

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Department of Employment Services



MURIEL BOWSER
MAYOR

DR. UNIQUE MORRIS-HUGHES
DIRECTOR

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Claimants

January 2020 Maximum Weekly Benefit Amount Increase

1. What is the new Maximum Weekly Benefit Amount in the District of Columbia?

Effective January 5, 2020, the Maximum Weekly Benefit Amount in the District of Columbia has increased from \$432 to \$444 for new initial claims.

2. If I am currently receiving unemployment benefits, will my weekly benefit amount increase after January 5, 2020?

No, if you are currently receiving unemployment benefits, your weekly benefit amount will not increase after January 5, 2020.

3. If I filed my new initial claim before January 5, 2020, and the issue on my claim is resolved after January 5, 2020, will my weekly benefit amount increase?

No, if you are found eligible to receive benefits after January 5, 2020 on the claim you filed before January 5, 2020, your weekly benefit amount will not increase.

4. Why am I not entitled to the \$444 maximum weekly benefit amount?

The \$444 maximum weekly benefit amount only applies to new initial claims filed on or after January 5, 2020. In order to qualify for the new maximum weekly benefit amount, the wages in the highest quarter of your base period must be \$11,544 or higher.

5. How is my weekly benefit amount calculated?

Your weekly benefit amount is calculated by taking the highest quarter of wages in your base period and dividing it by 26.

6. I reopened my claim or filed an additional claim on or after January 5, 2020. Why am I not entitled to the \$444 maximum weekly benefit amount?

The new maximum weekly benefit amount applies to new initial claims filed on or after January 5, 2020. In order to qualify for the new maximum weekly benefit

amount, the wages in the highest quarter of your base period must be \$11,544 or higher.

7. I filed my new initial claim before January 5, 2020, but I did not become monetarily eligible until January 5, 2020 or after. Why am I not entitled to the \$444 maximum weekly benefit amount?

The new maximum weekly benefit amount applies to new initial claims filed on or after January 5, 2020. In order to qualify for the new maximum weekly benefit amount, the wages in the highest quarter of your base period must be \$11,544 or higher.

8. How much will I receive in a partial payment when I report my gross earnings?

To determine the weekly benefit amount you will receive if you are working part-time, use the following formula:

- Add \$50 to your weekly benefit amount;
- Subtract sixty-six (66) percent of your gross weekly wages

The remainder, rounded down, is your reduced weekly benefit amount.

For example: your weekly benefit amount is \$200, and your gross earnings for the week are \$100. Add \$50 to your weekly benefit amount ($\$200 + \$50 = \$250$). Subtract sixty-six (66) percent of your \$100 in gross earnings, which is \$66. The remainder is \$184 ($\$250 - \$66 = \$184$). Your reduced weekly benefit amount is \$184.

NOTE: All earnings from work, including self-employment, must be reported on your weekly claim for benefits. You must report gross earnings (before any deductions for taxes, health benefits, etc.). Earnings must be reported for the week in which the work was actually done, regardless of when you are paid. If you do not know the actual amount of your wages, provide an estimate by multiplying your hourly wage by the number of hours worked each week. If after receiving your check, you discover that your estimate was incorrect, contact our Customer Navigation Center at 202-724-7000. *For example:* If you worked 15 hours during the week, and you are paid \$15, your gross earnings would be \$225 (15 hours X \$15/hour = \$225 gross earnings).

If you are working full-time (on a temporary, on-call, or permanent basis), you are not unemployed. Therefore, you are not eligible for benefits, regardless of the amount of your gross weekly earnings.

Failure to report your wages may result in a disqualification and an overpayment, and it could result in criminal prosecution and/or possible incarceration.

9. If I performed work during the week, do I still have to provide two job searches?

If you performed part-time or temporary work, including self-employment, you must still provide two new job searches per week.

If you are working full-time, you are NOT unemployed. Therefore, you are not eligible for benefits, and you must immediately stop certifying for benefits.