

Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) Available for Earthquake Survivors

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This version CORRECTS the deadline for filing for DUA from Feb. 28, 2020, to March 3, 2020 and clarifies filing requirements.

CAGUAS, Puerto Rico – Individuals who lost their jobs because of the earthquakes in southwest Puerto Rico and live or work in any of the 25 municipalities FEMA approved for assistance may be eligible to receive unemployment benefits.

The earthquakes that began Dec. 28, 2019, affected the municipalities of Adjuntas, Arecibo, Cabo Rojo, Ciales, Corozal, [Guánica](#), [Guayanilla](#), Hormigueros, Jayuya, Juana Díaz, Lajas, Lares, Las Marías, Maricao, Mayagüez, Morovis, Orocovi, Peñuelas, Ponce, Sabana Grande, San Germán, San Sebastián, Utuado, Villalba and Yauco.

The Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) program is funded by FEMA, overseen by the U.S. Department of Labor, and managed by the Puerto Rico Department of Labor and Human Resources (PRDOL). DUA is intended for employees or self-employed individuals who lost their jobs as a direct result of a major disaster.

To be eligible for Disaster Unemployment Assistance, individuals must:

- File a regular unemployment insurance claim and be determined ineligible for benefits.
- Be unemployed or partially unemployed as a direct result of the major disaster.



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- Be able and available for work, unless injured as a direct result of the disaster.
- File an application for DUA within 30 days of the date of the announcement of the availability of DUA benefits.
- Have not refused an offer of employment in a suitable position.

In addition, unemployed individuals, including self-employed, who were living or working in the affected areas at the time of the major disaster, and who are unemployed as a result of this major disaster may be eligible for these funds, if they:

- Have applied for and exhausted all regular unemployment benefits from any state, or do not qualify for unemployment benefits; or
- Can no longer work or perform services because of physical damage or destruction to the place of employment as a direct result of the disaster; or
- Are unable to reach their jobs or self-employed locations because they must travel through the affected area and are prevented from doing so by the disaster; or
- Were to commence employment or self-employment but were impeded to do so by the disaster; or
- Became the breadwinner or major support for their household because of the death of the head of household due to the disaster; or
- Cannot work or perform services in self-employment because of injuries caused as direct results of the disaster.

To file a DUA claim, visit the PRDOL's Bureau of Employment Security (BES) unemployment local office nearest to your home or at the American Job Center (AJC) in your area. Claims can be accepted in person from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. DUA Claims can also be filed by telephone until 4 p.m. each work day by calling the PRDOL Call Center at: 787-945-7900 or 787-395-7328. Interstate DUA claims (for individuals who relocated out of state) may also be filed by phone at: 787-945-7898.

To receive DUA benefits, all required documentation must be submitted to PRDOL within 21 days from the day the DUA application is filed. Required documentation includes your Social Security number, a copy of your most recent federal income tax return, check stubs, and/or documentation to support that you were working or



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self-employed when the disaster occurred. The aforementioned documentation can be submitted in person at your nearest BES local office or AJC.

The deadline to file for DUA benefits timely is March 3, 2020.

Survivors may also search for employment and training opportunities through the AJC or by visiting [CareerOneStop.org/LocalHelp](https://www.careeronestop.org/LocalHelp).

Required DUA forms and additional information that becomes available will be posted to PRDOL's website at <https://www.trabajo.pr.gov/>.

For more information on PR's disaster recovery, visit the [Government of Puerto Rico](https://www.gobierno.pr/), www.fema.gov/disaster/4473, www.twitter.com/femaregion2 and Facebook: www.facebook.com/femapuertorico.

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La misión de FEMA es ayudar a la gente antes, durante y después de los desastres.

La asistencia para la recuperación de desastres está disponible sin importar la raza, el color, la religión, la nacionalidad, el sexo, la edad, la discapacidad, el dominio del inglés o la situación económica. Si usted o alguien que usted conoce ha sido discriminado, llame gratis a FEMA al 800-621-FEMA (3362) o 711 para el servicio de retransmisión de video. Hay operadores multilingües disponibles. (Oprima 2 para el español.) TTY llame al 800-462-7585.

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