UPDATE

2021 CHANGES TO UNEMPLOYMENT POLICIES | WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU NEED TO KNOW?

Need Help? Call the VOLS Unemployed Workers Project Hotline at 347-521-5720
WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW REGARDING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FOR 2021?

ADDITIONAL MEASURES:

1) The Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program has been extended until March 14, 2021. Claimants who have not exhausted their benefits, i.e., still have weeks left on their claim, may continue to receive benefits through April 5, 2021.

2) The Act strengthens documentation requirements for both new PUA applicants and current PUA claimants. NEW claimants will need to provide documentation related to their wages and work history. This additional documentation may include taxes, additional wage forms, more detailed information about their former employers and more complete information from claimants who worked more than one job. New PUA claimants (after 1/31/2021) have 21 days to submit documentation. Current PUA claimants have 90 days to submit such documentation.

   Self-employed individuals: the DOL is looking at 2019 tax forms/Schedule C. If you have paid yourself W-2 income from your business, this will not be counted towards your weekly benefit rate (WBR).

3) Waivers: Both PUA overpayments and LWA overpayments may be waived “when the individual is not at fault for the payment and repayment would be contrary to equity and good conscience.” These federal overpayment waivers must be requested online through the online TWC system or via mail to NYS Department of Labor PO Box 15131 Albany NY 12212-5131. Claimants must provide information detailing financial hardship and that they’ve claimed benefits in good conscience. Make sure you include your social security number in this request.

4) Limitations on Backpay: Anyone who applied for benefits after 12/27/20 are only entitled to backpay as far as 12/1/20. Previously, claimants were paid retroactively for weeks in which they were unemployed but did not certify for benefits or faced issues certifying. Now, claimants who apply will not be backpaid for periods of unemployment before 12/1/20. For those who have been unemployed for a longer period of time, unfortunately, they will not be backpaid for the weeks not certified.