

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)

Administered by the Louisiana Workforce Commission

What is Disaster Unemployment Assistance?

The Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) program provides assistance to individuals whose employment has been either lost or interrupted as a **direct** result of a major disaster, as declared by the President of the United States. A number of Louisiana parishes qualify for DUA assistance as a result of Hurricane Isaac.

Who is eligible for DUA?

DUA is available to unemployed workers or self-employed individuals who became unemployed as a **direct** result of the disaster. DUA is also available to those individuals who became the breadwinner, or major support provider, due to the death of the head of household and as a **direct** result of the disaster.

When is the deadline to file a claim and what parishes are eligible?

Deadline to apply: Tuesday, Oct. 2, 2012

Ascension, Jefferson, Lafourche, Livingston, Orleans, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. John the Baptist, and St. Tammany

Deadline to apply: Friday, Oct. 5, 2012

St. Charles, Tangipahoa

How do I file a claim?

Claims can be filed online at www.laworks.net or through the UI Call Center at 1-866-783-5567. Proof of employment at the time of the disaster is required within 21 days of filing the DUA application. Instructions will be provided as to where to fax or mail this required documentation. Your personal income tax return (Federal Form 1040 and attachments) or other proof of employment and wages for the prior calendar year is also requested if available.

Things to keep in mind when filing a DUA claim:

- Regular Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits supersede DUA – Any person determined eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits or the Federal Extended Benefits Program, even in the case of a disaster, would not be eligible for DUA.
- Your employer will be notified – LWC is required to notify your last employer when you apply for any unemployment insurance benefits, including DUA. Any failure to provide the proper name and address of your last employer may result in a delay of benefits.
- Fraudulent claims will be prosecuted, including jail time – You are required to report all earnings when worked, not when received. Intentional false reporting of reason for separation or last employer information may also be considered fraudulent.
- You must report all earnings weekly – If you are paid by your employer during your absence from work or if you return to work, you must report these earnings on your weekly request for payment. If you receive vacation pay, contact the call center at 1-866-783-5567.

How much assistance can I expect to receive?

Individuals eligible for DUA will be paid weekly benefits in accordance with federal and state regulations. The average DUA benefit duration is based on the severity of the disaster. Currently, the maximum weekly assistance amount in Louisiana is \$247 and is based on the individual's gross earnings or net income if self-employed for the most recent tax year. The minimum DUA benefit amount is \$99 weekly based on full-time employment.

How long will it take before I receive my benefits?

DUA benefits are held until such time that proof of employment and wages are verified and it is determined that the unemployment was a **direct** result of the disaster. Each claim must be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Continue to file your weekly continued claims as long as you are unemployed as a direct result of the disaster. Our goal is to ensure a determination is made as quickly as possible.