

2009 Ohio's Extension of Unemployment Compensation Benefits Frequently Asked Questions

On April 1, 2009, Governor Ted Strickland signed legislation amending Ohio law to allow up to 20 weeks of additional unemployment compensation (UC) for eligible Ohioans. Individuals can now receive these state-extended benefits *after* their federal-extended benefits expire. This legislative change was made to take advantage of the 100 percent federal funding of state-extended benefits offered by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Who is eligible to receive this extension?

Currently unemployed individuals who satisfy all of the following criteria could qualify if they:

- have exhausted all regular state UC benefits and federal Emergency Unemployment Compensation (EUC) as of March 15, 2009, or later;
- have no rights to regular UC, federal-extended benefits, or state-extended benefits under any other state unemployment compensation law or federal law or in Canada.

What are individuals eligible for?

Individuals are eligible to receive up to 20 weeks of additional benefits, for a total of up to 79 weeks overall. These benefits are known as "Ohio Extended Benefits, or Ohio EB." The extended benefit amounts will be the same as claimants' previous UC benefit amount, unless there is some other change in circumstances (such as an adjustment in deductions, like child support).

Here would be the maximum course of benefits, in order of payment:

- Regular UC (state funded) -- 26 weeks
- First phase federal emergency unemployment (EUC, federally funded) – 13 weeks
- Second phase EUC, Tier 1 (federally funded) -- 7 weeks
- Second phase EUC, Tier 2 (federally funded) -- 13 weeks
- Ohio EB, Tier 1 (100% federally funded through 12/31/09) -- 13 weeks
- Ohio EB, Tier 2 (100% federally funded 12/31/09) -- 7 weeks

Total eligible weeks through 12/31/09 = 79 weeks

I think I am eligible for extended benefits. What do I do?

Potentially eligible individuals who exhaust their federal-extended unemployment benefits will receive instructions by mail about how to file for Ohio EB. Most applicants will call 1-877-OHIO JOB (644-6562) and follow the recorded instructions.

How long will it take to process my application and start benefit payments?

Please allow four weeks for your application to be processed and eligibility determined. Following that initial payment, subsequent payments will be issued on a routine weekly or biweekly basis, by preferred payment method (debit card or electronic fund transfer).

I have an Ohio claim, but I live in another state. Do I qualify for Ohio EB?

As an out-of-state claimants may receive up to 20 weeks of Ohio EB if you either commute to Ohio to seek work OR your state of residence has also triggered their state-extended benefit program. If not, then you are eligible to receive two weeks of Ohio EB. As of May 10, 2009, 25 other states (Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin), as well as Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia are triggered on EB.

How can I find out if my payment has been issued?

By visiting <http://unemployment.ohio.gov> or by calling 1-877-OHIO JOB (644-6562) and selecting the option to obtain information about your unemployment compensation claim. Both options require a personal identification number (PIN).

How may I file continued claims of Ohio extended benefits?

Once a favorable determination has been made, continued weeks may be claimed via our self-service web site (<http://unemployment.ohio.gov>) or by calling 1-877-OHIO JOB (644-6562) and following the recorded instructions. These options require a personal identification number (PIN).

Are there any special weekly eligibility requirements?

Yes. In addition to being able and available for work, an individual is expected to make a systematic and sustained effort to obtain work.

During each week you claim unemployment compensation, you must personally apply for work with at least two employers (not including union hiring halls) who hire in your trade or occupation. You must submit tangible evidence of this work search for each week of unemployment claimed; keep a written record of action taken, including each employer's name and address, method of applying for work, type(s) of work sought, dates of contact, and outcome of each contact; and provide the record for further examination upon request. All claims for unemployment compensation are subject to audit.

In addition, you must register for job placement in the state in which you customarily seek work. If you seek work in Ohio, you are required to register with Ohio's SCOTI system and this registration is completed at the time you file your application. If you live and seek work outside Ohio, you are required to register for job placement with the labor exchange system in the state in which you reside. Failure to register with your state's labor exchange system, may result in loss of benefits. If your job prospects are not good, you are expected to accept any offer of suitable work listed with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) or offered in writing.

How are these benefits being paid for?

With certain exceptions, the program is being financed by the federal government for individuals who establish eligibility on or before December 26, 2009. The program will be phased out for individuals who began receiving state-extended benefits prior to December 26, 2009. The last week payable for this program will be the week ending May 29, 2010.