

CARES ACT

Frequently Asked Questions by Independent Contractors



Q. What is the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (“CARES”) Act?

A. The CARES Act (also known as the “Relief for Workers Affected by Coronavirus Act” (Title II, Section A)) provides a substantial expansion of unemployment insurance and benefits for workers sidelined for specified reasons associated with COVID-19.

Q. Are independent contractors mentioned in the CARES Act?

A. The CARES Act creates the temporary Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program (the “PUA”), effective January 27, 2020, to remain in effect until December 31, 2020, which covers individuals who would not otherwise be eligible for unemployment insurance and benefits. For the first time in history, the law provides coverage for the self-employed, independent contractors, gig workers, part-time employment seekers, those who lack sufficient work history, or who have exhausted their unemployment benefits under existing schemes – provided they are able to self-certify that they are unable or unavailable to work because of COVID-19. Check the law for the specific COVID-19-related eligibility criteria.

Q. Can agents apply for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Benefits under the CARES Act?

A. Yes. The CARES Act has been signed into law, but in many instances, the benefits are not yet available and filers must wait until the state agency receives guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor or the state agency modifies its website, application and portal. Agents should check their appropriate local state agency website for further guidance and instructions on seeking Pandemic Unemployment Assistance Benefits and whether benefits are available immediately.

Q. What information is needed to apply for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits?

A. When applying for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits, agents should identify as an independent contractor or small business seeking relief due to national disaster/Covid-19. The local state agency will tell agents all the information required for pandemic benefits.

Q. Do agents need the Company’s EIN?

A. The Company’s Employer Identification Number is not needed. Agents may need their social security number or if they operate as a small business, their business’s EIN.

Q. Where can I get more information specific to my state?

A. <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/state/contacts>

As a reminder, eligibility for this benefit is determined at the state level. Neither Coldwell Banker nor Realogy have any influence over any state agency’s determination of eligibility for the pandemic unemployment assistance benefits. We are encouraged by the text of the CARES Act, and we are providing this information to guide you in reaching out to your specific state for additional information.