ALERT: Lost Wages Assistance program

Q&As

Q: If I’m eligible, when will I receive the LWA benefits?

A: We will start processing payments for this new program Mon., Sept. 21, 2020. If you are eligible, you will receive the money in your account as soon as your bank processes the payment from us. Payments will be retroactive for all the weeks for which you are eligible.

The only exception to this payment timeline is if your unemployment claim for any of the weeks ending Aug. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 and Sept. 5 is pending due to an issue we are investigating. We must first resolve those issues and pay you unemployment benefits for those weeks. Then, if Lost Wages Assistance funds are still available, we also will pay you the extra $300 for those weeks. The Federal Emergency Management Agency has approved the amount we requested to pay claimants in this situation. In addition, FEMA is allowing states plenty of time to resolve these claims.

Q: I just answered the LWA eligibility question and now my weekly benefit payment is delayed. Why?

A: Answering the eligibility question did not delay your payment. Weekly claim payment processing has been delayed by 2-3 days during the week of Sept. 7 due to the Labor Day holiday. The delay also is due to slower than normal processing following the LWA launch. Customers who submitted weekly claims on Sunday and Monday, Sept. 5 and 6, should start seeing payments in their accounts in the next day or two. We apologize for the delay and frustration this may cause.

Q: Is the LWA the same program that paid the extra $600 per week under the CARES Act?

A: No. The $600 per week available under the CARES Act expired at the end of July. LWA has different eligibility requirements and is a limited pool of money to be shared among all states that apply and are approved.

Q: Do I need to receive more than $100 in weekly unemployment benefits in order to receive the extra benefits?

A: No. Since Washington’s minimum weekly benefit amount is higher than the $100 required by LWA, this is not a concern for Washington claimants. As long as you are eligible to receive at least $1 in benefits, you can receive LWA.
For example, if you receive less than $100 each week because money is being deducted from your weekly benefit payment, you will still be eligible for the entire $300.

Q: How much money could the LWA program contribute to Washington’s economy?
A: We estimate that the LWA could provide more than $400 million to families, individuals and our state’s economy. Any additional funds to help unemployed workers are welcome.

Q: What do all those messages mean in my eServices account?

Note: You may see an issue in the Pending Issues tab of your eServices account. Issues related to Lost Wages Assistance will be cleared from your account after we process your answer to the eligibility question. The LWA issue does not affect your current benefit payments.

A: If you see this message at the top of your eServices home page...

- "Answer the eligibility question for Lost Wages Assistance."
  It means: You have not yet answered the eligibility question. Click the link to answer the question.

- "We received your answer. We will update your status if we issue a payment."
  It means: You answered the eligibility question. You don’t need to do anything more. If we are able to issue a Lost Wages Assistance payment to you, we will update this message.

- "No action needed. We will update your status if we issue a payment."
  It means: You have received PUA benefits. You don’t need to answer the eligibility question. If we issue a Lost Wages Assistance payment to you, we will update this message.

- "You are not eligible for Lost Wages Assistance benefits. You told us you are not unemployed or working fewer hours because of the COVID-19 pandemic."
  It means: You are not eligible for Lost Wages Assistance based on how you answered the eligibility question.

- "We last issued a payment on XX/XX/XXXX for your Lost Wages Assistance benefits."
  It means: We paid you Lost Wages Assistance benefits on XX/XX/XXXX. It may take a few days for your bank to process the payment and the funds to arrive in your account.

Resource:
https://esd.wa.gov/unemployment/lwa