

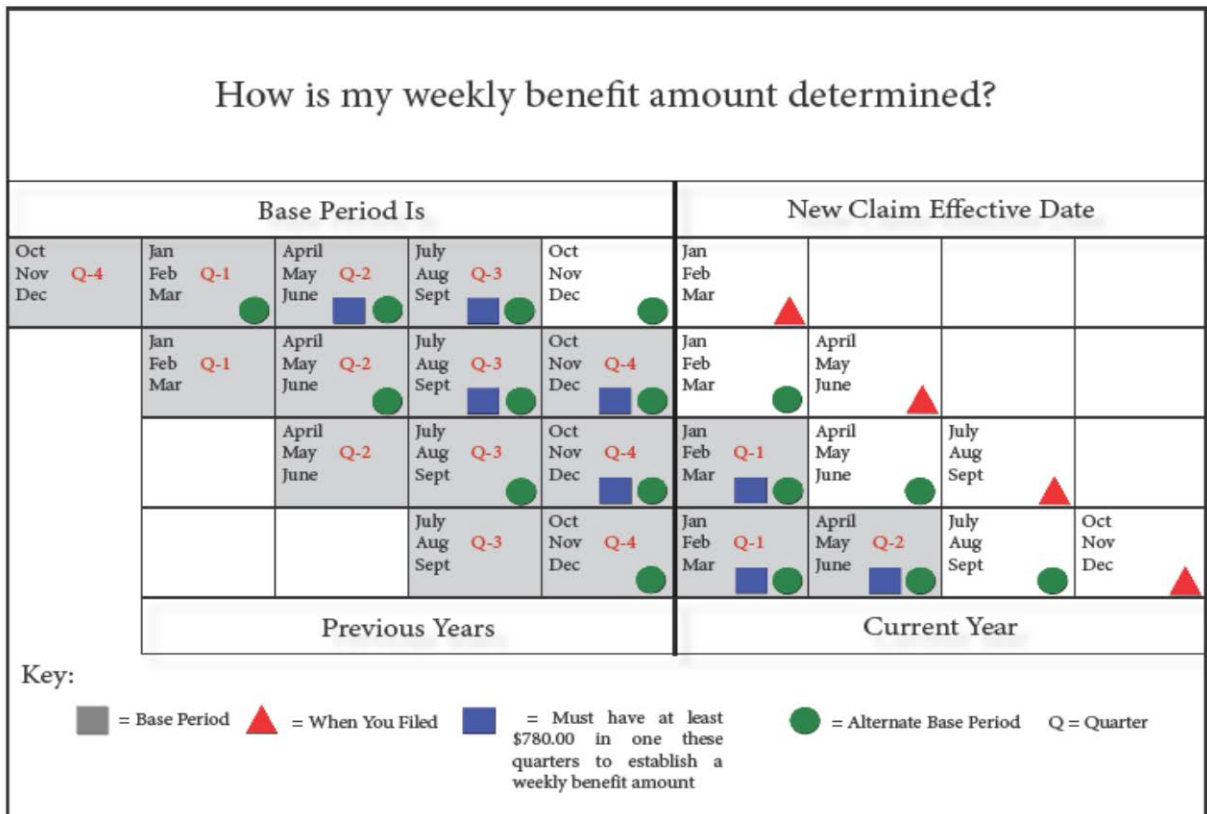


NORTH CAROLINA DIVISION OF EMPLOYMENT SECURITY (DES) UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE OVERVIEW

- Welcome to North Carolina's Division of Employment Security Unemployment Insurance Benefits Overview
- Most employers pay state and federal taxes on wages you earn while you're working. Those taxes fund unemployment insurance payments. The individual employee pays nothing towards unemployment insurance.
- In North Carolina, there are 3 criteria that individuals must meet in order to be eligible for unemployment benefits:
 - 1) You must be unemployed due to no fault of your own.
 - 2) You must be considered monetarily eligible.
 - 3) You must be able, available and actively seeking work.
- You must register for work with NCWorks Online at www.NCWorks.gov, the internet based job search and referral system provided by the North Carolina Division of Workforce Solutions. Register for work at www.NCWorks.gov by creating an online account. Click on the 'Not Registered?' link and then select 'Individual' under Option 2 – Create a User Account. The website will then guide you through the steps to complete your account setup. . If you've previously registered and it has been more than 90 days since you have logged in to the website, you must visit NCWorks.gov and verify your information in order to reactivate your account.
- It is also important to remember that unemployment insurance payments are not guaranteed to everyone who files a claim. Several factors can affect your eligibility to receive payments.
- Employers and Claimants are expected to act ethically and in good faith and answer all questions truthfully and to the best of their ability.
- This presentation will cover the following topics:
 1. Monetary eligibility to establish a claim for unemployment
 2. Issues that affect unemployment insurance payments
 3. Filing your claim for unemployment insurance payments
 4. Delivery of unemployment insurance payments and tax withholding information
 5. Filing your weekly certification to receive payments
 6. Weekly work search requirements
- (1) MONETARY ELIGIBILITY TO ESTABLISH A CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT
 1. Every individual who files a claim for unemployment will receive a WAGE TRANSCRIPT & MONETARY DETERMINATION. Keep this letter for future reference. This letter displays all employers for whom you worked and the wages you

earned during a specific period of time. These wages are used to establish your claim. It is your responsibility to read this letter carefully and determine if all of your wages and employer information is correct. **This letter DOES NOT guarantee that you'll receive unemployment insurance payments.**

2. If your wages aren't sufficient to establish a claim, the letter explains why and provides you with information to correct it if possible.
3. This correction process may take several weeks to be completed. While your monetary eligibility is under review, **you must file weekly certifications for each week you wish to receive an unemployment payment.** Failure to file weekly certifications for each week you wish to receive unemployment payments may result in you failing to meet the requirements for payment.
4. The letter will also provide information on how much your weekly unemployment payments **could** be, how many weeks you **could** receive those payments and how much money you **could** earn and still receive the unemployment payments. Read the letter carefully to understand your rights and responsibilities. **As a reminder, this letter DOES NOT guarantee that you'll receive unemployment insurance payments.**



This graph describes how DES establishes your weekly benefit amount. The triangle represents the quarter in which your claim was filed. The square represents the quarters of that base period used to determine your benefit amount. If you don't qualify in the "BASE PERIOD", DES will automatically look at what is called ALTERNATE BASE PERIOD to establish a weekly benefit amount. The Alternate base period is represented by the circle. There are two requirements that will qualify the claim monetarily:

1. The claimant must have wages in at least two quarters of either the base or the alternate base year period.
2. The claimant must have at least \$780 in one of last two quarters to establish a weekly benefit amount.

Weekly Benefit Amount (WBA) The weekly benefit amount is calculated by adding the wages paid to the individual in the last two completed quarters of the individual's base period divided by 52 and rounded to the next lower whole dollar. If this amount is less than fifteen dollars (\$15.00), the individual's WBA is zero.

The claimant must have at least \$780 in one of the last two quarters to establish a weekly benefit amount.

The weekly benefit amount may not exceed three hundred fifty dollars (\$350.00). Some claimants may have a 'valid' claim and still have a WBA = \$0. Because the claim is valid it cannot be moved to alternate base.

Remember that the MONETARY ELIGIBILITY STATEMENT is not a guarantee that you will receive unemployment insurance!

- (2) ISSUES THAT AFFECT UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PAYMENTS

1. The DES must determine whether you meet all eligibility requirements to be paid unemployment insurance benefits. This process can take several weeks depending on the number of "issues" you have, the time it takes for us to receive complete and accurate information about the issues from you and your last employer, and agency workload.
2. Some examples of issues are your reason for being unemployed, separation /severance / vacation payments you received, not being able and available or not looking for work, and not completing a weekly work search.
3. It is important **to file weekly certifications for each week you wish to receive unemployment insurance payments while the issues are being examined.**
4. If you receive a determination that denies you from collecting unemployment insurance payments, you may appeal the determination by reading the instructions on the determination and filing the appeal within the time frame specified. Late appeals may not be eligible for processing. **It is important to continue to file weekly certifications while your claim is under review unless you've returned to full time work.**
5. **When filing your weekly certifications, you must report any money you earned in the week it was earned (not received).**
6. Failure to report money earned may be considered fraud.
7. You must answer all questions each week truthfully and accurately to receive unemployment insurance payments.
8. **Making a false statement or furnishing inaccurate information to obtain unemployment payments will disqualify you from receiving future unemployment payments. Falsifying information can result in criminal prosecution and repayment of benefits through future payroll deduction, and recovery from state and or federal income tax refunds.**

- (3) FILING YOUR CLAIM FOR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PAYMENTS

1. **The quickest and most efficient way to file a claim is at our website:** des.nc.gov.
2. You should file a new claim for unemployment insurance payments as soon as your job has ended or you have worked less than 3 full time days.
3. If you don't have access to a computer, you may file a claim for benefits by calling toll free 877-841-9617.
4. If this is your first time filing for unemployment insurance benefits, you will be required to create a four digit personal identification code (PIN). Write down and keep the PIN in a safe place. Your PIN is required to access your information through our website and telephone system.

5. Individuals who are qualified for unemployment insurance payments will serve a one week period that's not payable. This week is called a waiting week.
 6. An individual will serve a non-paid waiting week each time they re-apply for unemployment insurance payments during their established benefit year.
 7. Employers are sent a request for separation information the day after you file a claim for unemployment. An employer is given fourteen days to respond to this request. Payments won't be released until DES verifies why you're no longer working.
 8. You must stop reporting weekly certifications if you've returned to full-time work. If you have another separation from work, you would need to reapply for unemployment benefits and serve an additional non-paid waiting week.
- (4) DELIVERY OF UNEMPLOYMENT PAYMENTS AND TAX WITHHOLDING INFORMATION FOR ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUALS

1. If it is determined that you are eligible for unemployment insurance payments, you will be paid either direct deposit to a checking or savings account or by a North Carolina Debit Card. The North Carolina Debit Card is the default method of payment if you don't choose direct deposit. Direct Deposit is the fastest and most convenient way to be paid unemployment insurance payments. You may provide your direct deposit information online when you file your new claim and make changes anytime on our website.
 2. The North Carolina debit card is mailed to you by a vendor for our agency only after DES applies a payment to your claim. The card usually takes eight to ten business days to arrive at your address. Please read all of the instructions that come with the card carefully.
 3. Unemployment insurance payments are subject to state and federal taxes. If you receive unemployment insurance payments, DES will provide you tax form 1099 the following January. Be sure to update your address on the DES website so this 1099 can be sent to you. 1099s are also available at our website using your SSN and 4 digit PIN number for secure access.
 4. Federal taxes are withheld at 10 percent of your weekly payment and can't be any more or less. The North Carolina Department of Revenue suggests six, seven or eight percent for the deduction of state taxes. The choice is yours to have taxes taken out when you apply for unemployment insurance payments and DES isn't responsible for when you pay your taxes.
 5. You can make changes to your tax withholding amount, or bank information anytime on our website.
- (5) FILING YOUR WEEKLY CERTIFICATION TO RECEIVE PAYMENTS

1. Each week you wish to receive an unemployment payment, you must file a weekly certification on our website at des.nc.gov. If you don't have access to a computer, you may file by telephone at 888-372-3453.
2. The earliest you may answer the weekly certification questions on the website is each Sunday. The questions you answer cover the prior seven day period Sunday through Saturday.
3. The weekly certification must be filed within fourteen (14) days from the week ending date that you are attempting to claim. For unemployment insurance purposes, the week begins on Sunday and ends on Saturday. This means that you must file a weekly certification for benefits within 14 days of the Saturday of the week you wish to claim. If you fail to file a weekly certification within fourteen (14) days from the week ending date, you will be required to reopen your claim and serve a non-payable waiting period week.

4. If you must use a telephone to file your weekly certification; and the last number in your Social Security Number is an odd number; your day to call is **Monday** and you will be answering questions that cover the prior week, Sunday through Saturday. If you miss your day to call, you may also call Wednesday through Sunday.
5. If you must use a telephone to file your weekly certification; and the last number of your Social Security Number is an even number, your day to call is **Tuesday** and you will be answering questions that cover the prior week, Sunday through Saturday. If you miss your day to call, you may also call Wednesday through Sunday.
6. The hours to file by computer or telephone are from 8am to midnight. Try to file your weekly certification as early in the day as possible to avoid delays in payments.

- (6) WEEKLY WORK SEARCH REQUIREMENTS

1. You must register for work with NCWorks Online at www.NCWorks.gov, the internet based job search and referral system provided by the North Carolina Division of Workforce Solutions. Register for work at www.NCWorks.gov by creating an online account. Click on the 'Not Registered?' link and then select 'Individual' under Option 2 –Create a User Account. The website will then guide you through the steps to complete your account setup. If you've previously registered and it has been more than 90 days since you have logged in to the website, you must visit NCWorks.gov and verify your information in order to reactivate your account. **FAILURE TO REGISTER MAY STOP YOUR UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE BENEFITS.**
2. You must be able and available for work each week you wish to receive unemployment insurance payments.
3. You are required to keep proof that you looked for work each week you apply for unemployment insurance payments
4. You are required to keep track of the date you made contact with an employer; the employer's name and address or web address of the employer, and how you contacted the employer. Contact can be in person, by email, on an employer's website or other job assistance website.
5. You are required to make contact with two different employers on two separate days of each week. This requirement is necessary even if you have partial earnings for that week.
6. If you refuse a job offer, you must contact the DES and provide information about the offer. Please call 888-737-0259. Failure to do so can stop your unemployment insurance payments.
7. Most individuals keep track of their work search on the DES work search form which is available on our website at des.nc.gov under the forms menu. You may keep track a different way as long as you can provide proof of the work searches when required to do so.
8. Keep your work search after you stop filing and go back to full time work. Audits on unemployment insurance claims can happen long after the claim has ended. Part of the audit may be a request for the work search record.
9. During the first few weeks of your claim, you will receive a letter requiring you to participate in a **MANDATORY Employability Assessment Interview also called an EAI.** Please read the letter carefully. A photo ID and your updated work search record are required at this interview which will be conducted at a Division of Workforce Solutions office near you. **Before the appointment, you must register at NCWorks.gov.**

Please refer to our website at des.nc.gov for additional information. If necessary, you may also contact the Customer Call Center at 888-737-0259 for additional information and assistance.

PRIVACY ACT STATEMENT

The Privacy Act of 1974 requires that you be given this statement because your employer is being asked to provide your Social Security Account number on your claim for unemployment compensation. Your Social Security number is solicited under the authority of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. ***Disclosure of your Social Security number for this purpose is mandatory; it must be entered on your claim for unemployment compensation.***

Your Social Security number will be used to report your unemployment compensation to the United States Internal Revenue Service and the North Carolina Department of Revenue. All unemployment compensation is subject to federal income tax. For further information, you can obtain a copy of Publication 905, "Unemployment Compensation: It's Taxable", by calling 1-800-829-3676. Your Social Security number will also be used as a record index for processing your claim, for statistical purposes, and to verify your eligibility for unemployment compensation and other public assistance benefits. ***If you refuse to allow your employer to disclose your Social Security number, your claim for unemployment benefits will not be processed.***