

U.S. Senator Marsha Blackburn

Congressional Response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Health Care and Economic Crisis

Unemployment Insurance

Summary: On March 25, 2020, the Senate passed H.R.748 by a vote of 96-0, the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act, which contains nearly \$340 billion in emergency funding. The House concurred with the Senate and passed the measure by voice vote on March 27, 2020.

CARES Act, Division A, Title II: Assistance for American Workers, Families, and Businesses:

Allows states to temporarily increase unemployment benefits and receive federal reimbursement, and allows participation by self-employed and independent contractors.

Specifically:

Creates a temporary Pandemic Unemployment Assistance program through 12/31/20 to provide payment to those unable to work as a direct result of the coronavirus public health emergency.

- Provides an additional \$600 per week to unemployment recipients for up to four months.
- Provides an additional 13 weeks of unemployment benefits through 12/31/20 to help those who remain unemployed after weeks of state unemployment benefits no longer available.

Provides payment to states to reimburse nonprofits, government agencies, and Indian tribes for half the costs they incur through 12/31/20 to pay unemployment benefits.

Provides funding to pay the cost of the first week of unemployment benefits through 12/31/20.

Provides states with temporary flexibility to hire staff, rehire former staff, or take other steps to quickly process unemployment claims.

Provides funding to support “short-time compensation” where employers reduce hours instead of laying off workers by paying 100 percent of the costs they incur doing so through 12/31/20.

- Provides funding to states which begin “short-time compensation” programs

For additional information:

[https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/CARES%20Act%20Section-by-Section%20\(Tax,%20Unemployment%20Insurance\).pdf](https://www.finance.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/CARES%20Act%20Section-by-Section%20(Tax,%20Unemployment%20Insurance).pdf)

<https://www.dol.gov/coronavirus>