

# COVID-19

## Montana Employer Frequently Asked Questions

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- Q: When and how will we know if our employees will be covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI), if I have to lay them off due to COVID-19 and what will happen with employees?**
- A:** If you have facts to reduce hours of or lay-off workers due to COVID-19 impacts, encourage them to file a claim for unemployment compensation at [MontanaUIworks.gov](http://MontanaUIworks.gov); they may be eligible for benefits. An unpaid temporary closure of an employer's operations functions as a lay-off from work, even if the employer intends to have their employees come back to work when operations resume.
- Keep watching our [COVID-19 FAQ](https://www.mt.gov/COVID-19) webpage for updates. We will also announce any changes using a variety of mediums including our website, email, and social networks. Like us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/mtgov).
- Q: How do my employees file for benefits and how much do they get?**
- A:** File for UI benefits online at [MontanaUIworks.gov](http://MontanaUIworks.gov). Use the [benefits estimator](#) to calculate possible weekly benefit amount. Please do not call the state COVID-19 hotline for UI questions.
- Q: Are employees eligible for benefits if their hours are reduced, cutting them from 40 hours per week to 20?**
- A:** If an employee is working less than their customary hours, they may be eligible to receive partial benefits.
- Q: How long will it take for employees to receive benefits?**
- A:** This is really claim specific. If there are any issues or areas that need to be investigated, it will take longer to process. Please have your employees contact our phone center or review any outstanding issues online at [MontanaUIworks.gov](http://MontanaUIworks.gov).
- Q: Is there anything I can do to help ensure my employees receive benefits as quickly as possible?**
- A:** If you have not already, sign-up for SDCS right away. Signing up for SDCS will allow us to communicate electronically with you regarding claims filed by your employees, provided you sign-up before they file. The quicker we can gather the information required the better. Review our [SDCS Information Sheet](#) to learn more. To sign-up visit [www.sdcs.mt.gov](http://www.sdcs.mt.gov) or call (406) 444-3824 (select option 2) for help.
- Q: How long will the employees be eligible for UI?**
- A:** The duration of a claim depends on a claimant's wages during their base period. Steps to determine eligibility, amount and length of benefits can be on page 8 of the [claimant handbook](#).

