take a minimum of two hours of paid sick leave. For more information, visit the California Labor Commissioner's Office's [FAQs](#).

13. Would I be entitled to compensation for reporting to work and being sent home?

Generally, if an employee reports for their regularly scheduled shift, but is required to work fewer hours or is sent home, they must be compensated for at least two hours of reporting time pay. However, reporting time pay does not apply when operations cannot commence or continue when recommended by civil authorities. This means that reporting time pay does apply under a state of emergency, unless the state of emergency includes a recommendation to cease operations.

14. If I am an exempt employee, am I entitled to a full week's salary for work interruptions due to a shutdown of operations?

An employee is exempt if they are paid at least the minimum required salary and meet the other qualifications for exemptions. Federal regulations require that employers pay an exempt employee performing any work during a week their full weekly salary if they do not work the full week because the employer failed to make work available. An exempt employee who performs no work at all during a week may have their weekly salary reduced. For more information, visit the California Labor Commissioner's Office's [FAQs](#).