



Joint Information Center - JIC Release No. 47
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Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program; GHC Information

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Program

The Government of Guam, along with the Guam Department of Labor (GDOL), is currently working with the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL) to create the guidelines and application process for the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program.

Authorized by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, the program will provide weekly benefit payments to workers who traditionally would not qualify for unemployment benefits, and who are unable to work as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. This includes those who are self-employed, independent contractors, workers with limited work experience, and those living in areas without an unemployment benefits program, such as Guam.

Information on the CARES Act, the Guam Economic Development Authority provided the CARES Act Selected Programs Presentation, which can be found on their website under Economic Relief Initiatives, <http://www.investguam.com/coronavirus/>.

The weekly benefits will be available for up to 39 weeks, between January 27, 2020 to December 31, 2020. The exact amount will be calculated in the same manner as the federal Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) program under the Stafford Act, which is the model for the PUA program.

PUA will have a minimum benefit that is equal to one-half of the state's average weekly Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefit. Because Guam doesn't currently have a UI program, the amount will be determined by USDOL. It will then be issued through an Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL). The GDOL expects to receive this letter shortly.

The process for applying also is currently being created by both the USDOL and GDOL. Mandatory quarantine procedures are also taken into consideration to ensure the safety of everyone and to create the best possible option.

Currently, GDOL is collecting information that will be used to estimate how much assistance Guam will need from the federal government, and help maximize the funds Guam can request for PUA and other future funding opportunities.

Interested applicants can email their information to rapidresponse@dol.guam.gov. Please follow these instructions when sending information:

For individual employees:

- Name of employer that issued furlough or layoff

For business owners or managers:

- Employer name and location
- Number of employees laid off or are anticipated to be laid off
- Anticipated date and length of layoffs (e.g. 1 to 2 weeks, 3 to 4 weeks, or unknown at this time)
- Number of employees with reduced work hours or anticipated number of employees with reduced work hours
- When hours were reduced or anticipated date to implement reduced hours
- Specifics on reduced work week imposed (e.g. reduce to 32 hours per week, 20 hours per week, 10 hours per week, or unknown at this time)
- Duration of reduced hours (e.g. 1 to 2 weeks, 3 to 4 weeks, or unknown at this time)

Guam Housing Corporation Updates

The Guam Housing Corporation (GHC) will remain closed through April 13, 2020. Pursuant to Executive Order No. 2020-07, relative to establishing a moratorium on evictions, and in accordance with Administrative Order ADM20-210 issued by the Supreme Court of Guam, the GHC will not be evicting rental tenants nor foreclosing on mortgage holders whose employment situation was impacted by the current COVID-19 health crisis, nor will they be assessing late fees for the duration of this public health emergency.

All tenants and loan holders are encouraged to continue to make their payments and keep their obligation current. Although GHC offices are currently closed, payments can be mailed to P.O. Box 3457, Hagatna, Guam 96932. If any GHC clients experience a change in employment as a result of the COVID-19 health crisis, they can email alice.tajeron@ghc.guam.gov with any inquiries.

Pursuant to item 2b of EO 2020-07, GHC will require supporting documents for any request for deferment of mortgage or rental payments as a result of COVID-19. Supporting documents could include furlough notices, a letter from the employer indicating reduction in hours, lay-off notices, etc., indicating the change of employment status was due to the COVID-19 crisis. Every individual has a different financial situation so the GHC team will work with their clients to determine the best course of action.

Presidential Disaster Declaration

On Wednesday, March 25, 2020, Governor Leon Guerrero submitted a request for a Presidential Disaster Declaration for Guam in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The request was based on the direct, detrimental economic impact of the COVID-19 events beginning February 2020 to present. On March 27, 2020, President Trump approved the request for Public Assistance, Category B, Emergency Protective Measures, which is assistance for local government of Guam agencies and certain private non-profit organizations. The requests for Individual Assistance and Hazard Mitigation are still under review and have not been awarded at this time.

For inquiries on COVID-19, local numbers can call 311 or contact the Joint Information Center at (671) 478-0208/09/10 Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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