

## **Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA)**

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### **What is Disaster Unemployment Assistance?**

DUA is a federally funded unemployment insurance program designed to provide benefits for workers and self employed workers who are out of work as a direct result of a declared disaster.

### **What was the disaster?**

President Bush declared a disaster on November 8, 2002 due to the major earthquake in Alaska, which occurred on November 3, 2002. The President's declaration provides for Disaster Unemployment Assistance for those individuals living or working within the Alaska Gateway and Copper River Regional Educational Assistance Areas. This includes the communities of:

Boundary	Chicken	Chisana	Chitina	Copper Center
Chistochina	Dot Lake	Eagle	Gakona	Glennallen
Gulkana	Kenny Lake	Lakeview	McCarthy	Mentasta
Nabesna	Nelchina	Mendeltna	Northway	Paxson
Slana	Tanacross	Tazlina	Tetlin	Tok
Tolsona	Tonsina.			

### **How do I apply for DUA?**

You can apply for DUA benefits over the phone by calling 1-800-590-5941. You have until December 26, 2002 to file a timely application. You will need to provide proof of earnings. If you are unable to locate your financial documents or they have been destroyed, you can contact the IRS and request a copy of your 2001 income taxes. Benefits will be initiated based on your sworn affidavit of earnings until your documentation is received.

### **Who is eligible for DUA?**

Workers or self employed workers who became unemployed or partially unemployed due to the disaster and who are not eligible for unemployment insurance benefits may be eligible for DUA. To receive DUA benefits, an individual must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- You must not be eligible for any UI program. (If you are, a claim will be established for you.)
- You are unemployed as a direct result of the disaster. Examples would include:
  - Unable to reach work site (roads blocked or impassable, etc.)
  - Unable to start a job due to the disaster
  - Unable to work due to an injury that incurred during the disaster.
  - Lost work was your main source of income.
- Your application was filed on or before December 26, 2002.
- You had a loss of potential income due to the disaster.
- If your work is seasonal, you may be eligible if you are unemployed because of the disaster and not due to the seasonal nature of your work.

- You are able and available to accept immediate suitable work.
- Your 2001 self-employment earnings must have been reported to the IRS.

### **What time period will it cover?**

Benefits for qualified applicants will be available during the disaster assistance period of November 10, 2002 through May 10, 2003.

### **How much money could I get?**

The DUA weekly assistance amount is calculated on the taxable wages you earned during 2001. Benefits for self-employed workers will be based on the net income reported from self-employment for 2001.

- Amounts range from \$97 - \$248 per week, plus \$24 for each dependent (up to three) and will be based on taxable wages from the 2001 tax year.
- Benefits can be paid for up to 26 weeks.
- Part-time self-employed workers are eligible for DUA. Benefits will be based on the percentage of average hours worked.
- You may still be eligible for partial benefits if you are back to work. Your earnings will be deducted from your weekly benefit amount.

### **How long will payments last?**

Benefits may be paid through May 10, 2003. However, you can only be paid for weeks that you were unemployed due to the disaster.

### **What must I do to continue my eligibility?**

You must be able and willing to accept work if it is offered to you and suitable for you. You must submit your claim certification for payment every two weeks and show on it that you are still looking for work, just as if you were receiving regular unemployment payments.

### **What if I am denied DUA benefits?**

If you are denied benefits, you will be given appeal rights. All requests for appeal must be in writing and mailed to the address shown on the denial document within 60 days from the date the denial was issued.

### **Whom can I call if I have questions?**

You may call the Alaska DUA number toll-free at 1-800-590-5941 if you have questions.

For further information on other federal aid programs that may be available to you due to this disaster, go to [www.fema.gov/diz02/d1440n03.shtm](http://www.fema.gov/diz02/d1440n03.shtm)