

Good Afternoon

As we continue to navigate these unprecedented times, we need to continue to make decisions that are best for all of us as employees, our community and the organization. We are trying to balance those three areas while trying to minimize the impact on any one of them. As this crisis continues, the financial hardship to the organization is becoming real. In order to protect the long-term viability of the organization, we need to access federal and state assistance as much as possible. Unfortunately, many of the programs designed to help businesses are for those under 500 employees. However, there is assistance directly for employees through unemployment benefits and stimulus checks. Below I outlined the next steps we will be taking starting April 12, 2020. **This update, for the most part, only pertains to those working on the hospital and SBC campus.**

Anticipated duration, 4 weeks, but possibly beyond if we need to continue to be shut down for non-essential services.

Over these next few days we will be evaluating staffing needs and “furloughing” staff as needed beginning 4/12/2020.

What is a Furlough? It’s when employees are being called off work for a specified amount of time at no fault of their own. The employee continues on as an employee of the organization with no lapse in service and most benefits remain intact.

- Employees who are furloughed are no longer paid by the organization.
- Employees will be eligible (in most cases) to apply and be granted unemployment benefits.
- With the recent stimulus package, the unemployment benefit has increased. This increase allows a benefit level, to be more in-line with a livable wage, than what it used to be based on minimum wage. The current levels, with the federal contribution, is up to \$970 per week.
- Furloughed employees do not accrue PTO.
- Retirement contributions do not occur.
- Furloughed employees will continue to be eligible for health insurance, dental insurance, and other applicable benefits.
 - The employee portion of health insurance premiums will be waived during this 4 week period for all staff (excluding leadership and medical staff). This waiver will apply to staff working at Epione, SBS and any other department as well.
- The furlough can be a day at a time, a week at a time, or longer.
 - We are anticipating nobody being furloughed for less than a week at a time.

Over the next several days, each department leader will be working with their teams to navigate how this impacts each department.

We have created an “FAQ” regarding unemployment benefits and a “how to guide” for filing for unemployment.

In order to navigate this process, we have developed two team leaders who will assist those effected. Brad Vamstad and Julie Stephenson will be those team leaders. The employees affected by this change will be grouped under either Brad or Julie.

The Human Resources Team will also be a resource and can be contacted by calling their extensions or emailing them.

Direct communication to those effected by this new process will be coming out from your department leader before the end of the day on Thursday April 9th. That communication will have more specific instructions on navigating this next phase.

What future communication will occur?

- Information regarding the next phase in this process will be communicated by 5/1/2020.
- We will respond to the changing situation as proactively as possible, and communicate changes clearly and consistently. Information will be updated on the employee COVID-19 website: <https://www.southwesthealth.org/coronavirus-internal/>

Lastly, we know these uncertain times are difficult to navigate and we will continue to keep you up-to-date on the ever changing situation as proactively as we can.

Without the team we have assembled, we wouldn't be able to navigate through these unprecedented times. I have the utmost faith that together, we will weather this storm.

Stay Strong and Be Safe!
Dan



Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ is not all inclusive and will be a working document that's updated as more questions arise. If you have any questions, please reach out to the designated resources.

How do I apply for unemployment?

<https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/>

What happens to my benefits?

All benefits remain intact as if you were working. There could be an impact to the following:

- Flex – if you have no wages through SH payroll, there can't be a deduction. There are two options:
 - Stop flex deductions and we will recalculate once you are back to regular scheduled work
 - Roll your deductions forward and the cumulative amount will pull from your next paycheck in which you have hours worked.
 - Please contact Caiti Droessler, 342-4702 or droesslerc@southwesthealth.org to set up how you would like to proceed.
- Retirement Contribution– If you have no wages through SH payroll, there is no deduction.

How will I pay for my insurance premiums?

All health insurance premiums will be waived beginning April 12, 2020 through May 9th, 2020 for all staff (excluding leaders and providers).

- If you do not currently have health insurance, this has no effect on you.

The remainder of insurance premiums (Dental, Vision, Long-term Disability, etc.) will be deducted from your earnings each pay period. During furlough however, the deductions will simply pull from the next paycheck in which you have hours worked.

Can I substitute PTO while on unemployment?

If you choose to use PTO while on furlough, it shows you are earning wages through SH. This may minimize your unemployment benefits or make you ineligible.

How will I know if I should file for unemployment?

If your leader communicates to you that you are being furloughed – that makes you eligible to file for unemployment benefits.

When will I get payment from unemployment?

There's no direct guidance other than the state is working hard to process all claims in a timely manner.

What is the amount I will receive from unemployment?

Currently, Wisconsin provides up to 26 weeks, with a maximum of \$370 a week and a minimum of \$54 per week. It is based off of previous gross wages.

The CARES Act has created temporary Pandemic Unemployment Assistance which would provide up to an additional \$600 per week. This has been approved through July 31st, 2020. So in total, the maximum unemployment benefit that a person could receive would be \$970 per week.

If I work only partial hours in a week, am I able to file for unemployment for the rest?

Yes. Employees can seek partial unemployment, but are not guaranteed benefits. We are trying our best to furlough staff in full week increments so this is a non-issue. However, if you are on furlough, you must be available to come back to work at any time.

Are taxes taken out of unemployment benefits?

You don't have to **pay** Social Security and Medicare **taxes** on your **unemployment benefits**, but you do have to report them on your **tax** return as income. You can choose to have income **tax** withheld from your **unemployment benefits**, if necessary, to avoid an unpleasant surprise next year when you file your return. You will determine which option you want when you file for unemployment.

If I live in a different state – which state to I file unemployment in?

Generally, you should file your claim with the state where you worked. If you worked in a state other than the one where you now live or if you worked in multiple states, the state unemployment insurance agency where you now live can provide information about how to file your claim with other states.

What makes me eligible for unemployment?

You have been notified from your leader that you are being put on furlough – which means you have no work at no fault of your own.

What if I choose to not work during the COVID-19 pandemic for any of the following reasons:

- I prefer to stay home and not risk exposure
 - You wouldn't be guaranteed unemployment benefits
- I don't have childcare
 - You wouldn't be guaranteed unemployment benefits
- I have a sick family member at home I need to care for
 - You wouldn't be guaranteed unemployment benefits
- I myself have a compromised immune system
 - Contact Human Resources to discuss
- I have a family member in my household with a compromised immune system
 - Contact Human Resources to discuss

What if I have symptoms of COVID-19 and forced to stay home?

If you have symptoms of COVID-19, Employee Health will work with you and we will likely request you be tested. The tiers have changed and health care workers getting tested has moved up the priority list.

If you were scheduled to work and you miss shifts due to illness related to COVID-19 – SH will pay cover your salary for the scheduled shift until the test result is available. At that time – if it's negative and you still have illness and cannot return to work, we will follow the unscheduled PTO policy and PTO will be applied.

HOW TO FILE FOR UNEMPLOYMENT

Go to WI Unemployment Website: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/>

The following message is currently appearing on the WI Unemployment website.

As of now, you will need to **wait to apply** since you were not eligible for unemployment prior to the CARES ACT as stated below in **red**. Please continue to check the website to see when you are able to apply.

Unemployment and COVID-19

If you were eligible for unemployment before the federal legislation passed, please apply as soon as you can at <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/ui>.

If you were not eligible for unemployment before the CARES Act (Federal Stimulus Bill) was passed **we are asking you to wait*** to file because our system is not yet set up to accept your application. We are waiting on additional guidance from USDOL. We expect those changes to be complete by mid-to late-April. We understand how important it is to get these payments to you as quickly as possible, and we are doing everything we can to get you the help you need. We will have the most up-to-date information at <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/caresact>.

Contacting Unemployment

DWD is experiencing an unprecedented call volume to our unemployment insurance and IT help lines. Unless you have received official notification from Unemployment Insurance that you must call our call center, please search for your answer at dwd.wi.gov/covid19/ or dwd.wi.gov/uiben/faqs in order to free up phone lines for folks who are required to call in.

[Apply for Unemployment Benefits](#)

[Unemployment FAQs about COVID-19](#)

In the meantime, please review the information below as well as the Unemployment FAQ Sheet to answer other questions you may have about unemployment and so that you are prepared when it comes time for you to apply.

Information You Need to Apply

Applying for unemployment benefits is smoother and faster when you have essential information in-hand. The information will be used to determine your eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits.

Have This Information Ready to Apply:

- A username and password for filing online*
- A valid email (use your personal not Southwest Health email) or mobile number
- Your social security number*
- Your Wisconsin driver license or identification number
- Your work history for the last 18 months:
 - Employers' business name: Southwest Health Center
 - Employers' address: 1400 East Side Rd, Platteville WI 53818
 - Employers' phone number: 608-348-2331
 - First and last dates of work with employer
 - Reason for no longer working with employer: Furlough
- Your current address. You need a valid mailing address to receive important documents about your claim. Make sure you have notified your post office of any recent changes to your address.

*Your username and password (referred to as security credentials) and your social security number will be used to identify you and must be used when accessing your account. **Do not give your security credentials to ANYONE.**

If you are ready to apply for unemployment benefits, CLICK on **Apply for Benefits Online**.

Governor Evers issued **EMERGENCY ORDER #12** instituting "Safer at Home" policy.
The order is effective at 8:00am on Wednesday, March 25, 2020. Learn more at: [EVERS.WI.GOV](https://www.evers.wisconsin.gov)

DWD
Department of Workforce Development

UNEMPLOYMENT | WORKPLACE INJURY | EQUAL RIGHTS | EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING | DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT | ABOUT DWD

Unemployment Insurance > Claimants

Unemployment Benefits for Claimants

As a result of Governor Evers' Emergency order you do not need to do a work search during the Governor's declared emergency. The Department is in the process of making the necessary updates. No action is needed on your part regarding the work search.

If you have become unemployed or partially unemployed, you may apply for unemployment benefits online. File weekly claims to receive benefit payments after requirements are met.

Apply for Benefits Online | **File Your Weekly Claim** | **Your Claim Information** | **Handbook for Claimants**

Unemployment News
COVID-19 Unemployment FAQs for Claimants

- 1099-G Income Tax Statements for 2019 are Available Online
- Credit Card/Debit Card Payment Options

Filing Requirements Video
Unemployment Filing Require...

Quick Links:

- 1099-G Tax Statements
- Work Search
- Registration for Work
- Payment Information
- Report Fraud
- File an Appeal
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Forms & Publications
- Hours of Operation - Online Services and Contact Information

Other Languages & Formats

- En Español
- Tshais lus hmoob
- Ask Questions or to Apply
- Interpreter & Translation Services

Then, click on the **Apply for Benefits Here** button

Unemployment Insurance > Claimants > Apply for Benefits Online

Apply for Benefits Online
File Your Weekly Claim
Your Claim Information
Handbook for Claimants
Help! ¡Ayuda! Pab!

Apply for Benefits Online

For a New Claim or to Reopen an Existing Claim

COVID-19 Unemployment FAQs for Claimants

If you're out of work through no fault of your own you'll need to apply for unemployment benefits before you can begin filing a weekly claim. Please make sure you have these documents ready to go to make your application quick and easy:

- Information You Need to Apply**

Apply for Benefits Here

Log onto my.unemployment.wisconsin.gov

Why was I directed to call?
What happens after I apply?

Hours of Operation: Online services are available at the following times to apply for benefits:

Sunday	9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Monday – Friday	6:00 AM - 7:00 PM
Saturday	9:00 AM - 2:30 PM

Related Videos

- How to Apply for Benefits Online
- How to Create a Username and Password (En Español)

Related FAQs

- Online Benefit Services Logon
- Applying for Benefits
- Eligibility Issues
- Work Registration
- Work Search

Related Publications

- Top 10 Things You Should Know
- Notice to Employees About Applying
- How to Apply and Eligibility FAQ

You will then be prompted to Log In if you already have an account or Sign Up.

Wisconsin Unemployment Insurance Benefit Services

Logon to file for unemployment benefits. If you do not have a username and password click on the Sign up link below.

IMPORTANT: If you used our online services in the past and created a username but forgot what the username is, DO NOT create a new username. Click on the forgot username/password link below.

Username
Password

Log In

Forgot your Username/Password?
Change your Password / Edit Logon Profile
Don't have a username [Sign Up](#)

For assistance with username and password issues please call 608-266-7252.
Note: The IT Solutions Center can only provide assistance with username/password issues. They do not have information regarding your claim.

Online services are available at the following times:

If you are unemployed and need to file a new claim:

Sunday	9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Monday - Friday	6:00 am - 7:00 pm
Saturday	9:00 am - 2:30 pm

If you need to file a weekly claim for a benefit payment or get information about your benefit account:

Sunday	9:00 am - Midnight
Monday - Friday	Available 24 Hours
Saturday	1:00 am - 3:00 pm