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Disaster Unemployment Assistance available in 14 counties

March 11, 2025: Governor's Office Press Release Residents affected by severe storms and floods can apply for help.

The state is now accepting applications for Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) from individuals in 14 counties who are out of work due to the severe storms, straight-line winds, flooding, landslides and mudslides that occurred in Kentucky beginning on Feb. 14, 2025.

On Feb. 25, 2025, President Donald Trump approved Gov. Andy Beshear's request for an Expedited Major Disaster Declaration, which includes public assistance for local governments and individual assistance for Kentuckians in Breathitt, Clay, Floyd, Harlan, Knott, Lee, Letcher, Martin, Owsley, Perry and Pike counties. On March 2, 2025, an amendment to that declaration was issued adding Estill, Johnson and Simpson counties to those eligible for individual assistance, including DUA.

Individuals – including unemployed and self-employed individuals who were living or working in the affected areas and became unemployed or had work interrupted as a direct result of severe storms and flooding that began on Feb. 14, 2025 – are eligible to apply for DUA benefits through the Kentucky Office of Unemployment Insurance.

The deadline to file individual initial applications for DUA is 60 days after the presidential declaration of the major disaster that resulted in the individual becoming unemployed. Additional counties added after the initial declaration must adhere to the same 60-day application deadline. Affected individuals should visit the Kentucky Career Center website at kcc.ky.gov or call 502-564-2900 to file their initial claim. The deadline to apply for DUA is April 25, 2025.

DUA is available to individuals who:

- Worked or were self-employed, or were scheduled to begin work or self-employment;
- Can no longer work or perform services because of physical damage or destruction to their place of employment as a direct result of a disaster, which can also include the physical inaccessibility of the place of employment due to its closure by the federal, state or local government in immediate response to the disaster;
- Establish that the work or self-employment they can no longer perform was their primary source of income;
- Do not qualify for regular unemployment insurance benefits from any state;
- Cannot work or resume self-employment because of an injury as a direct result of the disaster; or
- As a result of the disaster, became the breadwinner or major supporter of a household because of the death of the head of the household.

In order to qualify for DUA benefits, claimants in eligible counties must show that their employment or self-employment was lost or interrupted as a direct result of the disaster and that they are not otherwise eligible for regular unemployment insurance benefits under state or federal law. Farmers and other self-employed individuals who traditionally are ineligible for unemployment insurance (UI) benefits may qualify for DUA.

To receive DUA benefits, the federal program requires individuals to provide documents, including a copy of their most recent federal or state income tax forms or check stubs, a bill showing their physical address at the time of the disaster and a photo ID. All required documentation must be submitted within 21 days from the date the individual's DUA application is filed.

DUA is available for 28 weeks of unemployment beginning Feb. 16, 2025, until Aug. 30, 2025, as long as the individual's unemployment continues to be a direct result of the disaster.

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