



Arkansas Division of
Workforce Services

Unemployment Insurance

EMPLOYER NEWSLETTER

In the newsletter

1. Online Employer Services
2. Getting Arkansans Back to Work
3. Reporting to DWS
4. Non-Charge for Q2, Q3, Q4, 2020
5. UI Modernization Efforts
- 6.-7. DWS Law Changes
8. Additional Resources

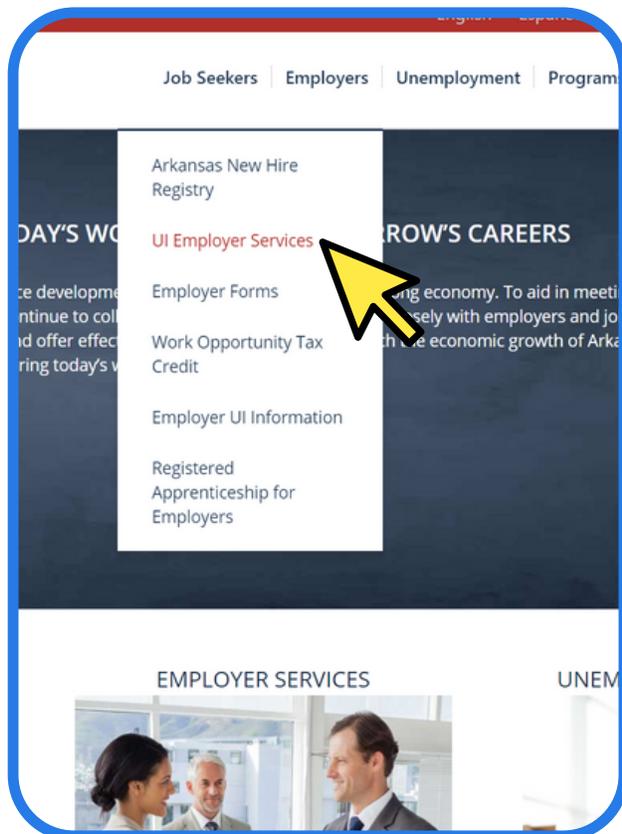


Fall 2021

Online Employer Services

The following UI employer services are now available online:

- Apply for a DWS Employer Account Number
- Use TAX 21 to file & pay Quarterly Contribution & Wage Reports
- UI 901A Overpayment Wage Response System
- UI Benefit Notice Response System & Shared Work Program
- Report Unemployment Insurance Fraud
- Notify DWS of an employee's potential refusal of work
- Report employee failure to submit to a pre-employment drug screen
- Report employee failure to pass a pre-employment drug screen
- Report a failure to appear for a scheduled job interview



How to Access Online UI Employer Services

Take the following steps to access all online UI employer services:

- Go to dws.arkansas.gov.
- Hover your mouse over the "Employers" tab at the top of the page.
- Select "[UI Employer Services](#)" from the drop-down menu.
- Click on the link to go to the [Online Unemployment Insurance Employer Services portal](#).

Getting Arkansans Back to Work



Job Fairs & Customized Hiring Events

The employment services staff at the Arkansas Workforce Centers across the state will work with you to host a hiring event or job fair tailored to your company's needs. We will also notify you of upcoming job fairs and opportunities to join other employers at larger recruiting events. Contact information for every Arkansas Workforce Center is available at www.dws.arkansas.gov/contact.

Mobile Workforce Centers

If you would like DWS to attend an event or provide services at another location, we can come to you in our Mobile Workforce Center RVs. DWS will work with job seekers on drafting résumés, effective interviewing skills, productive job search techniques, Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate (CRC) assessments, and more. Request a Mobile Workforce Center by completing and submitting the online form [here](#). If you prefer to submit the form offline, you can download and print this [Mobile Workforce Centers application form](#).



Recruiting, Screening, and Referring Applicants

When you need the right people for the job, we can help you review resumes and assess candidates before the interview stage. Connect with your local Arkansas Workforce Center for assistance recruiting, screening, and hiring qualified applicants. Contact information for every Arkansas Workforce Center is available at www.dws.arkansas.gov/contact.

Virtual Job Fairs

DWS and the Arkansas Workforce Centers now offer Virtual Job Fairs as a free employer service statewide. Setting up a Virtual Job Fair is easy! Please contact your local Arkansas Workforce Center to get started. Click [here](#) to learn more about Virtual Job Fairs.

Workforce Center Facilities

Many Arkansas Workforce Centers have meeting rooms, computer labs, and training areas that are available for businesses to reserve and use at no cost. These facilities are often used for hiring events, job fairs, interviewing candidates, training workers, conducting employee orientations, and holding general meetings or conferences. Contact information for every Arkansas Workforce Center is available at www.dws.arkansas.gov/contact.



Send us your job orders!

We will help you fill your positions!

Simply contact Employment Services at your local Arkansas Workforce Center. Contact information for every Arkansas Workforce Center is available online at www.dws.arkansas.gov/contact.

Reporting to DWS

The number one topic of conversation among employers is the difficulty you are having filling job vacancies. It's a concern for us too and we want to help. As your state workforce agency, we are doing everything we can to identify and stop unemployment fraud and encourage Arkansans to get back to work.

Governor Hutchinson directed the Division of Workforce Services to end Arkansas's participation in federal pandemic unemployment programs effective June 27, 2021. For those who remain eligible for regular state unemployment insurance, DWS is conducting weekly random audits of work search records. Failure by the claimant to submit accurate documentation of job contacts can result in disqualification and denial of benefits. Some employers have reported individuals who contact them to ask for specific information to put on their Work Search Contact Record but express no interest in applying for a job.

We assure you, DWS can prevent a claimant from benefiting from attempts to defraud, but to act, we must be notified! That's where you come in!

What to report

You are encouraged to report any suspicious activity that could be related to unemployment fraud or a potential disqualification, even if you do not know whether the individual is claiming unemployment benefits. If you provide the information, we'll do the rest!



Let us know when an applicant:

- Refuses offers of suitable work.
- Fails to appear for an interview.
- Fails to appear for/pass a drug screen.
- Fails to return to work when recalled.
- Fails to return calls after inquiring about a job.
- Deliberately presents oneself in a negative way to avoid job offers.
- Negotiates hours and pay to stay below the maximum allowed to continue receiving benefits.

How to report

Reporting is easy! You can report to DWS one of two ways:

1. [Tax 21](#)- Click this link and log in to Tax 21 using the second option you see on the Tax 21 homepage. Once you log in, choose option 3, 4, 5, or 6, depending on the type of report you are submitting. To report anything that does not fall into a category with a specific form, please use option 3. Report Unemployment Insurance Fraud.
2. [Refusal of Work Form](#)- Click this link to use our online form. You can fill it out and submit it directly through the DWS website.

Non-Charge for Q2, Q3, Q4 of 2020

The quarterly charges used to determine the 2021 contribution rates are the third and fourth quarters of 2019 and the first and second quarters of 2020.

Due to an executive order and Act 153 of 2021 (signed into law by Governor Hutchinson on February 25, 2021), Arkansas carried out a non-charge and removed all benefit charges for the second quarter of 2020. Similar action was taken for governmental entities and non-profit employers that reimburse the trust fund directly, rather than pay contributions at an assigned rate. The 2021 rate statement reflected the exclusion of these charges.

Regarding the 2022 rate calculations, the quarters used to determine these rates will be the third and fourth quarters of 2020 and the first and second quarters of 2021.

Act 153 of 2021, specifically §11-10-703(a)(7), gives the DWS Director the discretion to non-charge UI benefit payments that are the result of a disaster emergency. DWS has compiled the estimated charges for the third and fourth quarters of 2020 in order to proceed with the non-charge for these quarters, as allowed by Act 153 of 2021. The removal of these charges from the rating process for 2022 will lessen the effects of the pandemic on Arkansas employers. Rate statements will be mailed out to employers in mid-December 2021.

The non-charges may reduce the amounts collected from employers in future rate years resulting in a slight negative impact on the trust fund balance going forward. Charges for the first and second quarters of 2021 will not be removed and will be reflected in 2022 rates.

Reflected in
2021 Rates

Q2 2020

Charges removed due to an executive order and Act 153 of 2021. Exclusion of charges was reflected in 2021 rate statement.

Q3 2020

Non-charge of UI benefit payments that were the result of a disaster emergency as allowed by Act 153 of 2021.

Q4 2020

Non-charge of UI benefit payments that were the result of a disaster emergency as allowed by Act 153 of 2021.

Q1 2021

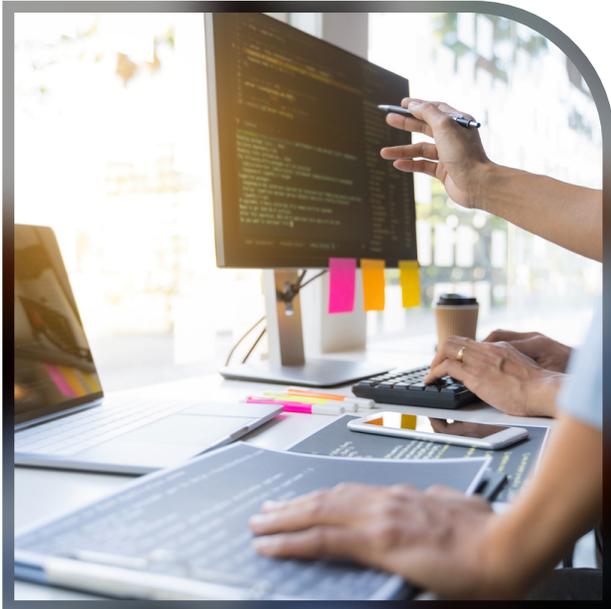
Charges will not be removed and will be reflected in 2022 rates.

Q2 2021

Charges will not be removed and will be reflected in 2022 rates.

Will be Reflected in 2022 Rates

Unemployment Insurance Modernization Efforts



Arkansas Division of Workforce Services

Unemployment Insurance Modernization Project

DWS is excited to launch the Unemployment Insurance Modernization Project which will move the administration of unemployment benefits from the decades-old legacy mainframe system to a modern application technology that supports web-based services.

Commissioned in July 2021, the long-term project will integrate claimant experience,

UI specialist workflows, and the employer tax system into one platform so that information can be shared between all stakeholders within one system. The major components of the transformation are benefits, taxes, and appeals processes, with a focus on fraud prevention and detection, equitable access, timely payment of benefits, and reduction of backlogs.

As an employer, you will benefit from the following features of the new UI system:

- Updated electronic communication technology
- Electronic form submission with space to add text as supporting information
- Ability to upload supporting documentation at the time of submitted answer
- Ability to file tax reports and pull charge statements electronically
- Ability to protest charges electronically and track results
- Electronic decisions and appeals scheduling correspondence

DWS 2021 Law Changes

Arkansas 93rd General Assembly

Non-Charge for UI Benefits Resulting from Declared Disasters

HB 1212 became Act 153 and authorizes the ADWS director to non-charge unemployment benefits paid to the separate account of each employer if the benefits paid are the result of declared disasters effective date February 25, 2021, retroactive to April 4, 2020.

Taxable Wage Base Freeze

HB 1409 became Act 368 and sets the 2022 calendar year taxable wage base as the lesser of either the amount as currently calculated by DWS law or \$10,000. Effective date July 28, 2021.

Stabilization Tax Freeze

HB 1407 became Act 369 and sets the 2022 calendar year stabilization tax as the lesser of either the amount as currently calculated by DWS law or .02 percent. Effective date July 28, 2021.

State Income Tax Exemption

SB 236 became Act 154 and exempts 2020 and 2021 unemployment compensation benefits paid from state and federal unemployment funds from state income tax. Effective date March 1, 2021.

State Income Tax Withholding from UI Benefit Payments

HB 1049 became Act 283 and provides that recipients of state and federal unemployment benefits may request to have state income taxes withheld from benefit payments. Effective date July 28, 2021, and is dependent upon DWS UI IT systems capability to withhold the taxes.

UI Fraud Prevention and Modernization

HB 1765 became Act 667 and requires DWS to modify the unemployment insurance program to prevent, detect, and recover unemployment insurance fraud. It also sets aside a portion of stabilization tax collections to be used to modernize DWS UI IT systems. Effective date April 12, 2021, and retroactive to April 1, 2021.

(Continues on next page)

DWS 2021 Law Changes Continued

Arkansas 93rd General Assembly

Direct Sellers Coverage Exemption

SB 547 became [Act 947](#) and exempts direct sellers from coverage under DWS Law. Effective date July 28, 2021.

Disclosure of Information

SB 299 became [Act 649](#) and amends the DWS law related to the disclosure of confidential information. Effective date July 28, 2021.

Employee Exemptions from Mandates Related to COVID-19

House Bill 1977 became [Act 1113](#) and provides employee exemptions from federal mandates and employer mandates related to Coronavirus 2019 (COVID-19) and declares an emergency.

Participation In Voluntary Federal UI Benefit Programs

Senate Bill 1 became [Act 2](#) of the First Extraordinary Session and clarifies that the DWS Director has the authority to choose to participate in and opt-out of certain voluntary federal UI benefit programs. Effective date August 6, 2021, and retroactive to May 19, 2021.

New Rule 5- Notice to Employee

[Rule 5](#) was revised and became effective on September 4, 2021. Part of the revised Rule 5 requires employers to provide a notice with information on how to file for unemployment insurance to workers who are discharged or laid off. While providing the notice is required, there is no penalty for noncompliance.

Download the [Employee Notice](#)

Download the [Employer Workplace Poster](#)

