



## Guidance for Applying for Unemployment Benefits

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*Many thanks to Stuart Barnhart at Fiddlin' Fish Brewing Company who compiled the following information on behalf of the Triad Brewers Alliance.*

Per conversation with the NC Department of Commerce, (the agency that oversees unemployment benefits):

- It is strongly recommended for employees to move forward with filing unemployment benefits.
  - Employees should use the following link:
  - <https://des.nc.gov/apply-unemployment/filing-your-unemployment-application>
  - **Employees must specifically state in their claim that their loss of employment (or reduction of hours) is due to COVID-19.**
  
- The business owner needs to make sure the business is signed up in the system (which requires the PIN number the Dept. of Commerce sent you when you began paying insurance)
  - Business owners should use the following link:
  - <https://des.nc.gov/employers/create-or-update-employer-account>
  - When an employee files, the business will receive a notice telling you to go online and respond. The sooner the business responds to the claim, the sooner it will free up everything for the employee.
  - *If the employee failed to mention that the loss of employment was due to COVID-19, the employer can inform the Dept. of Commerce that it was in fact due to COVID-19, which will free everything up for the employee.*

**\*\* Please be advised that due to high call volume, the fastest and most efficient way to file for unemployment benefits is online.**

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## Contact Information:

### For Applicants:

DES Customer Call Center

For questions regarding: benefits and assistance with Unemployment Insurance claims, sign-in, or password reset.

(888) 737-0259

<https://des.nc.gov/apply-unemployment>

### For Employers:

Employer Call Center

For questions regarding: employer sign-in assistance/password reset; employer tax assistance; list of charges/potential charges.

866-278-3822 or 919-707-1150

[des.tax.customerservice@nccommerce.com](mailto:des.tax.customerservice@nccommerce.com)

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## Expansion of Unemployment Benefits per Executive Order 118

Effective March 17, 2020 Governor Cooper's Executive Order 118, modified North Carolina's unemployment benefits, expanding them to help those employees affected by COVID-19 shut downs. More specifically, Executive Order 118:

1. Removes the one week waiting period to apply for benefits
2. Removes the requirement to look for another job during the unemployed period
3. Allows employees who have lost their jobs, and in some case have had their hours reduced due to COVID-19 issues to apply for unemployment
4. Replaces the in-person interview requirement by allowing this to be done online or by phone.
5. Directs that unemployment losses will NOT be counted against employers