

Governor Abbott Announces Federal Stimulus Package To Help Texans Affected By COVID-19

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Governor Greg Abbott today issued a statement regarding the recently passed \$2 trillion federal stimulus package intended to relieve the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with a special focus on unemployed workers and the state's hardest-hit businesses.

"We appreciate the speedy passage of this stimulus package designed to provide much-needed relief for hardworking Texas families who have been economically impacted by COVID-19," said Governor Abbott. "While the state of Texas continues to take action to protect public health, we are also committed to working with our federal partners to ensure Texans have the financial relief they need during this time."

Workers are the main beneficiaries of the stimulus dollars, whether their situation consists of reduced hours, furlough, or termination related to COVID-19. Self-employed Texans whose businesses have failed under the stress of the global pandemic may also be eligible as well.

A newly created Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC) fund is the bill's primary vehicle, empowering states to extend federally-funded unemployment benefits by an additional 13 weeks (past the usual 26 weeks). The fund also boost weekly benefits for those laid off, terminated or furloughed due to COVID-19 by \$600 per week.

The measures also reduces paperwork and speeds the claims process by empowering employers to file one mass claim on behalf of all their employees laid off because of COVID-19. It also eliminates any chargeback to Texas employers for claims filed due to COVID-19.

Much like disaster unemployment assistance seen in past weather-related disasters, Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) may be available for displaced workers not normally eligible for regular or extended benefits. Workers whose hours have been reduced due to the COVID-19 slowdown may qualify for Work Share, a federal Short-Term Compensation program.

Employees whose work has been impacted by COVID-19, whether by a reduction in hours or a loss of their job, are encouraged [apply for unemployment benefits online](#) or call 1-800-939-6631.

Employers can also [utilize online filing](#) for mass claims they file on behalf of employee groups laid off due to COVID-19.

<https://www.twc.texas.gov/jobseekers/applying-unemployment-benefits>

