

**What is a High Unemployment Period (HUP)?**

A High Unemployment Period (HUP) is a period in the State that meets or surpasses a specific unemployment percentage threshold. When that threshold is met, the maximum duration of Extended Benefits (EB) is increased and allows for additional weeks of payment for EB and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) to eligible individuals. The potential maximum increases from 13 to 20 weeks of EB or an increased 7 weeks of PUA.

**Why did Alaska start paying additional HUP weeks of benefits?**

When the State's Total Unemployment Rate (TUR) reaches 8% or higher, for an average 3-month period, the additional HUP monetary entitlement is payable to EB and PUA eligible individuals. Alaska reached this threshold effective 07/05/2020 per notification by the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), which allowed the State to pay these additional weeks.

**Why did Alaska stop paying additional HUP weeks of benefits?**

When the State's TUR drops below that 8% threshold, USDOL notifies the State that it can no longer pay HUP benefits past a specific date (12/12/2020).

**Does this mean EB and/or PUA benefits will no longer be available at all?**

No. The current unemployment rate in Alaska is still high enough to allow payment of EB for the regular duration allowed, which is up to a maximum of 13 weeks. The State is simply no longer able to pay the additional weeks allowed under a HUP.

PUA will also be available (minus the additional 7 weeks) until the week ending 12/26/2020 per Pub. L. 116-136 (CARES Act). Currently, no federal legislation has been passed to extend the payment of PUA benefits past that date.