

# UI and COVID-19: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



If you are not working or working reduced hours due to COVID-19, you may be eligible for Unemployment Insurance (UI) benefits.

The UI program was established as a means to protect those who are involuntarily unemployed from the financial burdens and dangers that come with being unemployed. It is designed to be a short-term assistance program and may be able to help those whose employment has been adversely impacted by COVID-19.

Below is a list of frequently asked questions for those impacted by COVID-19. The situation is rapidly evolving, and there is pending legislation at the both the state and federal level on this issue. The Kansas Department of Labor (KDOL) will provide updates regarding any changes to the availability of UI benefits as they potentially occur.

## **Am I unemployed?**

You are unemployed in any week that you do not work and any week for which wages are not payable to you. So, if you are not working and not being paid, you are unemployed for purposes of the UI program. You may also be considered unemployed, if you work less than full time and your gross weekly wages are less than your determined weekly benefit amount. So, if your hours and wages have been reduced, you may also be considered unemployed.

## **What if I am receiving sick leave, vacation leave, or some other paid benefit while I am off of work?**

If you are receiving paid leave, it will be considered wages. If those wages for the week are more than your weekly benefit amount, you will not be eligible for benefits for that week.

## **Am I able to work?**

To receive UI benefits, you must be able to work. For those who are not working due to COVID-19, KDOL is presuming that they are able to work, unless they refuse an offer of suitable employment due to illness or injury.

## **What does it mean to be available for work?**

An individual must also be available for work in order to receive UI benefits. You will be considered available for work, if your unemployment is related to COVID-19, so long as you are taking all necessary steps to return to work for your regular employer and/or have not withdrawn from the labor market.

## **Do I have to look for work?**

If you are unemployed due to COVID-19 and have taken all necessary steps to return to work for your regular employer, you do not have to look for other work.

## **Do I have to serve a waiting week?**

The waiting week requirement for those unemployed due to COVID-19 is waived.

## **What is required of employers?**

All employers must notify their employees of the availability of UI benefits at the time of separation from employment. While not required, employers may also consider filing claims by spreadsheet. For more information visit:

<https://www.kansasemployer.gov/uitax/Tax/LayoffSelect.aspx>.