

April 22, 2020 Department Update for UIAC

1. Trust Fund Update

- Current balance of the fund as of April 22, 2020: \$1,758,486,151
- First quarter tax contributions are due April 30th
- Current unemployment insurance claims statistics:
<https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/covid19/public/ui-stats.htm>
- Total benefit payments for 3/1/2020-4/22/2020: \$211,509,832
- As of April 22, 2020, we had 63 work-share plans with 3,218 worker participants

2. Federal Legislation Update

- Families First Coronavirus Response Act
 - Provides states with increased federal funding so that UI agencies can respond to the increased claims due to the pandemic. DWD needs these funds to administer the UI program and ensure that claims are paid.
 - But, states must take certain actions to receive this money. The first allotment of funds available to DWD is about \$9 million. To qualify for those funds, Wisconsin must require employers to inform employees of their right to file for UI at the time of separation.
 - DWD has drafted a scope statement, [SS 018-20](#), related to Ch. DWD 120. The scope statement was published April 6, 2020. A hearing will be held on the scope statement on [April 23, 2020 at 10:30 a.m. by WebEx](#).
- [CARES Act](#) – DWD has a summary of benefits unemployed individuals may be eligible to receive. Resources for claimants about these programs are available on our website at: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/covid19/public/ui.htm>
 - [Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation \(FPUC\)](#) - Provides most individuals an emergency increase in \$600 per week in unemployment benefits (e.g., Regular UI, PUA, PEUC, and Work-Share). Starting April 26, 2020, DWD expects to start paying FPUC retroactively to March 29, 2020. Claimants do not need to take any extra steps to receive the \$600 weekly FPUC payments. FPUC payments under the CARES Act end on July 25, 2020.
 - [Pandemic Unemployment Assistance \(PUA\)](#) - Provides up to 39 weeks of unemployment benefits to people not otherwise eligible for Regular UI (e.g. self-employed, independent contractors, workers with limited work history) and meet the federal requirements. DWD began taking claims for PUA on April 21, 2020. Information about PUA and the link to the application form is available on our website at: <https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/uiben/pua/>
 - [Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation \(PEUC\)](#) - Provides an additional 13 weeks of emergency benefits for people who remain unemployed after they have exhausted their regular UI benefits.
 - Federal government will pay 50% of the benefits paid to former employees of reimbursable employers.

- Federal government will pay 100% of the benefits paid to employees in work-share plans.
- Federal government will pay 100% of the benefits paid for the first week of unemployment for states that waive the waiting week.

3. State Legislation Update

- Suspension of the waiting period for collection of unemployment insurance benefits ([AB 1034](#) / SB 906)
 - This bill would have suspended the waiting week, but it did not pass.
- State government response to the COVID-19 pandemic ([Act 185](#))
 - Suspends the waiting week for benefit years that began after March 12, 2020, and before February 7, 2021. USDOL has determined Wisconsin UI is not eligible for retroactive 100% funding of the first week of benefits under the CARES Act. Federal funding, therefore, will begin on April 19 and continue through December 26, 2020.
 - For initial claims related to the public health emergency Executive Order #72, benefits charged after March 12, 2020, and before December 31, 2020 will be charged to the balancing account for contribution employers and to the interest and penalty fund for reimbursable employers.
 - Suspends certain requirements for [work-share plans](#) submitted until the end of 2020, such as reducing the minimum size of the work share plan from 20 employees to 2 employees and permitting employers to reduce up to 60% of working hours instead of 50% under current law.

4. Scope Statements

- [SS 013-20](#), Chs. DWD 127 & 128 (March 23, 2020) – emergency rule regarding work search actions and providing certain treatment of available for work and work available during the pandemic. This scope contains minor changes to Scope Statement 008-20, as permitted under new federal legislation. We are currently working on a draft of an administrative rule.
- [SS 018-20](#), Ch. DWD 120 (April 6, 2020) – emergency and permanent rule. As described above, this scope statement is regarding employers providing notice to individual employees about their right to file for unemployment insurance benefits at the time of termination. USDOL has determined that individual notice is required; our current rule requiring notice posters is insufficient. A hearing will be held on the scope statement on [April 23, 2020 at 10:30 a.m. by WebEx](#).