

Important information regarding Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits for Puerto Rico and U.S. Virgin Islands Residents

Individuals that may have relocated to Connecticut from Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands following Hurricanes Irma and Maria may be eligible for a 26-week extension of Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) benefits. The following provides information regarding eligibility and filing.

What: The Disaster Recovery Reform Act of 2018 (Public Law No. 115-254)

Enacted October 5, 2018, this law extends the duration of DUA for individuals unemployed as a direct result of the major disasters due to Hurricanes Irma and Maria in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. For purposes of these major disasters in these two territories, the law extends the number of weeks in the disaster assistance period from 26 weeks to 52 weeks after the date of the disaster declaration.

Who: Individuals in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, as well as individuals who have relocated to other states.

The following individuals are potentially eligible:

- Individuals who exhausted DUA;
- Individuals who exhausted regular Unemployment Insurance (UI), even if they did not apply for DUA during the original DAP;
- Individuals who had a lapse in continued claim filing, if the reason for the lapse is not disqualifying; and
- Individuals who never applied for DUA (for reasons other than collecting regular UI during the original DAP) if they can show good cause for the late filing.

When: Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands had to make extensive preparations to carry out the provisions of the extension, so both territories are just now implementing the extension.

- Puerto Rico made its initial announcement of the availability of DUA extended benefits to DUA exhaustees on January 22, 2019 and potentially eligible UI exhaustees were notified March 22, 2019. The original 60-day filing deadline of March 25, 2019 has been extended another 60 days.
- The U.S. Virgin Islands is going to notice their potential claimants by the end of March.

How: Filing for extended Disaster Unemployment Assistance

- **Puerto Rico:**
Claimants can contact the Puerto Rico Department of Labor at **(787) 945-7898**, Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Visit <https://www.trabajo.pr.gov/> for information on filing for extended DUA benefits. The deadline for filing for extended DUA in Puerto Rico has been extended to **May 24, 2019**.



March 26, 2019

- **U.S. Virgin Islands:**

Claimants can contact the Virgin Islands Department of Labor (VIDOL) at **(340) 715-5712** Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. VIDOL is updating its website at <http://www.vidol.gov/unemployment-insurance/> with information on filing for extended DUA benefits. The deadline for filing for extended DUA in the U.S. Virgin Islands will be 60 days from the date of announcement of the availability of extended DUA, which is expected to occur on **May 24, 2019**.