

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING ADMINISTRATION ADVISORY SYSTEM U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR Washington, D.C. 20210	CLASSIFICATION Unemployment Insurance
	CORRESPONDENCE SYMBOL OUI/DFAS
	DATE August 17, 2020

**ADVISORY: UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROGRAM LETTER NO. 27-20,
Change 1**

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES

FROM: JOHN PALLASCH /s/
Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Presidential Memorandum on Authorizing the Other Needs Assistance Program for Major Disaster Declarations Related to Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)—Unemployment Insurance (UI) Related Technical Assistance for States Administering Lost Wages Assistance (LWA) Questions and Answers

1. **Purpose.** The purpose of this Unemployment Insurance Program Letter (UIPL) is to address questions raised by states and provide further guidance about the LWA program authorized by the Presidential Memorandum, *Authorizing the Other Needs Assistance Program for Major Disaster Declarations Related to Coronavirus Disease 2019* (Presidential Memo), issued on August 8, 2020, and administered through a grant agreement with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).
2. **Action Requested.** The U.S. Department of Labor’s (Department) Employment and Training Administration (ETA) requests State Workforce Administrators to provide the information contained in this UIPL to appropriate program and other staff in state workforce systems.
3. **Summary and Background.**
 - a. Summary – On August 8, 2020, the Presidential Memo instructed the Secretary of Homeland Security, acting through FEMA, to make available other needs assistance (ONA) for lost wages in accordance with Section 408(e)(2) of the Stafford Act (42 U.S.C. 5174(e)(2)). This UIPL responds to questions received from states about the LWA program. Answers were developed in coordination with FEMA.
 - b. Background – LWA is administered by states and territories through a grant agreement with FEMA. FEMA does not administer these payments directly to individuals. The states and territories will distribute the funds through their UI system, as a supplemental payment.

RESCISSIONS None	EXPIRATION DATE Continuing
----------------------------	--------------------------------------

The Presidential Memo requires the Secretary of Labor to provide, as appropriate, and consistent with applicable law, technical assistance to FEMA and state governors in the implementation of LWA programs. UIPL No. 27-20 was issued on August 12, 2020 to provide UI-related technical assistance.

4. Guidance.

- a. Questions and Answers. FEMA, in coordination with the Department, hosted multiple calls with state administrators and UI directors over the last week to discuss the Presidential Memo. Attachment I contains answers to certain questions received during these discussions, through FEMA's designated email for LWA-related inquiries (fema-ihphelpdesk@fema.dhs.gov), and through the Department's designated email on all COVID-19 related inquiries (covid-19@dol.gov).
- b. Clarification on the frequency of self-certification. In Section 4.a. of UIPL No. 27-20, states were advised that they will need to develop a self-certification process in accordance with FEMA instructions for claimants to certify weekly that they are unemployed or partially unemployed due to disruptions caused by COVID-19. The instructions now clarify that a single self-certification per claim is sufficient to meet this requirement. Refer to Question 3 in Attachment I for further details.

5. **Inquiries.** States should direct inquiries regarding LWA to fema-ihphelpdesk@fema.dhs.gov. States may direct inquiries regarding the intersection of LWA with unemployment benefit programs to covid-19@dol.gov.

6. References.

- Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (Pub. L. 116-136), including Title II Subtitle A Relief for Workers Affected by Coronavirus Act;
- Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5121 et seq.);
- Presidential Memorandum, *Authorizing the Other Needs Assistance Program for Major Disaster Declarations Related to Coronavirus Disease 2019*, issued August 8, 2020;
- Grants.gov Application at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppId=328611>; and
- FEMA Website at <https://www.fema.gov/disasters/coronavirus/supplemental-payments-lost-wages>.

7. Attachment(s):

- Attachment I: Questions and Answers.