



Frequently asked questions about coronavirus (COVID-19) for workers and employers Updated July 31, 2020

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[Guidance on Return to Work for High Risk Individuals](#)

THIS GUIDANCE PERTAINING TO CDC GUIDELINES IS SOLELY FOR THE PERIOD FROM GOVERNOR LAMONT'S DECLARATION OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND CIVIL PREPAREDNESS EMERGENCY ISSUED ON MARCH 10, 2020, THROUGH SEPTEMBER 9, 2020, AND ANY PERIOD OF EXTENSION OR RENEWAL.

When you file your weekly claim, you will be asked "Did you refuse an offer of suitable work or rehire, quit a job, or get discharged from a job?" Further, if you turned down work requiring interaction with other individuals in person, whether in an office setting or public setting, that was not suitable because you are at high risk for severe illness from COVID-19 under the CDC guidelines, you may answer "No" to that question because you did not refuse an offer of suitable work. However, your condition must fall into one of the following categories:

According to the CDC Guidelines, those at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

People 65 years and older

People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

- Chronic kidney disease
- COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant
- Obesity (body mass index [BMI] of 30 or higher)
- Serious heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies
- Sickle cell disease
- Type 2 diabetes mellitus

According to the CDC Guidelines, those who *might* be at high-risk for severe illness from COVID-19 are:

People of all ages with underlying medical conditions, particularly if not well controlled, including:

- Asthma (moderate-to-severe)
- Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain)
- Cystic fibrosis
- Hypertension or high blood pressure
- Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines
- Neurologic conditions, such as dementia
- Liver disease
- Pregnancy
- Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues)
- Smoking
- Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder)
- Type 1 diabetes mellitus

If you answer "No" that you did not refuse an offer of suitable work because you fall into one of the categories above, the employer may exercise their right to contact the Department of Labor and protest your receipt of unemployment benefits. If that should happen, a fact-finding will be scheduled.

If you answer "No" that you did not refuse an offer of suitable work because you fall into one of the categories above, the employer may exercise their right to contact the Department of Labor and protest your receipt of unemployment benefits. If that should happen, a fact-finding will be scheduled and you will be required to provide documentation that you fall into one of the categories above. If the fact-finding reveals that you turned down suitable work without sufficient cause, you will be disqualified and may have to repay any benefits you were therefore not eligible to receive. If you are deliberately dishonest when responding to question 2, you may be subject to a monetary penalty for filing a fraudulent claim. In addition, if an Able & Available issue is raised, you will need to establish that you were able and available to work to continue receiving benefits.