

## COVID-19 Q&A for Philadelphia Workers\*

### I AM OUT OF WORK . . .

#### **I am out of work because my employer closed due to COVID-19. Am I eligible for unemployment compensation?**

Yes, most people qualify. The fastest and easiest way is to file an initial claim [online](#). Unfortunately, those who lack legal work authorization cannot qualify. Here's more information about unemployment from [PLA](#) and the [PA Dep't of Labor & Industry](#).

#### **If I work in the gig economy as an independent contractor, can I get unemployment?**

Most likely yes. The CARES Act will provide Pandemic Unemployment Assistance to those who are left out of regular state unemployment. The details are still being worked out by the government. Here's more information on the [CARES Act](#).

#### **Are there any other ways I can get help?**

The CARES Act will provide tax filers and Social Security recipients with a one-time payment of up to \$1,200 (\$2,400 for married couples) plus \$500 per child. The payments are for those with incomes up to \$75,000 (individuals) and \$150,000 (married couples).

The CARES Act will provide all unemployment insurance claimants with their usual calculated benefit plus an additional \$600 per week in compensation under Pandemic Unemployment Compensation and an additional 13 weeks of state unemployment insurance benefits under Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation.

### I STILL HAVE MY JOB BUT . . .

#### **Can I get unemployment because my child's school has been closed?**

It depends. Unemployment is for those who have lost their job through no fault of their own. You should be able to get benefits if you can show that: (1) you had no other child care options, (2) informed your employer of the problem, and (3) your employer, in response, failed to offer any accommodation or remote work option.

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\*Information current as of April 1, 2020. Please note that information is changing frequently.

## What kind of leave can I use during the COVID-19 crisis?

You can use your sick leave time required by Philadelphia. Workers can use their sick time if: (a) they are quarantined, (b) their employer closes, or (c) they have to care for a child because of school closure. Workers are limited to 40 hours/year and leave is paid/unpaid depending on employer size. Here's more information on the [leave law](#).

The FFCRA requires employers to provide both **paid sick leave** and **paid expanded family and medical leave** for employers with fewer than 500 employees.

Workers can take up to 80 hours **paid sick leave** if they are unable to work because: (1) they are quarantined or experiencing COVID-19 (full pay), or (2) have a bona fide need to take care of someone quarantined or a child whose school is closed (2/3 pay).

Workers can take up to an additional 10 weeks of **paid expanded family and medical leave** (2/3 pay) if they are unable to work for the above reasons. Small businesses with less than 50 employees may apply for a waiver. Here's more information on [FFCRA](#).

## I have an underlying condition that makes me more at-risk for complications from COVID-19. Do I have the right to work from home and/or take leave?

Most likely yes. Under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), workers who have a condition that could be exacerbated by the virus have the right to ask to telework or take leave. Here's more information on the [ADA](#).

## I am still working because my job is essential, what should my employer be doing to protect me from COVID-19?

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires employers to provide a workplace free from serious recognized hazards, as well as personal protective equipment. Here's more information on [OSHA](#).

## I contracted coronavirus at work, what can I do?

Workers who believe they got sick after being exposed to the coronavirus in their workplace may be eligible for workers' compensation and should notify their employer that they are filing a claim. Here's information on [workers' compensation](#).

## If I become sick at work with symptoms relating to coronavirus can my employer send me home?

Yes. The CDC recommends that employees who become sick with coronavirus symptoms (e.g., fever, cough, shortness of breath) "should be separated from other employees and sent home immediately." Here's information about [CDC guidance](#).