

## **Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) Frequently Asked Questions**

### **Why must I provide PUA documentation at this time?**

The Continued Assistance Act requires that any individual who received Pandemic Unemployment Assistance benefits on or after December 27, 2020 (the date of enactment of the Continued Assistance Act), but filed their claim before January 31, 2021, must provide this Proof of Employment documentation within 90 days of the date they are notified of the requirement. In addition to the Pandemic, Louisiana was the only state in the nation to experience and have to implement Disaster Unemployment for six natural disasters in 2020 and 2021. This unique set of circumstances resulted in an extreme delay in getting the required messaging about the 90-day Proof of Employment requirements out to the public.

### **What is the deadline for providing the requested Proof of Employment?**

Your deadline date can be found in the top right-hand corner of the notice you received. If you cannot meet the 90-day deadline and believe you have good cause for being unable to do so, please email [Covid19Assist@lwc.la.gov](mailto:Covid19Assist@lwc.la.gov) before the deadline. Please include in the subject line “Good Cause” and your full name in the body of the email, the last four digits of your Social Security Number, and why you cannot meet the deadline. We will contact you only if we need additional information. Keep in mind that no extension beyond your 90-day deadline date is guaranteed. No adverse action will be taken on your claim before 03/31/2024; however, we still urge you to submit your document(s) to us as soon as possible.

### **How do I provide Proof of Employment documentation to the Louisiana Workforce Commission?**

You must follow the instructions on the letter you received. The letter includes step-by-step instructions on uploading the documents directly to your HiRE account. Uploading is the fastest way to get these documents to us. Please be mindful of mail and processing delays if you mail your documentation.

### **What happens if I do not provide Proof of Employment?**

If you fail to provide the requested documentation in the required timeframe, you will be issued an appealable determination. This determination will disqualify you for benefits effective December 27, 2020. You will be overpaid if you receive any payments for weeks after this date. If you are overpaid, you will be sent important information about the overpayment when the determination is issued. Please review those documents carefully before contacting our agency or filing an appeal.

### **How will I know that you received the documents?**

If you followed the instructions in the letter and uploaded the document directly into HiRE, you can view the uploaded document for confirmation immediately. There is no need to contact the Agency. If you mail the document, you must allow time for the document to be received by staff and scanned into HiRE. Due to the volume of claimants receiving these letters, we strongly encourage you to upload the documents electronically to your HiRE account.

**If I previously submitted wage and tax documents, do I still need to submit Proof of Employment?**

Yes, you do. PUA claimants must know that even if they previously submitted proof of wages and tax documents to have their weekly benefit amount re-determined above the minimum \$107, they must still submit documentation to substantiate employment/self-employment to satisfy this federal requirement.

**I never applied for Pandemic benefits but received a letter and/or email stating I must submit PUA documentation. What should I do?**

If you never applied for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance, but recently received communication about the PUA Proof of Employment requirement, you may be a victim of unemployment insurance (UI) fraud. You should immediately report suspected UI fraud to the LWC at <https://www.laworks.net/UIFraudMenu.asp>.

We will contact you if we need further details or documentation. Please keep the fraud report submission confirmation page for your record.

If you previously reported fraud, there is no need to report the fraud again. Instead, you should check your email to ensure you didn't miss important communication and next-step instructions from us about the fraud allegations. Individuals alleging Identity Theft must provide requested documentation before a determination of Identity Theft can be made. If you previously reported Identity Theft but failed to provide the requested documentation, you will continue to be held responsible for the claim. If you cannot find the email with the next step instructions, you can re-submit your identity theft report at <https://www.laworks.net/IDFraudDocumentPortal>.