

## SMALL BUSINESS CENTER INFORMATION

### General Information on Unemployment and Covid-19:

- If Covid-19 has caused the business to shutdown, workers should apply for unemployment. This can be done online or via a toll free number. See the link and number below.
- Workers claim will be based on past wages and time worked. So not everyone will be eligible for unemployment. I still encourage everyone to file even if they do not think they will qualify because the open claim will likely be needed to receive federal stimulus related benefits.
- Employers will not be taxed due to layoffs. The Department of Commerce Division of Employment Security has been directed to not allocate charges to employers' accounts for individuals who are paid benefits for reasons related to COVID-19.
- When an employer lays off workers, they will receive a form (500-AB) when the worker files a claim with boxes related to how the claimant left the job. Employers responding to requests for separation information should indicate that the separation was due to COVID-19.
- Typically, when a person draws unemployment, they are required to look for work. Claimants who have lost their jobs due to the Covid-19 pandemic are not required to do a work search log.
- All claims that are a result of Covid-19 do not have a waiting week. That means eligible claimants would be able to get a check typically within 10 days of filing.

### Information for Employers:

- Employers should advise that employees are eligible to file unemployment if they are not drawing sick or vacation leave. In other words, you can't draw unemployment and sick/vacation leave at the same time. Finish all paid leave and then open the claim.
- If hours have been cut significantly, employers should advise workers to file a claim.
- Employers may file for unemployment if they have paid unemployment tax on themselves.
- Employers should be encouraging and assuring when laying off workers. Since good workers are hard to find, make sure they know you want them back when the business reopens.
- Employees can work limited hours and still draw unemployment. The amount they can earn without a deduction from their check is 20% of their weekly benefit amount. That amount is on the claimant's benefit summary and called the earnings allowance. Any earnings that exceed the earnings allowance will be deducted from the weekly check

but not the claim balance. I realize this is technical information but the bottom line is that claimants can work limited hours and still receive benefits.

**Resources:**

Covid-19 Claims Information: <https://des.nc.gov/need-help/covid-19-information>

Before You File a Claim: <https://des.nc.gov/apply-unemployment/before-you-apply>

Claims Toll Free number (long wait times): 888-737-0259

Online Link to File a Claim: <https://fed.des.nc.gov/ofis/citizen/pages/public/SelfRegStart.aspx>