

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 16, 2020
CONTACTS

[Claims Data](#) and [Agency Response](#) Videos at 10AM

Initial Claims Data

[Anna L. Johnson](#), Senior Economic Analyst
(503) 991-2110

Unemployment Benefits and Agency Response

[Gail Kiles Krumenauer](#), Communications Director
(503) 947-1268

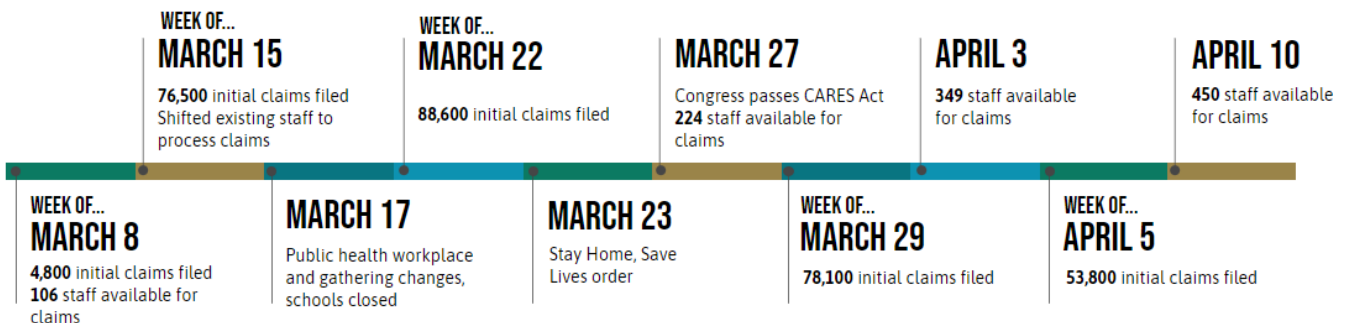
Unemployment Benefit Payments Quadruple in Oregon

During the week of April 5 to April 11, the Oregon Employment Department received 53,800 initial claims for unemployment benefits. That’s in addition to a revised total of 243,000 initial claims filed during the prior three weeks.

Helping Oregonians

The Oregon Employment Department continues to prioritize efforts that can get the most benefits to the greatest number of affected Oregonians the fastest. With the first [CARES Act](#) payments on April 10, Oregon is among the early states getting an extra \$600 per week to those out of work due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the week of March 29 to April 4, the Employment Department paid \$23 million in benefits to Oregonians. During the week of April 5 to April 11, that more than quadrupled to \$97 million in benefits paid. More benefits measures are on the agency’s [COVID-19 page](#).

The Employment Department’s efforts continue with more hiring underway, and programming the unemployment benefits system for Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). Once ready, the PUA program will allow the self-employed, contract workers, and gig workers not already eligible to receive unemployment benefits for the first time.



The responsiveness of existing agency employees transitioning from other program areas to take claims, efforts to rapidly hire new staff, and launching new programs has resulted in getting much-needed benefits to more Oregonians in difficult times. These results come despite the agency’s reliance on a dated mainframe system to process unemployment benefits. The Employment Department will continue to examine opportunities to improve services to Oregonians, such as waiving the “waiting week” for benefits. As of now, waiving the waiting week requires thousands of hours of programming, and would delay processing record numbers of claims that are getting benefits to Oregonians who need them now.

Initial Claims

The Employment Department has detailed information for 47,700 of the initial claims processed during the week starting April 5. The leisure and hospitality sector, which includes hotels and restaurants, continued to see the greatest number of initial claims for unemployment benefits (12,300). This reflects ongoing impacts of public health and safety measures related to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since March 15, there have been about 52,900 initial claims filed in the leisure and hospitality sector. Health care and social assistance (25,800) and retail trade (19,700) are other sectors with large totals of initial weekly claims in the past four weeks, but every sector has seen additional claims activity.

Multnomah (10,200), Washington (6,000), and Lane (4,600) also continued to be the counties with the largest number of claims. More initial claims data by industry and area can be found on the QualityInfo.org [COVID-19 page](#).

Oregon Unemployment Insurance Initial Claims by Sector

Sector	Initial Claims Week of April 5 - 11, 2020	Total Initial Claims Since March 15, 2020
Natural Resources and Mining	622	2,043
Construction	3,263	12,449
Manufacturing	4,733	14,637
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	9,434	28,174
Wholesale Trade	1,461	3,872
Retail Trade	6,708	19,740
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	1,265	4,562
Information	526	1,864
Financial Activities	1,130	3,600
Professional and Business Services	4,343	13,591
Education and Health Services	8,393	29,683
Educational Services	1,118	3,877
Health Care and Social Assistance	7,275	25,806
Leisure and Hospitality	12,318	52,901
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	1,470	5,208
Accommodation and Food Services	10,848	47,693
Other Services	2,888	10,165

Source: Oregon Employment Department
 Industry details are not available for all claims.

Oregon Initial Unemployment Insurance Claims by County

County	Initial Claims Week of April 5 - 11, 2020	Total Initial Claims Since March 15, 2020	County	Initial Claims Week of April 5 - 11, 2020	Total Initial Claims Since March 15, 2020
Baker	139	440	Lake	31	105
Benton	892	2,751	Lane	4,614	16,049
Clackamas	4,373	15,219	Lincoln	744	2,816
Clatsop	605	2,483	Linn	1,659	4,952
Columbia	518	1,759	Malheur	120	384
Coos	871	2,677	Marion	3,062	11,054
Crook	255	902	Morrow	56	182
Curry	217	699	Multnomah	10,176	39,315
Deschutes	2,661	10,125	Polk	762	2,542
Douglas	1,201	3,893	Sherman	11	40
Gilliam	14	34	Tillamook	316	1,094
Grant	49	182	Umatilla	659	2,308
Harney	38	136	Union	311	1,168
Hood River	252	999	Wallowa	53	163
Jackson	2,398	8,655	Wasco	265	929
Jefferson	234	732	Washington	5,978	19,913
Josephine	812	2,749	Wheeler	-c-	5
Klamath	620	1,944	Yamhill	1,159	3,831

-c- data is suppressed for confidentiality
 Source: Oregon Employment Department

To file an online claim for unemployment benefits, go to Oregon.gov/employ or call 1-877-FILE-4-UI. For help finding jobs and training resources, contact your local WorkSource Oregon center or go to WorkSourceOregon.org. Equal Opportunity program — auxiliary aids and services available upon request to individuals with disabilities. Contact: (503) 947-1794. For people who are deaf or hard of hearing, call 711 Telecommunications Relay Services.