



Education Employees

Between academic terms

Many educational institutions or school systems elected to end a semester, term, or school year earlier than usual in response to COVID-19. Since the school schedule changed because of the COVID-19 pandemic, you experienced both a reduction of work hours and earnings, qualifying you for Unemployment benefits and / or Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). However, at the end of the regularly scheduled year or term, the state is required to reassess the benefit entitlement of these individuals to determine if there is reasonable assurance of employment during the next regularly scheduled academic year or term.

After the 2019 - 2020 school year was originally scheduled to end, a school is no longer considered closed as a direct result of the COVID-19 public health emergency. Therefore, many school employees will no longer be considered to be unemployed due to a COVID-19 related reason. This means the Alabama Department of Labor must review whether you will continue to qualify for Unemployment or PUA benefits. Unemployment compensation payments WILL STOP until it can be reviewed.

The agency has made every effort to begin this review immediately after the end of the traditional school year. However, due to the wide variety of school terms, it is possible some may have already claimed weeks beyond the end of their school year. Depending on when your school year was set to end, final review of this issue may result in an overpayment of your claim. You will receive a letter explaining your appeal rights.

In some cases, claimants may no longer be employed with an educational entity, but their base wages (wages earned within the last 18 months) are still attached to a previous education-related job. Unemployment benefits are determined based on the wages earned in the Base period, which is the 1st four quarters of the previous five completed calendar quarters. Calendar quarters are: January - March, April - June, July - September, and October - December. For example, if a claim were filed today, the base period is all four quarters of 2019.

Please note: If you have other employment between school terms and you are unemployed from that other employment due to COVID-19 related reasons, then you may still be eligible for PUA. Additionally, you may be eligible for regular unemployment if you have wages to determine an unemployment claim without including the educational institution wages.