



Labor Secretary Issues Directive to Streamline the Processing of Unemployment Insurance (UI) Payments

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Sacramento, CA—California Labor Secretary Julie A. Su sent a memorandum to Employment Development Department Director Sharon Hilliard authorizing the department to take additional steps to streamline the approval process for an unprecedented surge in unemployment insurance (UI) benefit claims and issue payments as quickly as possible.

“The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted the lives of workers across California,” wrote Su. “UI provides a critical source of security to workers in times like this and an important boost to the economy.”

Su’s directive will allow the EDD to streamline the benefit claims process and exercise flexibility when assessing the unique and unprecedented situation that workers are facing. Under Su’s directive, the EDD may award benefits to a claimant before making a final determination regarding whether the claimant is able and available to work. As federal law requires, a worker’s ability and availability to work will remain a factor in the EDD’s eligibility determination. However, the flexibility Su’s directive provides will enable the EDD to put money in the hands of unemployed workers more quickly.

The EDD is also employing several other strategies to help keep up with the demand including staff working overtime seven days a week, redirecting hundreds of staff with unemployment processing experience (including recent retirees), and hiring as much additional staff as possible.

This directive meets the intent of legislation (H.R. 6201) recently passed by the federal government encouraging states to take steps to exercise flexibility, ease eligibility requirements and ensure access to UI benefits for workers impacted by this national crisis. Impacted workers should visit the labor.ca.gov/coronavirus2019 for more information about benefits and how to apply.

A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).

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