

CARES ACT

With so much going on in the world right now, and so many programs being discussed, we wanted to provide you with an overview of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act). We have already discussed the recently begun Economic Impact Payments. If you would like to read more about that section of the CARES Act, [click here](#).

Unemployment

Maine is participating in a new temporary federal unemployment program created by the CARES Act. Guidance from the Department of Labor has been released and the Maine Department of Labor is working to implement them quickly as possible. The additional \$600 in weekly benefits provided by Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC) will begin to be sent out early the week of April 20th. If you have already enrolled in the current unemployment program, you should continue filing your weekly certifications. For more information on Maine's participation in the FPUC visit their [official page](#).

Emergency legislation (Public Law 20, Chap. 617) was enacted and signed into law March 18th. It included temporary measures to enhance the flexibility of the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program in order to support workers and businesses economically impacted by the novel coronavirus. The legislation temporarily changes the eligibility requirements to include loss of employment due to COVID-19. It also waives the work search requirement for individuals still connected to their employer and waives the one-week waiting period so that benefits will be available sooner. In addition, any benefits paid under these provisions would not affect the employer's experience rating record. To view the official Maine Department of Labor FAQ on the novel coronavirus' impact on unemployment, [click here](#).

Sick & Leave Provisions

Okay, this is a really complicated area that affects both employees and employers with direction for both. Because this can get so complicated, we are going to provide a simple overview of what's available, but we highly encourage you to check [The National Law Review's article](#). They've done a great job analyzing this in detail.

All employees are covered, both full and part-time, as long as they have worked for their current employer for at least 30 days. The definition of leave has been broadened to include impact from COVID-19, though anyone utilizing these enhanced services will need to provide documentation that they are at risk or affected. The leave period is similar to the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) with compensation capping at \$200 a day or \$10,000 in total.

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